

Measures to Increase Productivity

Important measures to increase productivity are as follows:

1. Implementation of Land Reforms:

Special attempts will have to be made by the State Governments to implement the land reforms legislation forcefully so that the slogan 'land to the tiller*' is translated into practice. Unless this is done, the tiller will have no incentive to invest in land and adopt new agricultural techniques. Therefore, land reforms are the first and foremost necessity.

2. Integrated Management of Land and Water Resources:

The total geographical area of the country is 328.7 million hectares, of which only 264.0 million hectares possess potential for biotic production. Of this, 'wastelands' account for 79.5 million hectares leaving only 184.5 million hectares. However, even this area cannot be regarded as being in good health. This proves the urgency for an integrated and efficient management policy directed towards better utilisation of our land and water resources.

3. Improved Seeds:

Improved seeds can play an important role in increasing the productivity. This has been amply proved by the experience of many countries and also by the use of high-yielding varieties of wheat in Punjab, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh in our own country. Farmers should also be educated in the methods of sowing, maturing and irrigating the new high-yielding varieties of seeds.

4. Irrigation:

Use of improved seeds and fertilizers require proper irrigation facilities. Irrigation can also make multiple cropping possible in a number of areas and hence enhance productivity.

5. Plant Protection:

Agricultural scientists have estimated that approximately 5 per cent of the crops are damaged by insects, pests and diseases. Most of the farmers in the countryside are unaware of the medicines and insecticides developed in recent years to face this challenge posed by diseases and insects. The government should maintain its own technical staff to carry out the spraying of pesticides and insecticides.

6. Provision of Credit and Marketing Facilities:

Use of improved varieties of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, insecticides, agricultural machinery and irrigation facilities, all require substantial money resources which small farmers do not usually possess. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the credit cooperative sector and free it from the clutches of large landowners.