



**First Annual Conference  
of the  
Indian Society of  
Agri-Business Management  
(25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September 2008)**

**Backdrop**

Production and market environment for Indian Agriculture sector has witnessed considerable changes during the last two decades. Closer integration of Indian economy in the global market place, advances in information and biotechnology, enhanced emphasis on privatization and public private partnerships, and domestic reforms have all contributed to these changes. Overall, this has brought increased market orientation in the sector and has thrown open a plethora of opportunities and challenges. There have been increased agri-business activities in the areas of large scale organised retailing, contract farming, futures trading, etc. This has also brought to the fore, the need for a more efficient and strengthened supply chain as well as technology and institutions to integrate small farmers into these supply chains.

Future of agricultural development lies mainly in equipping the farmers to adjust and modernize in response to conditions brought about by increasing competition, and changing demands from consumers. In addition, this requires establishing a healthy investment climate to encourage entrepreneurial action in commodities and value chains, supporting human resource development through improved quality and access to social services, and strengthening agricultural technology support services.

The challenges outlined above are complex and require considerable debate and careful thinking by all stakeholders. To facilitate objective and evidence based discussion on critical issues faced by agriculture and agribusiness sector, the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Bangalore in collaboration with Centre for Public Policy, Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Bangalore is organizing the first Annual Conference of the Indian Society of Agri-Business Management in from 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

**Conference Themes**

The themes for the Conference are Emerging Agribusiness Formats in India and Agribusiness Management Education.

**Theme 1: Emerging Agribusiness Formats and Management**

The changing political, demographic and economic features of India such as economic growth, rising incomes and emergence of large middle-class population is changing the preference of demand for food and other agricultural products. Simultaneous changes through the proliferation of brands, changing lifestyles, consumer awareness and improvement in technology have also led to the growth of the sector. Newer segments are emerging with specific quality requirements of food and agricultural products. This diversity in demand together with increasing value additions is posing newer challenges in value chain management. The pattern of diffusion of organized food retail chains in India follows that of other regions, with the boom being confined for most part to the urban areas of the country. However, India is at an early stage of modernizing food retailing, with branded and organized food retailing accounting for about four per cent of total retail sales. Due to

restrictions on foreign direct investments, domestic capital, rather than FDI continues to play a major role in the organized retail sector in India.

On the supply side, increasing subdivision and fragmentation of holdings, increasing cost and uncertainty in input markets, new generation technological advancement and weak institutional support have contributed to considerable challenges to farming population. In the wake of these challenges several alternatives have been tried such as contract farming, commodity futures, privatization of agricultural markets, increased role of private sector, public private partnership, farmers organization, etc. It is in this context the conference would like to examine experience so far on these different formats and their attractiveness, sustainability and scalability.

Therefore major issues that would be addressed are:

1. Value chain management
2. Contract farming
3. Spot and futures trading
4. Financing value chain
5. Institutional innovations to integrate diverse categories of producers
6. Quality standards and infrastructure
7. Information technology role

**Theme 2: Agribusiness Management Education**

Transformation of agriculture into agribusiness calls for professional management. In addition to the task of providing trained and skilled manpower in agriculture and allied sectors, Agri-Business Management Education should be agro-industry need based and solution oriented. India has a long history of Agri-Business Management education pioneered by the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad. While experimentation continued on the exact content on the Agri-Business

Management Education, it is not until very recently significant scaling up has taken place. Today Agri-Business Education has spread to major regions of the country. It is in this context the conference will try to understand the experiences of different institutions on the content, structure, industry orientation of these programmes so as to explore avenues to strengthen the Agri-business Education. Specific issues discussed would be

1. Student profile and admission
2. Structure and content of the PGP/MBAs with specialization in Agri-business Management
3. Delivery mode and pedagogy
4. Industry-institution interface
5. Research-Education linkage
6. Continuing Agribusiness Education

#### **About the venue**

The Conference will be held from 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September 2008 at the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Bangalore, Karnataka State. Bangalore is the Garden City of India., known for Information Technology and Biotechnology. Weather is salubrious throughout the year with the temperature ranging between 22<sup>o</sup> C and 32<sup>o</sup> C. The UAS is located in Gandhi Krishi Vignan Kendra (GKVK) campus ( <http://www.uasbangalore.edu.in>) on the Bangalore-Hyderabad Highway. Bangalore is the fifth largest city in India with a population of about 7 million, well connected by rail, road and air. The city provides a plethora of places of visit like the Vidhana Soudha, Lalbagh (botanical garden), Cubbon Park, Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium, ISKON Temple and Bannerghatta National Park, World renowned educational and research institutes like Indian Institute of Science, Raman Research Institute, Indian Institute of Horticultural Research, Indian Institute of Management, National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bangalore

University, Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Research and number of engineering and medical colleges are located in this city. Besides, other places of tourist and historical interest are close to Bangalore like Mysore city (140 kms) known for silk and sandalwood, Brindavan Garden and Palaces, Mysore Zoo, Chamundi Hills, Srirangapatna and Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary.

#### **Call for Papers**

Papers are invited on the indicated themes. Contributors of oral and poster papers are requested to submit an abstract not exceeding 250 words to the organizing secretary through e-mail ( [pk.mandanna@yahoo.com](mailto:pk.mandanna@yahoo.com)) on or before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008. The acceptance of abstract will be communicated to the contributors for preparing a full length paper and or poster with detailed instructions to submit the same in electronic form by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

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#### **Conference Chair**

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#### **Registration Fee**

For participants: Rs. 1,000/ each.  
For accompanying persons: Rs. 500/- each.