



## Development of Agricultural Entrepreneurship among Farmwomen

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### ABSTRACT

This study was conducted in Nanded district of Maharashtra state to examine the agricultural entrepreneurship among farmwomen. It revealed from the study that 40 percent farmwomen had developed Entrepreneurship towards agriculture. Majority of respondents i.e. 40 percent were engaged in the milk and milk products enterprise and 25 percent respondents participated in nursery management enterprise. Further, farmwomen expressed their preferences towards milk and milk product, fruit preservation, vegetable dehydration, and sale of fruits and vegetables enterprise.

Key words : Agriculture, Entrepreneurship, Farmwomen.

Women have always played an important role in agriculture. They worked not only at home but also on farm, to extend help to every member of the family. Now a day, there has been a growing realization regarding the role of farmwomen in national development. Nearly half of the available human resources in India, like many other countries, are women. According to 1991 census, 44.24 per cent women were engaged as agricultural labourers (more than that of their male counterpart i.e. 20.83 percent). However, 34.75 percent female were engaged as cultivators, as reported by National Institute of public Co-operation and Child development 2001.

Defining entrepreneurship is not an easy task. To some, entrepreneurship means primarily innovations, to others it means risk taking, to few others a market establishing force and again to others starting owning and managing a small business. Entrepreneurship is most appropriate for the rural areas. It is important to bear in mind the entrepreneurial skills that will be needed to improve the quality of life for individuals, families and communities and to sustain healthy economy and environment (Hansra *et al.* 2002).

In recent decade, a new trend developed i.e. agriculture is recognized as an enterprise when farmer, farmwomen took farming as an enterprise, then only farming will sustain as an industry. So, it is need of the time to develop an attitude towards agriculture as an enterprise. Maximum work in farming is performed by women, so it is felt necessary to conduct this study. In agriculture, both men and women play important

role in the sphere of productive work, but women contribution is not given much importance, because men agricultural work results in visible cash income. Women may be producing food for family consumption and the cash value remains hidden.

The present study was conducted with following objectives

1. To know the view of farmwomen towards agriculture.
2. To study the role of farmwomen in entrepreneurship development in agriculture.
3. To study the preference of farmwomen to different agricultural enterprises.

### MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study was conducted in the Nanded district of Maharashtra state. Five villages were selected from Loha and Khandhar Talukas. From each village 20 farm women who have undergone training in KVK were selected randomly, making a total sample of 100 respondents. Personal interviews were conducted to collect data through interview schedules. Collected data were processed by using percentage and frequencies. The selected respondents undergone training extended by KVK in, kitchen gardening, sericulture, poultry, dairy management, vermicomposting, mushroom cultivation, nursery management, budding, grafting, fruit preservation and many other home science related enterprises. The study was conducted in the year 2002-03.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to their views about Agriculture as an enterprise.

Sl.No.	Category	Number	Percentage
1	Yes	40	40
2	No	60	60

It is observed from Table 1 that 40 percent farmwomen have developed the entrepreneurship view towards the agriculture. The study indicates that, it is the need of time to develop commercial approach for sustained growth of agriculture. It is also evident that sixty percent of the respondents are involved in agriculture in traditional way. The state of affairs can be attributed to some reasons like their neglected role in decision making, their knowledge regarding agriculture, family binding, burden of house and field work, social participation and exposure etc.

It is seen from Table 2 that out of 100 farmwomen, 40 percent were engaged in milk and milk products enterprise i.e., preparation, sale and preservation, 25 percent were helping on field, nursery management, 10 percent were busy with sericulture. Nine percent farmwomen were harvesting and selling the fruits and vegetables in local and nearest weekly market and helping their families in agricultural entrepreneurship. The same results were reported by More *et al.* (2002)

Farm women, opined that, they were engaged in said jobs, but it is not what they expect in entrepreneurship which still requires more efforts, co-operation, help of their family member, if they want to generate more income from the agricultural enterprises.

Table 3 reveals that majority (80 per cent) of the farmwomen preferred milk and milk product enterprise followed by fruit preservation (75 percent), vegetable dehydration (65 percent) and, selling of fruits and vegetables (60 percent). However, sericulture was preferred by 55 percent farmwomen. Geetha and Manjunatha (2002) obtained similar results.

An enquiry was made why women have given 1<sup>st</sup> preference to preparation of milk and milk products. They expressed that, this enterprise is within their reach, they get cash from sale of milk, ghee, curd, buttermilk, khoa, which can be used in household emergencies. Another important reason being, the customers are women and during their interaction, they share views, feeling

and develop social relations.

Fruit preservation and vegetable dehydration had been given second and third preference respectively. The respondents expressed that they prefer these enterprises, but to develop those enterprises they need financial support to purchase small machinery and require specialized training. Similar constraints were reported by Kalaskar *et al.* (2002).

Regarding sericulture it was expressed that they like the enterprise and they are helping their spouses in rearing silkworms, cutting leaves, feeding worms, maintaining temperature etc.

Almost all respondents revealed that these enterprises are agro-based which can be started at their home in addition to the routine family responsibilities.

It can be concluded from the study that, 40 percent women have developed entrepreneurship approach. This is quite desirable, which will bring commercial approach in farming and related enterprises. The extension workers and agencies need to take special efforts to develop commercial view among women regarding agriculture. Forty percent women are engaged in milk and milk product, 25 percent are involved in nursery management, 10 percent women force is engaged in sericulture. Considering this data, farmwomen should involve more in special training programmes in specialized subjects.

Regarding farmwomen's preferences, they have given 1<sup>st</sup> preference to milk and milk products sale, second to fruit preservation, and third to vegetable dehydration. Considering their interest KVK should organize the specialized training programme for enterprises.

The majority of the working women are engaged in agriculture sector. Therefore, concentrated and consistent efforts should be made to ensure that the benefits of extension and various other programmes reach women in proportion to their number. Special need based training programme should be planned on preferred subjects. Farmwomen should get an opportunity to interact with successful women entrepreneurs and progressive farmers. Special effort should be made to organize training by MCED about entrepreneurship awareness and orientation before offering subject training. Model demonstration should be organized to show the characteristics and qualities of an entrepreneur.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents according to their participation in Agriculture enterprise (n =100)

S No.	Enterprises	Frequency	Percentage
1	Milk and milk products	40	40
2	Nursery management	25	25
3	Sericulture	10	10
4	Fruit preservation	5	5
5	Vegetable dehydration	2	2
6	Vermicomposting	2	2
7	Sale of fruit and vegetables	9	9
8	Mushroom cultivation	2	2

Table 3. Preference of farmwomen to Agriculture enterprise

S No.	Name of theEnterprises	Number	Per cent	Rank
1	Milk and milk products	80	80	I
2	Fruit preservation	75	75	II
3	Vegetable dehydration	65	65	III
4	Sale of fruit and vegetable	60	60	IV
5	Sericulture	55	55	V
6	Mushroom Cultivation	50	50	VI
7	Nursery management	45	45	VII
8	Vermicompost	40	40	VIII

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