

Resource Management with Zero Waste Approach (Part – II) Agricultural Products

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Abstract

The socio economic conditions of India can be mostly judged from the development of agriculture and agro based industries as about 70% of its population mostly depend on agricultural land. Though India's agricultural production was around 700 million tonnes (MT) during the period 2000 – 2001, nearly 30% of the produce used to be lost due to improper post harvest facilities and lack of enough cold storage capacity. In addition to this, about 20% of the food grains produced annually is being damaged by rodents. The agro based industries of the country are very few in numbers. Only 7% of the agricultural produce in India is processed while those in UK or even in a developing country like Philipines are 65 and 45% respectively. Further, India though second largest producer of fruits and vegetables in the world, nearly 50% worth of the produce is wasted due to improper handling and storage facilities. In view of all these, it is essential to manage the agricultural produce in a very scientific manner involving the farmers, governments and other stake holders. In this paper, an account of the present situation on the management of agricultural produce in India has been briefly described and discussed highlighting the weaknesses of the present practices. The agricultural products management practices being carried out in some other countries like UK, Vietnam and USA to minimize the waste generation have been described briefly. As most of the countries practice the 3R (Reduce, Reuse and Recover) management system, it is recommended that, in India similar system on agricultural produce management should be adopted. In this regard, some suggestions have been made to enhance the agricultural production in India and their utilization with zero waste approach.

Key words: India's agricultural production, high percentage of waste generation, need for better management, creation of enough storage and transportation facilities, adoption of modern technology, 3R management programme, zero waste approach.