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CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT: THE ONLY WAY TO TURNAROUND INDIAN FRUIT PROCESSING INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Average land holding of Indian growers/farmers/cultivators is significantly small. Similarly, large percentage of processors are either tiny or small. Smallness of the Indian growers and processors is the source of all problems that prohibit this industry from flourishing to its desired levels. Being small means sacrificing the benefits of larger economies (Economies of scale, economies of scope and economies of experience). Thus they can't exercise their power in the market place and end up in becoming price takers. Middle men have capitalized on this weakness of growers and processors and have been exploiting them. The only solution to this problem is to speed up cooperative movement amongst growers and processors. Growers and processors should come forward, join their hands and form cooperatives and run them successfully.

Karnataka being second largest producer of fruits in India contributing to nearly 12% of the total production, effort has been made in this research paper to gather and analyze information pertaining to cooperative effort made so far by the growers and processors of mango within Karnataka state so that results can be generalized for the entire nation. Growers and processors should follow the footsteps of small milk producers, who came forward, formed cooperatives and run them successfully during 1980s. The cooperative movement (popularly known as white revolution) initiated by Dr. Kurien has revolutionized the dairy industry of India and made India the largest producer and processor of milk in the world. Such similar cooperative effort is the need of the hour to turnaround this industry.

Key words: Co-operative movement, Fruit Processing Industry, Turnaround

Introduction

Average land holding of the Indian fruit cultivators is significantly small when compared with other developing countries. Middle men (traders between growers and processors) have capitalized on this weakness of growers and exploiting them. This is the reason middle men have become strong and the growers have become weak in India.

Similarly large chunk of Indian fruit processors have their operations in home scale, cottage scale and small scale category with the installed capacity ranging from 50 tons to 250 tons a year and only a small number of large scale Indian and multinational companies have larger installed capacities in the range of 12000 to 72000 tons a year. Yet it is still dominated by large number of small scale processors.

Smallness of the Indian growers and processors is the source of all problems that prohibit this industry from flourishing to its desired levels. Being small means sacrificing the benefits of larger economies (Economies of scale, economies of scope and economies of experience). Thus they can't exercise their power in the market place and end up in becoming price takers.

Similar kind of situation was plaguing Indian Dairy industry till 1970s. The stakeholders then realized that the only way to overcome this problem of smallness, which in fact was prohibiting the growth of this industry to desired levels, is to come together and form cooperative associations. Small milk producers came forward, joined their hands, formed cooperatives (region wise), and ran them successfully. The cooperative movement (popularly known as white revolution) initiated by Dr.