**Unlocking value added poultry exports can transform rural livelihoods**

The Indian Poultry sector has taken a quantum leap in the last four decades, emerging from conventional farming practices to commercial production system with state-of-the-art technological interventions. Poultry is one of the fastest growing segments of the agricultural sector in India today, with production of eggs and broilers rising at a rate of 8 to 10% per annum. As a result, India is now the world's fifth largest egg producer and the eighteenth largest producer of broilers. Nonetheless, the country has untapped potential in terms of value-added production, feed production, etc and has the capability to position India as a world leader.

Towards identifying the key growth drivers and suggesting a roadmap for an economically viable and sustainable Poultry Sector that will contribute towards doubling the farmers income, the Confederation of Indian Industry organised the National Conference on Poultry & Poultry Products with the aim of “Creating an economically viable and sustainable Poultry Industry” on March 21, 2022.

Addressing the opening session, **Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Balyan, Hon’ble Minister of State of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying**, recommended the reconstitution of the Poultry Advisory Committee towards connecting all stakeholders. He also urged the industry to “focus on integration of small farmers for a vibrant & sustainable poultry sector.” He also mentioned “Towards becoming AatmaNirbhar and aligned to the Make in India vision of the government, Industry should focus on R&D towards offsetting import dependence for vaccines and feed additives.”

Cognizant of the sector’s impact and potential, the Union Budget (2022-23) has allocated Rs 6,407 crore for the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, which is an increase of 44 % from the 2021-22 allocation.

Along with the organised sector, it is critical to encourage and empower unorganized and backyard poultry, evolving them into proactive business entities that can be part of the poultry supply chain and integrate with the private industry output. Towards this, numerous initiatives have been undertaken under the National Livestock Mission (NLM) and Rural Backyard Poultry Development (RBPD).

Further, towards augmenting income potential, the need of the hour is to move up the value chain and focus on processed products. Towards this, the Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund has been set up to encourage meat processing and value addition infrastructure.

With the policy interventions by Government and enterprise of private players, poultry farming today has transformed into a very scientific operation. Going forward, towards recognising the full potential of the sector, focus needs to be on leveraging technology for disease surveillance and feed innovation, strengthening cold chain infrastructure for integrated supply chains, and encouraging market transition from live birds to chilled and frozen products etc.

Focusing on the road ahead for the sector’s growth**, Mr Atul Chaturvedi, Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying**, mentioned “While the government has put in place initiatives such as PLI and AHIDF, going forward, Industry needs to come up with effective and sustainable solutions towards making our products competitive such that we not only meet protein requirements in India but also export to the world. Focus also needs be given on availability of quality feed at affordable prices towards creating an economically viable and sustainable poultry industry.”

Another important driver in the sector growth story will be the value generated out of exports. Thus, along with competitive cost of production, focus on disease surveillance mechanism especially for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) becomes very critical to achieve the desired growth rate.

The maintenance of food safety at all stages of production, processing, packing, storage, and marketing of poultry meat and meat-derived products while adhering to the standards prescribed by the importing countries shall make a significant impact in the global market.

**Dr Alain Kanora, Director, Huvepharma NV, Bulgaria** mentioned, “The growth of poultry in India is owing to the rise in fast food and ready-to-eat food, and these need to be supported by industry”. He also emphasized the need for legislation & 'auto control' to ensure quality.

“Value-added poultry products are fast emerging in India, driven by demand for packaged/ processed foods, ready-to-eat meats and meat-derived products, and will be the levers for the future growth of the sector” mentioned Mr Arabind Das, Co-Chairman, CII National Committee on Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying and CMD, NutriWiz Global Advisory Services Pvt. Ltd

Given that export of poultry and value added meat products will drive the sector’s growth, Mr. O P Singh, Conference Chairman and Managing Director HuvePharma SEA (Pune) Pvt Ltd, mentioned that “We need to focus on inclusivity of small farmers, expediting vaccines for poultry and Ease of Doing Business for export oriented businesses”

The Opening Session was followed by a series of technical sessions focusing on Strengthening Farming Systems to create economic viability across the supply chain and Role of Technology and Innovation in Enhancing the efficiency of poultry sector. The deliberations of the day also focused on processed and Value-Added poultry products. The sessions had representation from key central government ministries and agencies as well as industry.

Addressing the session on Strengthening Farming Systems to create economic viability across the supply chain, Dr O P Chaudhary, Joint Secretary (NLM), Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India, mentioned that “the government has designed schemes towards enabling the growth of both organized as well as unorganized players. The need of the hour is to focus on growing our exports.”

Speaking on the role of Technology and Innovation in Enhancing the efficiency of the sector, Dr Sujit Menon, Director – India, Petersime, Belgium, mentioned “Precision sensor technologies and automation need to be leveraged for improving the productivity and efficiency of the sector”.

The discussions during the day reinstated the fact that India has the potential to be a leader in poultry and poultry products. While the government has taken significant steps in the form of schemes and funds to boost the sector; it is critical to utilize these reforms in a strategic manner to realize the full potential and reap the benefits as intended.