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## Problems of Punjab Farmers in Post Green Revolution

During sixties, India agriculture experienced a spectacular increase in production, especially, in that of wheat and rice. It was mainly through an increase in productivity per hectares of these crops. The jump in the rate of increase in productivity of these crops was so sudden and conspicuous that some economists termed the new change as 'Green Revolution' According to M.S. Swaminathan, the noted agricultural scientist in India, 'the progress made by India in increasing wheat production during 1964-1968 exceeded that of the preceding four thousand years.' The increase in the production of wheat and rice was spectacular that William Gadd of the U.S.A. referred to it, for the first time in 1968, as 'Green Revolution'. Since then, the use of the term has become rather universal. Incidentally this phase has been called the 'specialised phase' because in this phase, emphasis was laid on increasing the production of only two selected crops, namely wheat and rice. These two tables depict the increase in production and the massive increase in wheat and rice production.

No doubt green revolution brought great progress in the production of rice and wheat on the other side it also brought many benefits for the farmers. That was for only limited period. The main benefits of green revolution were: Increase in food grain output, increase in market surplus, generation of more employment opportunities in the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, rural development saving of foreign exchange, increased Income of rural people, stimulus of Industrialisation, having such great benefits green

revolution was not a blessing for the farmers in Punjab. It added lots of problems in the lives of the farmers and made their life full of misery. The post green revolution period was full of troubles and problems for the farmers in Punjab.

### I. Imbalance in the economy :

Green revolution recording to some economists, has created, what they call 'development duality' in the agriculture sector. This means that the green revolution has created and accentuated imbalance in the economy has benefited mainly those farmers, who had the money to use new technologies, quality seeds , chemical fertilization in the agriculture and the farmers have not been able to reap the benefits of new agricultural technology due to lack of money power, so it was not blessing for them. This new technology has also created differences in agricultural productivity within the same region. For example Ropar and Hushiarpur district in Punjab are still backward in agriculture due to poor irrigation facilities which have stood in the way of adoption of new pursuits.

### II. Uneven progress in crop production :

There is uneven progress in the spread of high yielding varieties of different crops. Among five crops (wheat, rice, maize, Jowar and Bajra) originally selected there has been a real break through only in the production of wheat and rice. The production of pulses, oily seeds, cotton and jute was suffered because of poor farmers having limited land confined to wheat and rice only. Which farmers can experimented and produced any crop instead of wheat and rice but the poor those occupy the large portion were confined

**TABLE 1 Production of Foodgrains in India**

Year	Production (million tones)	Year	Production (million tones)	Year	Production
1950-51	54.9	1988-89	169.9	1998-99	203.6
1960-61	82	1989-90	171	1999-2k	209.8
1964-65	89	1990-91	176.2	2000-01	196.8
1967-68	95.1	1993-94	184.3	2001-02	212.9
1969-70	99.1	1994-95	191.5	2002-03	174.2
1975-76	121.3	1995-96	180.4	2003-04	212
1980-81	129.6	1996-97	199.4		
1985-86	149	1997-98	192.4		

Source Economic Survey India, various issues.

Table 2. Production of Rice, Wheat and other Food Grains in India

Year	Rice (Million Tonnes)	Percentage of total foodgrains	Wheat (Million Tonnes)	Percentage of total foodgrains	Other Foodgrains (Million Tonnes)	Percentage of total foodgrains
1950-51	22.1	40.96	6.8	12.39	26	46.65
1960-61	34.6	42.19	11	13.42	36.4	44.39
1967-68	37.62	39.56	16.54	17.39	40.94	43.05
1969-70	40.43	40.8	20.09	20.27	38.58	38.93
1975-76	48.74	40.28	28.85	23.83	43.44	35.89
1980-81	53.63	41.41	36.31	28.03	39.58	30.56
1985-86	63.33	42.43	46.05	31.27	39.56	26.3
1988-89	70.5	41.5	54	31.8	45.4	26.7
1990-91	74.6	42.4	54.5	30.9	47.1	26.7
1993-94	80.3	43.57	59.8	32.45	44.2	23.98
1995-96	77	42.68	62.1	34.42	41.3	22.90
1996-97	81.7	40.98	69.4	34.8	48.3	24.22
1998-99	86	42.3	71.3	35	46.2	22.7
1999-2k	8968	42.75	76.37	36.4	43.75	20.85
2000-01	84.98	43.18	69.68	35.41	42.14	21.41
2001-02	93.34	43.84	72.77	34.18	46.79	21.98
2002-03	72.66	41.71	65.1	37.37	36.43	20.92
2003-04	87	41.04	72.06	33.99	52.94	24.97

Source: Economic Survey of India, various issues.

to these two crops only. That's why some economists called the change as wheat-rice revolution', instead of 'green revolution'.

**(iii) Wide Disparity in the Distribution of income:**

No doubt, green revolution resulted in inter-regional disparities because of variations in the, availability of irrigation facilities, difference in the suitability of different regions for production of wheat and paddy and because of some structural and physical differences of various regions. At the same time, it led to another type of disparity in the states experiencing green revolution. It was the disparity in income generated on farms of different sizes.

The green revolution was no doubt, size neutral. However, it was not resource neutral. Large farmers gained more because of their capacity to invest liberally in the new inputs. The gap between the productivity on large farms and that on small farms grew. And as a result, difference in the income of the large farmers and that of the small farmers widened. There was yet another factor responsible for the widening of such disparities.

The practice of reverse leasing (i.e., larger farmers leasing in land, from small farmers) as well as the fall in the area leased out by the large farmers to small farmers after the advent of green revolution,

further increased the disparity in the size of operational holdings. This, in turn, added to the inter-farm disparity in income. The rising number of suicides in Punjab directly exposes the extremity of rural insecurity environmentally and economically unsustainability in Punjab's agriculture.

The number of 2990 farmers had committed suicide in just two districts- 1256 in Bathinda and 1634 in Sangrur District- between 2000 and 2008. And in the state where green revolution took place in 1960's the adverse conditions of the farmers and their suicides are the well mark proof to us that how far green revolution brought misery for them rather happiness.

**(v) Social Tension in Rural Areas :**

The new agricultural technology has created a class of farmers who have resources and opportunities to prosper while others have lagged and stagnated. There is now a very conspicuous difference in the economic status of the two groups of farmers. This has led to a social polarisation in the rural areas. Parthasarthy, in his presidential address at the conference of the Indian Society of Agricultural Economics in 1986, had rightly said, "The polarisation process that accentuated the rural classes differences has been further intensified by green revolution.

**(vi) Unproductive Expenditure by Affluent Farmers :**

Normally, the large farmers should have used the additional income that they earned because of green revolution for further development of agriculture.. But they did not do so. Rather they have been found spending it lavishly upon unproductive activities such as marriages, births, celebration of festivals or on ornaments. As a consequence of this unproductive expenditure, these rich farmers continue to borrow either from cooperative banks or from land development banks or commercial banks to purchase agricultural inputs from the market. The result is that these institutions are not able to meet the additional credit requirements of small and marginal farmers who are still at the mercy of money lenders. If the rich farmers had invested their surplus funds in the purchase of new inputs, these institutions would have advanced loans in sufficient amount to small and

marginal farmers to enable them to adopt the new agricultural technology more extensively.

**(v) Gains from Green Revolution are only short term gains:**

According to quite a few experts, the over-application of fertilizers under the new seed-cum-fertilizer technology has degraded the soil by reducing its water holding capacity and natural productivity. Further, as the high yielding varieties of crops are susceptible to a number of disease, relatively large doses of insecticides are needed to protect them. This is proving to be a serious health hazard for the people. As such, many experts feel that the gains from green revolution are only short term gains and in the long run, the economy will have to pay dearly for such gains. Incidentally, it is interesting to point out that because of the extra-ordinary keenness of the producers to use fertilizers and pesticides in order to get maximum output from the land, Swaminathan has called 'green revolution' as 'greed revolution.'

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