Entrepreneurial agribusiness model to help 6,000 smallholder farmers

More than 1,000 women and men farmers of Maruru village in Anantapur district, Andhra Pradesh, a dryland region, will create a self-sustaining agribusiness model aimed at doubling farm incomes. The Walmart Foundation, as part of its global philanthropy support, and International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid-Tropics (ICRISAT), in its continuous efforts to turn dryland farming into a profitable enterprise, are working together to accelerate value chain benefits with innovative post-harvest management and food processing opportunities for over 6,000 smallholder farmers in the state.

According to ICRISAT, the primary processing unit for groundnut, launched today at Maruru village, will help the farmers’ collective realise an additional income of up to US$100,000 annually. This two-year programme will enable farmers to move into an entrepreneurial model to seize income opportunities while creating new farm-based employment prospects for women and youth.

Launching the project at the Accion Fraterna Ecology Centre (AFEC) campus in Anantapur, Dr. Marco, Ferroni, Chair, System Management Board, Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) said, “Smallholder farmers in Andhra Pradesh operate under challenging conditions of extreme weather events, and dryland farmers face even more hardships due to climate vagaries which deprive them of sustaining agriculture. Coupled with better crop practices, processing units handled by the farmers themselves as a business opportunity will help them link their produce to the retail and last mile markets and capture a better price.”

Rajneesh Kumar, Senior Vice President & Chief Corporate Affairs Officer at Walmart India, the wholly owned subsidiary of Walmart Inc., said, “The key to improving the livelihoods of farmers and enhancing their income, is to strengthen the entire agricultural supply chain. A robust supply chain that provides market linkages, logistics support, and helps farmers get fair price for their produce as well as reduces food wastage is crucial to promote sustainable agriculture in India. Eliminating the systemic barriers that prevent farmers from increasing their productivity and market access, therefore, must attain priority, which is why the Walmart Foundation’s grant of US$2 million to ICRISAT to help create an improved business model is crucial.”

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