



THE AGRI PUBLICATION

THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE

— Grow With Every Page —

e-Magazine for Agricultural Articles



Volume

01



Issue

04



September

2026



Available online at
<https://agripublication.com/>



UDYAM REGISTERED NUMBER
UDYAM-MP-06-0043239



©Agri Publication
ISSN (Online): 3139-6127

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Our Website



Volume: 01 Issue No: 04

Sustainable Agribusiness, Crop Diversification, Organic Farming, Biogas and Solar Energy

Article ID: AP-V01-I04-05

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Introduction

Agriculture is the means of food security and it is sustainable Agribusiness which integrates agricultural production with environmental sustainability, economic viability and social equity so that current needs are met without compromising future generations. In the Indian context, where agriculture supports nearly half the workforce and faces mounting pressure from climate variability, ground water depletion, soil degradation and volatile input costs, the transition from input intensive mono culture to diversified, resources efficient and circular system both an ecological necessity and entrepreneurial opportunity. It examines the conceptual foundation of sustainable Agri-Business, focusing on four interlinked pillars – crop diversification, organic/ Natural Farming, biogas (from waste to wealth) and solar energy (solar pumps). It analyses their economic, environmental and social dimensions, reviews relevant central and state schemes compares cost and benefits with Indian context and present a design for small integrated farm

– enterprise. This discussion distinguishes among government schemes, credit programmers, insurance, market institutions, infrastructure support, incubation and training, emphasizing interpretation for as agripreneurs

Meaning of sustainable Agribusiness and its three pillars:

Sustainable Agri-Business refers to the management of agricultural value chains – production, processing, marketing and services _ in a manner that simultaneously delivers profitable returns, regenerates natural resources and strengthen rural livelihoods

It has three dimensions which are interdependent

- **Economic Sustainability** – requires positive net returns over time, resilience to price and climate shocks, access to credit and markets, and value addition. For small holders this often means diversified income streams and reduced dependency on subsidized but depleting resources (chemical fertilizers, diesel, free or highly subsidised electricity)
- **Environmental sustainability:** It focuses on soil health, water use efficiency biodiversity, reduced greenhouse gas emissions and circular nutrient flows. Practices such as crop rotation, organic inputs, residue recycling and renewable energy directly address these.
- **Social Sustainability:** It emphasizes equitable access for small and marginal farmers,womens and youths, decent work, nutritional security; and community institutions (FPOs, clusters, cooperatives) . Schemes that priorities cluster approaches and capacity building as well

In India these dimensions are operationalized through the

National Mission On Sustainable Agriculture (MMSA) , National Mission On Natural Farming (NMNF), Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojna (PKVY) , PM- KUSUM are related programs. We as agri-preneur can treat these not as isolated subsidies but as complementary instruments that can reduce risk.

Interlinkage Of Three Pillars



Fig:1

Role of PMFBY in integration of three pillars:

This scheme addresses growing ecological and climatic vulnerabilities by serving as a core risk management tool for climate change

Economic Sustainability: To attain Environmental sustainability this scheme focuses on climate resilient agriculture, crop diversification and resource optimization via technology (Yield Estimation System technology) PMFBY ensures the financial stability of farming households, preventing them from falling into debt cycles after crop failures. It addresses income stabilization (provide quick compensation for yield losses), flow of agricultural credit (mitigates the risk of loan defaults, ensuring continuous credit flow), Exemption and Subsidy support (Features heavily subsidized premiums with low fixed rates for farmers 1.5 to 5% to keep financial safety nets affordable)

Social Sustainability: PMFBY fosters equitability, transparent administration and societal resilience across rural networks by addressing Inclusivity for marginalized farmers, Stakeholder Integration (uses a centralized IT platform to bring farmers, insurers, financial institutions and community bodies into a unified ecosystem, promoting transparency, Mitigation Of Distress Migration (providing a rapid payout mechanism stabilizes rural communities)

Crop Diversification: Crop diversification is the deliberate shift from continuous rice- wheat or other water – intensive mono cultures towards a mixed cereals,pulses,oilseeds,millets, horticulture, fodder and agroforestry. It reduces risk, improves soil fertility through legumes, lowers irrigation demand and opens higher – value market windows

Policy Instruments

Crop diversification programme under PM-RKVY targets original green revolution states punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh etc and tobacco growing areas, providing demonstration and assistance for alternative crops

National Food security and Nutrition Mission (NFSNM) , a mission for atmanirbharata in pulses, National Mission On

Edible Oils_ oilseeds (NMEI-OS) and Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) supply seeds, demonstration and area expansion support

State schemes such as Haryana’s “Mera pani Meri Virasat “offer direct incentives for shifting out of paddy in critically depleted blocks

Organic Farming and Natural Farming:

Organic farming excludes synthetic inputs and relies on certified organic inputs, crop rotation and biological pest management. Natural farming emphasises zero to near zero external inputs, cow-based formulations (jeevaamrit, Beejanrit), mulching and indigenous knowledge

Solar Energy _ Solar pumps and Solar Irrigation:

Irrigation accounts for a large share of farm energy use. Diesel pumps are costly and polluting; grid electricity is often unreliable or night time only. Solar pumps under PM- KUSUM address this

PM-KUSUM components (updated targets and progress as of mid-2026)

Component A: Decentralized ground/ stilt- mounted solar plants (up to 2MW) on fallow land, farmers sell power to DISCOMs.

Component B: Standalone off grid solar pumps (individual or feed level)

Central financial assistance is typically 30% (higher in special category states); states contribute another 30% farmers Share

Biogas

Biogas is generated by the anaerobic digestion of cattle dung, crop residue, kitchen waste and other biodegradable material. It can be used for household cooking and small- scale lighting needs, while the digested slurry that remains becomes a valuable organic manure. Because it converts an otherwise low value waste stream into both usable energy and a soil input, biogas is one of the clearest examples of waste to wealth technology available to Indian farmers

Biogas is particularly well suited to mixed Indian farms, since a large share of rural households already keep cattle or buffaloes and therefore generate a steady supply of dung. A small household or community scale biogas plant reduces expenditure on firewood and LPG, improves sanitation around the cattle shed, and when slurry is applied to fields through vermi composting unit closes the nutrient loop between livestock and crop production

Agripreneurial Interpretation:

Diversification alone cannot guarantee higher income Unless linked to assured markets or value addition. Successful models combine diversification with FPO aggregation, contract farming or direct marketing (eg; millets processed into ready- to- cook products). Credits and insurance (PMFBY) remain available for the new crops, while infrastructure support under Agriculture Infrastructure Fund(AIF) can finance sorting, grading and storage for diversified produce

Cost Benefit Considerations:

We have to analyses official and government authorized data to analyses the cost Benefit Considerations. Sustainable Agribusiness practices requires high initial cost but reduce recurring costs over the medium time interval . A solar pump for instances has cost more upfront then compared to diesel pumps. But eliminates recurring diesel expenditure and gives more dependable irrigation. A biogas plant involves a one – time construction cost but subsequently lowers cooking – fuel expenditure and supplies manure would have to purchased organic and diversified cultivation may may initially require moderate to high labor cost but closer management but it lowers the cost of chemical fertilizers, pesticides which is really beneficial.

The principal benefits of this approach include reduced dependence on purchased inputs, diversified and more stable income, improved soil health, greater resilience to shock and lower carbon emissions from the farm.



Limitations: Main limitations are the need for technical knowledge and bearing large amount of labour cost of quality laborers

Component	Cost/Assistance	Official Source
Solar irrigation pump (PMKUSUM)	30% central CFA+ 30% state subsidy (upto 60% total) farmer pays only 10-40%	MNRF, PM-KUSUM scheme guidelines
Organic Farming (PVKY)	31,500rs/ha over 3 years (15000rsDBT for inputs+9000rs training+ 4500rs marketing+ 3000rs certification)	PIB, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers welfare
Natural Farming (NMNF)	4000rs/acre/year of 2 years (max 1acre/farmer)	PIB, National Mission On Natural Farming (launched 25/11/2024
Small Biogas plant (1-25m³/ day)	9800rs-70,400rs/ plant	MNRF, National Biogas Programme

Waste to wealth concept:

We have to integrate all the involved components in farm or farming system for example a single enterprise should linked with 3-4 enterprise, then one component's waste will be act as another component's wealth just like integration of Fish- poultry -Horticulture- Vermi compost etc. This is what we want to convey about waste to wealth.

Circular Economy:

Circular economy is nothing but recycling of nutrients and all by this we have to produce bioenergy. We will convert crop residues and animal manure into organic compost or biofertilizers to replenish the soil, reducing reliance on chemical synthetic inputs. By using these agricultural waste, animal slurry, or food processing byproducts to generate biogas or green energy. We can transform waste streams into new revenue sources, such as using crop remnants as feedstock for insect protein farming or turning organic debris into soil enriching biochar

Climate Resilient Agri-Business:

Climate resilient agri-business is about overcoming climatic stress and uncertainty during business operation. It is a commercial approach that combines adaptive farming, modern technology and risk management to protect long term profits and food supplies against extreme weather Climate- smart practices:

We can use or recommend drought tolerant seeds, crop rotation (eg: rice-black gram/ green gram; cereal - pulse rotation) and mixed farming to prevent total harvest failure Efficient Resource Management:

Water conservation method like drip irrigation, rain water harvesting reduce waste and lower operational costs during water shortages

Agroforestry and Diversification:

Planting trees alongside crops or adding dairy and poultry will be a approach to lower financial risk by creating multiple income streams, we can also reduce carbon footprint by using solar irrigation to meet sustainability

Practical:

SAMRIDDHI FARMS – FROM WASTE TO

WEALTH

A 1.5 acres Integrated Farm-Enterprise

Model



1.5-Acre Integrated Farm-Enterprise: Nutrient & Waste Loop

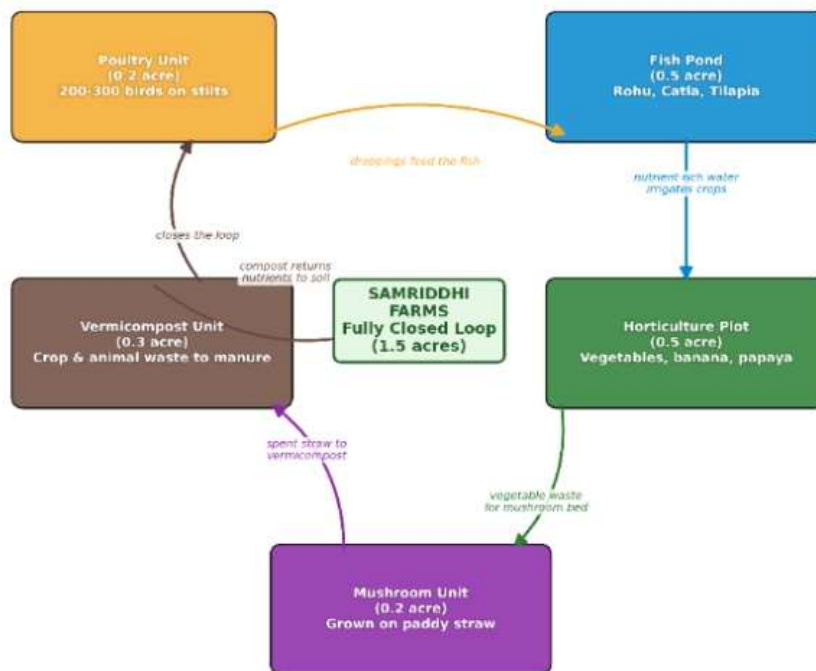


Figure 2: Nutrient and waste flow in the 1.5-acre Samriddhi Farms model — each component's waste becomes the next component's input, forming a closed loop.

Concept:

Integrated Fish- poultry -Horticulture- Vermi compost Mushroom unit

A FULLY CLOSED LOOP:

Poultry waste will act as fish feed Pond water will irrigate crop field Crop waste such as vegetable straw in vermicomposting Compost will return the nutrients material to soil Straw waste can act as mushroom bed

THE NUTRIENT LOOP:

Poultry droppings- Feed the fish Pond – Nutrient rich water – irrigates vegetables- vegetable waste – vermicompost

Core Components: Fish and poultry:

Fish pond (0.5acre)

Poultry raised beneath a stilted poultry shed

Species- Rohu, Atla, Tilapia – fast growing and market friendly

Poultry droppings fall directly into the water, feeding fish naturally

Cut fish feed cost by roughly 30%

Poultry Unit

200-300 birds housed on stilts above the pond Eggs and meat provide daily and weekly income Droppings feed the fish pond below – zero waste Low additional land or infrastructure cost

Core Components: Horticulture and Vermicompost:

Horticulture plot (0.5acre)

Seasonal vegetables plus banana and papaya on the bunds

Irrigated with nutrient rich pond water

Reduces need for external fertilizers

Crop waste feeds directly into the vermicompost unit

Vermicompost unit:(0.3 acre)

Convert crop residues, vegetable and animal waste into manure

Compost return to the vegetable plot closing the loop

Minimal ongoing input cost once established

Off season Boost: Mushroom Unit (0.2acre)

Grown on paddy straw and left over agri – waste from the plot

Short crop cycle – fast turn over, quick cash in hand

Needs minimal extra space – fits into a shaded corner of shed

Fills the income gap

THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP ANGLE:

We can connect FPOs and also can sale the product directly to farmer's market

The Digital Farm Gate:

We can use free or low cost tools like what's App business,

Instagram or local community Facebook groups Transparency is our brand:

We can post short, simple behind the scenes showing how our crops, chickens, and compost unit interacts...

That's how we can do enterprising of farm product and can run Farm-Enterprise

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