

13. Maharashtra Agricultural Competitiveness Project: National Perspective

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Introduction

Agriculture in India today a net sown area of 141 million hectares with 7 percent being accounted for by the horticulture sub sector. Livestock population is more than 512 million and India is the 7th largest agricultural exporter in the world. As per National sample survey/and the Ministry of Agricultural and Farmers Welfare, the number of agricultural laborers stood at 78.2 million in 2011-12 by 2010-11, the average farm size stood at 1.15 hectare. Small and Marginal farmers account for about 83 percent of holdings. In this circumstance, the agro and food processing sector may be considered in terms of the sub-sectors. Maharashtra has the highest production of fruits in India. It is ranked first in grapes, pomegranate, banana, tomato and onion production and second in papaya production. The state ranks 9th in vegetable production with 5.6 percent of India total vegetable production. The state also houses more than 6500MSMEs an 300 large scale units. In this regard the Agri-Business Promotion Facility services under the Maharashtra Agricultural Competitiveness Project are provide by the Gant Thornton India. The Interventions under the MACP have led to the evolution of 100s of FPCs. The FPCs are Managed by the Board of Directors and their constant capacity building is of utmost importance. It is in this regard that information provide in this paper.

Project Development Objective of the Maharashtra Agricultural Competitiveness Project (MACP) is to increase the Productivity, Profitability and Market Access of the farming community in Maharashtra. This would be achieved by providing farmers with technical knowledge, market intelligence and market networks to support diversification and intensification of agriculture production aimed at responding to market demand. Farmers will also be assisted in establishing farmer organizations, developing alternative market channels outside of the regulated markets and in supporting the modernization of promising traditional wholesale markets. The project has three main components: