



Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium Holds Maharashtra Agribusiness Conclave in Pune

Pune, February 7, 2018: Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium organised Maharashtra Agri-Business Conclave (MAC) at Pune with the objective of strengthening of existing FPOs and to explore innovative and effective strategies for enhancement of capacity building and sustainability of Farmer Producer Organisations through technology, Finance and Input supply.

The Conclave witnessed participation from luminaries from both the agricultural and corporate sectors, who deliberated on pressing issues that farmers in the region are facing and shared their domain expertise to find plausible solutions through backward and forward linkages to promote sustainability of FPOs / FPCs, credit linkages for promoting agribusiness in Maharashtra through SFAC schemes such as Venture Capital Assistance and Credit Guarantee Scheme.

All the stake holders in promotion and sustenance of FPCs viz. Senior State Government Officials, Corporates, Bankers and representatives of FPCs besides Academician participated in the event. More than 200 FPCs, 100 Corporates and Banking Officials were present in the above celebrations. Number of FPCs displayed their products and active interaction between FPCs and Corporates took place which paved the way for market linkage of agriculture produce.

Shri Sumanta Chaudhuri, IAS and MD SFAC and Shri B.R. Patel, General Manager, Head-Rural & Agri Banking and CSR, Bank of Baroda signed a MoU for comprehensive growth and development of Farmer Producer Organizations.

Inaugurating the MAC, **Shri Sumanta Chaudhari, Managing Director, SFAC said**, "FPOs aim to enhance farmers' competitiveness and increase their advantage in emerging market opportunities. We need to maximize the number of FPOs in Maharashtra through agribusiness incubators, in order to engage more stakeholders in making agriculture more sustainable and profitable. We intend to make the farmers not just self-sufficient, but prosperous as well." He, further, emphasized that the FPCs, Corporates and Bankers should utilise the schemes of SFAC to the maximum extent.

Shri B.R. Patel, General Manager, Bank of Baroda, stated that, 'We have a network of 329 in Maharashtra and Bank of Baroda has made a commitment of three crore nine lakh to SFAC. We will be playing a lead role in promoting FPO for which we are working ahead for more tie ups. We have also started sensitization programme for the same.'

The Maharashtra Agribusiness Conclave aims to develop the market linkages for the sustainability of FPOs by creating a platform for all stakeholders to come together and identify the challenges faced

by farmers in Maharashtra. The purpose is to make agriculture profitable by involving farmers along the entire agricultural value chain through Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs).

The Maharashtra Agribusiness Conclave in Pune was organised by SFAC in collaboration with Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), PHD Chambers of Commerce and Industries and MAHA Farmers' Producer Company Limited (MAHA-FPC)

About SFAC

Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) is an Autonomous Society promoted by Ministry of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers' Welfare, Government of India. It was registered under Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860 on 18th January, 1994. The society is also registered as Non-Banking Financial Institution by Reserve Bank of India. It is governed by Board of Management which is chaired, ex-officio, by Hon'ble Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare as the President and the Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare, Government of India, is the ex-officio Vice-President. SFAC is implementing the central schemes of Government of India namely VCA, EGCGS for economic inclusion of small and marginal farmers in agribusiness activities.