



Mains Practice Question

Q. What is Integrated farming System? How it can help in tackling the farmer's distress? (150 words)

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Approach

- Write about Integrated farming System (IFS) in the introduction para.
- Explain how it can help in tackling the farmer's distress by writing IFS's features.

Introduction

- **Integrated farming System (IFS):** Integrated Farming System (IFS) is an interdependent, interrelated often interlocking production systems based on few crops, animals and related subsidiary enterprises in such a way that maximize the utilization of nutrients of each system and minimize the negative effect of these enterprises on environment.
- The interrelated, inter-dependent-interlocking nature of IFS involves the utilization of primary produce and secondary produce of one system, as basic input of the other system, thus making them mutually integrated as one whole unit.

Body

It can help in tackling the farmer's distress as it focuses on the following –

- **Utilizing the by-products** of one component of the farming system as an input in other for ensuring supplementary and complementary enterprise relationship. Thus reducing the effective input cost. For example, cattle dung mixed with crop residues and farm waste can be converted in to nutrient-rich vermicompost.
- **Maximization of yield** of all component enterprises to provide steady and stable income at higher levels.
- **Rejuvenation/amelioration of systems productivity** and achieve agro ecological equilibrium.
- **Control the built-up** of insects-pest, diseases and weeds population through natural cropping system management and keep them at low level of intensity.
- **Reducing the use of chemical fertilizer** and other harmful agrochemicals and pesticides to provide pollution free, healthy produce and environment to the society at large.
- **Increase in natural resource** use efficiency by early recycling of nutrients.
- Some IFS features like Organic farming, and developing a judicious mix of income-generating activities such as dairy, poultry, fishery, goat-rearing, vermicomposting and others, and community-led local systems for water conservation etc help in reducing farmers' distress.
- **Mitigation of negative impact** of agriculture or livestock on environment.
- **Effective tool for north eastern farmers:** Integrated Farming Systems suitable particularly for hilly regions of the North Eastern Region can be adopted. Some are as - Integrated Fish cum Pig farming, Integrated Fish cum Duck Farming, Integrated Fish Farming-Chicken, Integrated Fish farming-cum-Cattle farming, Integrated Fish farming-cum-Rabbit farming, Integrated Fish farming-cum-Agriculture. Sikkim being an organic state is an good example.

Conclusion

- In its real sense it will help in lifting the economy of agriculture and standard of living of the farmers of the country as a whole.
- All stakeholders should make continuous efforts to build farmer capacities for adoption of productive, remunerative, eco-friendly and self-sustaining integrated farming systems.

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