



Question 12. Explain the role of non-farm employment in promoting rural diversification.

Answer. The non-farm sectors include agro-processing industries, food processing industries, leather industry, tourism, etc. Some other sectors which have the potential but lack infrastructure are traditional household-based industries like pottery, crafts, handlooms, etc.

Question 13. Bring out the importance of animal husbandry, fisheries and horticulture as a source of diversification.

Answer.

1. Animal Husbandry

- (a) In India, the farming community uses the mixed crop-livestock farming system—cattle, goats, fowl are the widely held species.
- (b) This system provides increased stability in income, food security, transport, fuel and nutrition for the family without disrupting other food-producing activities.
- (c) Today, livestock sector alone provides alternate livelihood options to over 70 million small and marginal farmers including landless labourers.
- (d) Poultry accounts for the largest share. It is 42 per cent of total livestock in India.
- (e) Milk production in the country has increased by more than four times between 1960-2002.
- (f) Meat, eggs, wool and other by-products are also emerging as important productive sectors for diversification.

2. Fisheries

- (a) The fishing community regards the water body as 'mother' or 'provider'. The water bodies consist of sea, oceans, rivers, lakes, natural aquatic ponds, streams, etc.
- (b) Presently, fish production from inland sources contributes about 49 per cent to the total fish production and the balance 51 per cent comes from the marine sector (sea and oceans). Today total fish production accounts for 1.4 per cent of the total GDP.
- (c) Among states, Kerala, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu are the major producers of marine products.

3. Horticulture

- (a) Due to varying climate and soil conditions, India has adopted growing of diverse horticultural crops such as fruits, vegetables, tuber crops, flowers, medicinal and aromatic plants, spices and plantation crops.
- (b) These crops play an important role in providing food, nutrition and employment.
- (c) India has emerged as a world leader in producing a variety of fruits like mangoes, bananas, coconuts, cashew, nuts and a number of spices and is the second largest producer of fruits and vegetables.
- (d) Flower harvesting, nursery maintenance, hybrid seed production and tissue culture, propagation of fruits and flowers and food processing are highly profitable employment opportunities for rural women. It has been estimated that this sector provides employment to around 19

per cent of the total labour force.

Question 14. 'Information technology plays a very significant role in achieving sustainable development and food security'—comment.

Answer. Information technology plays a very significant role in achieving sustainable development and food security in the following ways:

1. It can act as a tool for releasing the creative potential and knowledge embedded in our people.
2. Issues like weather forecast, crop treatment, fertilizers, pesticides, storage conditions, etc. can be well administered if expert opinion is made available to the farmers.
3. The quality and quantity of crops can be increased manifold if the farmers are made aware of the latest equipments, technologies and resources.
4. IT has ushered in a knowledge economy.
5. It has potential of employment generation in rural areas.

Question 15. What is organic farming and how does it promote sustainable development?

Answer. Organic farming is a system of farming that maintains, enhances and restores the ecological balance.

Need for organic farming arises because:

1. In the past, modern farming methods made excessive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. It led to soil, water and air pollution, loss of soil fertility and too much chemical contents in foodgrains.
2. There is urgency to conserve the environment and ecosystem and promote sustainable development.
3. Organic farming is an inexpensive farming technology. It can be purchased by small and marginal farmers.

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