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elets

Cotton & Agro Commodities

# MARKETING Innovation Summit

Innovation in Cotton and Agro Commodity Markets

CONFERENCE | EXPO

MUMBAI, 23 July 2019

## Event Report

### When Maharashtra Showed the Way of **Cotton & Agro Commodities** Marketing through Innovation



**Chief Guest**  
**SHRI DEVENDRA FADNAVIS,**  
Hon'ble Chief Minister  
Maharashtra



**Guest of Honour**  
**PROF. RAM SHINDE**  
Hon'ble Minister for Marketing & Textiles  
Government of Maharashtra



**PROGRAM MENTOR**  
**ANOOP KUMAR**  
Principal Secretary  
Marketing  
Animal Husbandry  
Dairy Development & Fisheries  
Government of Maharashtra



**PROGRAM CHAIR**  
**NAWIN SONA NATESAN**  
Secretary to Government and  
Managing Director  
The Maharashtra State Coop  
Cotton Growers' Marketing  
Federation Limited



# About Elets Marketing Innovation Summit

Elets Technomedia, in association with the Maharashtra Government, organised first-of-its-kind event, the Marketing Innovation Summit that aimed to highlight innovations in marketing of cotton and other agro products. Backed by 'The Maharashtra State Coop Cotton Growers Marketing Federation Ltd (MSCCGMF)', and Department of Marketing, Government of Maharashtra, the event also highlighted challenges existing in this sector.

MSCCGMF is a 35 year old organisation dealing with cotton across the value chain from direct procurement from farmers to processing and selling of cotton bales. Digitization of farmer's land records, use of technology for augmenting commodity market, effective use of technology and innovation for the agro sector, strengthening of the agro economy with conducive policies and its implementation are the need of the hour to ensure building an effective agro commodity marketing ecosystem. The event focused on the same.



Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister of Maharashtra (Right) along with Guest of Honour Prof. Ram Shinde, Minister for Marketing & Textiles, Government of Maharashtra (Left), at Elets Marketing Innovation Summit, held in Mumbai on 23rd July, 2019.



Marked by an array of industry leaders, the event was attended by Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister of Maharashtra.



Dr Ravi Gupta, CEO, Elets Technomedia Pvt Ltd; Program Mentor Anoop Kumar, Principal Secretary, Marketing, Animal Husbandry Dairy Development & Fisheries, Government of Maharashtra; Program Chair Nawin Sona Natesan, Secretary to Government of Maharashtra & Managing Director, The Maharashtra State Coop Cotton Growers' Marketing Federation Ltd (MSCCGMFL); Pramit Chanda, Country Director, India, IDH The Sustainable Trade Initiative, Headquartered in Netherlands; Sritanu Chatterjee, Senior Policy Advisor for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and other special guests light lamp at the Marketing Innovation Summit, innovation in cotton and agro commodity markets, in Mumbai.







- "The realities of climate change are there to stay. At least, for next 10-20 years. So, what we really need to do is to create resilience choosing smart and best technologies. Maharashtra has already started a project in climate resilience with the help of World Bank."

Lauding the efforts behind the event, **Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister of Maharashtra** talked about various aspects of cotton and agro commodities marketing. Few excerpts:

- "In India around 34% of area where cotton is grown, falls in Maharashtra. But we contribute only 17%, to the entire cotton production. This is a huge disparity. And I think unless we do not address this productivity aspect wisely, we will not be able to make our cotton farming sustainable."







Also present at the event was **Kotak Group of Companies Chairman Suresh Kotak**, referred to as the 'Cotton Man of India'. Speaking on 'Maharashtra Showing Way in Cotton & Agro Commodities Marketing with Innovation & Technology', he stressed that there was a need to focus on opportunities more than challenges. Few excerpts:

- "The opportunities are both available in the international and national fields. In national field, we have direct opportunities because of the concept which is demand rated supply. So that means if we give better cotton to our mills, we can definitely produce better goods with lower cost."
- "The present thinking is that cotton is for classes and polyester is for masses. No. cotton is also for masses because cotton is a renewable resource. And the environmental and climate change that is taking place, cotton's pre-eminence gets reinforced and re-established. So, I feel we are on the right path."
- The industry veteran added that Maharashtra had the advantage of diversity of various qualities that could be improved.



# Event Highlights



**Chief Guest:**  
Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister of Maharashtra

- Lauded Elets, Maharashtra Government and The Maharashtra State Coop Cotton Growers' Marketing Federation Ltd (MSCCGMFL) for coming up with the first-of-its-kind event
- Talked about innovation in cotton market, farmers' connect with the users and climate change
- Launched the logo of 'smart cotton' that will ensure quality certification which will result in Maharashtra Cotton reaching to the World market



**Program Mentor:**  
Anoop Kumar, Principal Secretary, Marketing and Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development & Fisheries Department, Government of Maharashtra

- Besides cotton, raised generic issues related to agricultural marketing
- Highlighted the need to increase farmer income and better logistics related facilities for them
- Talked about partnership with private firms in the cotton sector



**Program Chair:**  
Nawin Sona Natesan, Secretary to Government of Maharashtra & Managing Director, The Maharashtra State Coop Cotton Growers' Marketing Federation Ltd (MSCCGMFL)

- Talked about Maharashtra's farmers
- Highlighted opportunities and challenges in cotton marketing
- Threw light on the term BIGFAB6 that stood for, B for Bigdata, I for IoT, G for GIS, F for Fintech, A for AI and Machine Learning, B for Blockchain, which is expected to change the game.





## Inaugural Session: **Changing World of Cotton & Agro Commodities Marketing**

(Right to Left) Dr Ravi Gupta, CEO, Elets Technomedia Pvt Ltd sharing the stage with other key speakers, Sritanu Chatterjee, Senior Policy Advisor for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands; Anoop Kumar, Principal Secretary, Marketing and Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development & Fisheries Department, Government of Maharashtra; Nawin Sona Natesan, Secretary to Government of Maharashtra & Managing Director, The Maharashtra State Coop Cotton Growers' Marketing Federation Ltd (MSCCGMFL) and Pramit Chanda, Country Director, India, IDH The Sustainable Trade Initiative, Headquartered in Netherlands.



"The centre point of this event is the farmer of Maharashtra. Given the large impact farming has on the economy of Maharashtra, how can we bridge the gap between agriculture as a production activity and agriculture as a consumption activity, that is the essence of today. We want to know how can we do it better, how it is being done in a better way at other places. Hence it is an national and an international level event."

**Nawin Sona Natesan, Secretary to Government of Maharashtra & Managing Director, The Maharashtra State Coop Cotton Growers' Marketing Federation Ltd (MSCCGMFL)**





"Even a 2-3% improvement at the ginning level has a substantial value addition at the gin and they are then able to transfer that back to the farmers as well. So looking at link-based marketing and implementing that perhaps is a policy across the state level in Maharashtra would be a critical element of driving this market access of addressing the issue of quality."

**Pramit Chanda, Country Director, India, IDH The Sustainable Trade Initiative, Headquartered in Netherlands**



"Already it has been mentioned that the Netherlands government is one of the founders of the better cotton initiatives, but there are other programmes also, at the global level, that the Dutch government is funding when it comes to textile and apparel sector. Why is it that this sector is so important? It's because the Dutch government is focussed and committed to work in partnership with all countries and with all players to help achieve the sustainable goals by 2030."

**Sritanu Chatterjee, Senior Policy Advisor for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands**



"Today instead of focusing on specifically cotton as commodity, I will like to raise some generic issues related to agricultural marketing. Those general issues have to be understood with a deep empathy to farmers, because if you look at last two and a half decades the phenomena of farmer suicides started in Telangana and then happened in Maharashtra's Vidarbha area. This distress signs have emerged mostly in cotton producing areas."

**Anoop Kumar, Principal Secretary, Marketing and Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development & Fisheries Department, Government of Maharashtra**

## Special Presentation



By Nawin Sona Natesan, Secretary to Government of Maharashtra & Managing Director, The Maharashtra State Coop Cotton Growers' Marketing Federation Limited (MSCCGMFL) on 'Need for Innovations in Marketing: Role of New Technologies, BIGFAB6 and Policy Reforms'. Few excerpts:

- Talking about challenges, he said that bridging gap between the farm and the aggregator was equally important to ensure there was no mixture in quality at the aggregation.
- "How can we give quality assurance when there is no framework that every single product needs to have a quality certificate. The US has a Bale Inventory System, but in India it is very far away because only 2% testing standards are there. So one of the biggest problems we see in agriculture sector is it is very unorganized."
- "I have coined a term that covers all major needs, BIGFAB6. It stands for, B for Bigdata, I for IoT, G for GIS, F for Fintech, A for AI and Machine Learning, B for Blockchain. I think these six technologies can change the world beyond our conception and this is what we are here to hear from our technology partners."
- "There are international standards but for public policy we have FAQ or non FAQ. But there are huge standards which are organic, free trade and sustainable, which are coming, in which technology has shown the way. Certification, traceability, are all coming from sudden niche areas where there is demand for traceability."



# Technology Presentations



**Pankaj Pipariya, Sales Leader, India-South Asia, The Weather Company, an IBM Business,** speaks on 'Weather Intelligence: Making Smarter Decisions in Agro Commodity Markets'

- Pipariya stressed that weather today accounted for 90% of agriculture and crop losses. So it was important for us to have a technology which is agonistic to the hardware devices.
- "We have created an IBM Watson Decision Platform for Agriculture which covers all key parameters like soil moisture and temperature, crop health, crop disease, yield prediction, and also price forecasting, besides basic fundamental weather information.



**Deepti V Dutt, Head – Strategic Initiatives Public Sector, Amazon Internet Services Pvt Ltd** speaks on 'Technology Presentation: Digital Innovation in Agriculture'

"We divide our agriculture focus into five areas: IoT which talks about connecting machinery and various devices etc used by tractor companies and farmers; Predictive Agriculture that talks about analytics that we help to advice farmers on when to sow, what to sow, pesticides etc; Traceability; Commodity Training and Gynomic sequencing."



**Anuja Shukla, Cloud Technology Partnerships Lead India, Google** speaks on Improving Market Interface with Farmers through Technology

- Talking about growing internet usage in India and how the country was witnessing a surge in data usage and internet users, **Anuja** explained how Google was working towards the mission for providing internet to every nook and corner of the country.
  - In this context, she gave an example of one such initiative named, Internet Saathi, where it taught rural women to start learning to use access the web. She further talked about Google services that gave farmers much-needed information on topics like crop planning, government schemes, apt market places as well as pest and disease control.
- "Farming as a service is a new trend that is catching on. This is basically a pillar to give access to farmers through a very simple medium which we just talked about, that is mobile. Suddenly your services, training, learning, all of this is accessible to farmers through this medium," **Anuja** added.



**Deepak Pareek, CEO, DigiAgri** shares his views on 'Farm to Fashion - Leveraging Technologies for Better Market Linkages'.

"With more awareness and clients being more demanding, we all want our health to be good. We want to eat food which has minimum pesticides and is chemical free, so sustainability is going to be the buzzword going forward if we want our farmers to get more premium on their products which they are producing," **Pareek** said.



## Fintech Led Transformation in Cotton & Agro Commodities Sector: The Present, The Future & the Role of Commodity Exchanges



Nawin Sona Natesan, Secretary to Government of Maharashtra & Managing Director, The Maharashtra State Coop Cotton Growers' Marketing Federation Ltd (MSCCGMFL) moderates the panel comprising Sunil Kumar, Senior Manager, Multi Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (MCX); Bhaskar Joshi, Research Associate, Louis Dreyfus Company Company (LDC); Himanshu Gupta, AVP, Sector Solutions, Axis Bank



"We have to understand that timely access of credit to the farmer is really important. I say that because the kharif window to the farmers across any state, whether it be for cotton or any other crop, is really short. So it is important that a farmer can have access to credit in the shortest period of time otherwise we are very well aware that a lot of times they are exploited."

**Bhaskar Joshi, Research Associate, Louis Dreyfus Company Company (LDC)**



"We are thinking to subsidize warehousing rent and logistics but as of now we have not been able to form a policy on that part but soon we will start thinking about it."

Talking about quality certificate assurance and quality assurance system in Indian context, he said, "We already have a laid down procedure for the same. We have a lab in Mumbai which is a material store in WTRA warehousing. So the quality part is more or less taken care of."

**Sunil Kumar, Senior Manager, Multi Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (MCX)**



"I think it (quality certificate assurance and quality assurance system in Indian context) is more from the perspective of a person who is actually buying, whether they are as per his requirements. So as we listed about the moisture content, staple length and others. If all these parameters are available to him online as well as he can verify that with the data available. If the actual quantity and the parameters match, the confidence level increases."

**Himanshu Gupta, AVP, Sector Solutions, Axis Bank said,**

## Special Addresses: Importance of Logistics and Supply Chain Management to Ensure Holistic Development of Commodity Spectrum



(Left to Right) Dr Yogesh Mhase, Managing Director, Maharashtra State Co-operative Marketing Federation Ltd; Sachindra Pratap Singh, Managing Director, Maharashtra State Warehousing Corporation; S C Mudgerikar, Director, Central Warehousing Corporation



"We have to think from farm to fabric that what sort of logistics go into that. Logistic cost is very high in India. So there is an urgent need to address this issue. We have to bring down the logistic cost to below 10%. Even the government's agenda is to double the farmers' income by 2022. So this is going to be a major step." **S C Mudgerikar, Director, Central Warehousing Corporation**

"We are also working on reducing the wastage during the storage and transportation, avoid distressal for the producers, avoid inflationary prices for the consumers, reduce asymmetry in demand and supply. This requires improvement in the marketing infrastructure so that we are able to provide good service to the farmers and to the consumers," added **Mudgerikar**.





“These days we have been talking about the private sector getting into the procurement and supply chain logistics, but I am very proud to share with you all that when there was nobody in the market to help the farmers, the cooperative sector and its federal society came to the rescue.

Procurement started then in 1960. In last five years, we did record breaking procurement of various pulses and soybean.”

***Sachindra Pratap Singh, Managing Director, Maharashtra State Warehousing Corporation***



## Audience glued to insightful sessions at the Marketing Innovation Summit





## Panel Discussion: Best Practices of Commodity Marketing Across India



"We have a project which is working to support incomes from non-farm livelihoods and to strengthen the food production system. This project is going on with the support of the World Bank, by the Uttarakhand government. Under the project, a lot of work has been done on Himalayan produce."

**Nitin Bhadauria, District Magistrate, Almora, Uttarakhand**



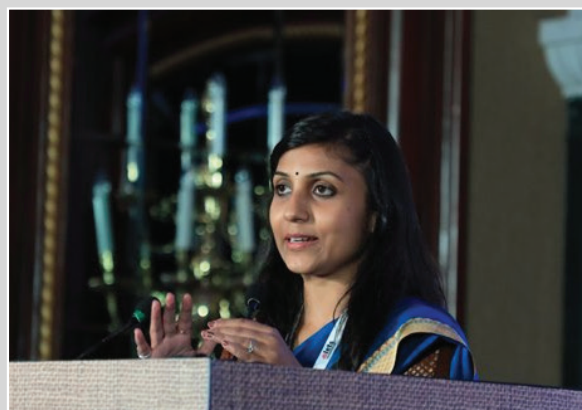
"I believe marketing starts from farmer's field, from the sowing itself. If he grows a quality crop by using quality seed, fertilizers and proper inputs, he gets a good quality crop and can fix more price in the market. In this context, the Telangana government has taken the initiative. Every farmer gets Rs 6000 per acre, so that he can utilise that amount for purchasing inputs without depending upon money lenders. So now, farmers are doing it. We have taken initiatives in marketing front also. For direct marketing, we have established 'right to bazaars'. It is a farmers' consumer market. It is a direct link between farmers and consumers."

**G Lakshmi Bai, Director, Telangana State Agricultural Marketing Board**



"We have a very limited agriculture produce. I think the policy for hill areas should be separate from pan India. That's what I believe, because the topography is different, transportation problem is there and all the hill areas are vulnerable from the natural calamity point of view. These are big hurdles for us."

**H K Sharma, Secretary, Cooperative Department, Government of Sikkim**



"We are trying to look at integrated value management system starting from production to procession, branding, packaging and marketing in the same platform. We are trying to give farmers all of these at one place. So these are some of the mechanisation interventions. We have marketing related issues as well as some interventions. In our district we still don't have eNAM(e-National Agriculture Market), which has been a game changer for Haridwar district. So we are trying in integrating our district also with the e-National Agriculture Market."

**Swati Bhadauria, District Magistrate, Chamoli, Uttarakhand**

## Panel Discussion: Challenges & Opportunities in Marketing of Cotton



Nawin Sona Natesan, Secretary to Government of Maharashtra & Managing Director, The Maharashtra State Coop Cotton Growers' Marketing Federation Ltd (MSCCGMF) moderates the panel comprising of P D Patodia, Chairman & Managing Director, Prime Urban Development India Limited; Jagdish Kulkarni, Manager-Sales & Product Support, Uster Technologies (India) Marketing Limited; Jasmer Dhingra, Program Manager, IDH; Manish Daga, Managing Director, CottonGuru



"Maharashtra as a whole is having the highest land (acres) in cotton but on the other side the yield is more or less, lowest one. If more steps are taken it can be improved a lot. As far as the industry is concerned, if you get right quality cotton, have good productivity, cost is also low and therefore the position of our country in the cotton sector can be much improved."

**P D Patodia, Chairman & Managing Director, Prime Urban Development India Limited**





Stressing on the need of technology for the betterment of agriculture department, he said, "Wherever the farmers have been provided knowledge or techniques of producing cotton, the yield has improved. As far as farmers are concerned, they require more as we are now looking to take care of more and more areas, especially in Maharashtra, for farmers' development," Patodia added.



"When I was invited here to be a part of the panel and post some questions to my fellow panelists here, it was very clear, because I represent a sustainable trade initiative, IDH, and the report you have heard so much of, the entire message for us was not only talk about marketing, position branding of cotton, but also how to make the value chain inclusive more than it has been already. So when we say inclusive, it means it starts at the farmers, it ends at the textile supply chain and farmers are a part of the chain."

**Jasmer Dhingra, Program Manager, IDH**



"We have to sow the seeds of success. Unless we sow the seeds at the right time, at the right opportunity, we will not see the results. What we are seeing right now is a disconnect between the stakeholders. The textile industry does not consider farmers or even ginning industry as part of the supply chain. The farmers have no connection with the buyers. So if this is going to continue, there is no way the industry and the farmer will earn anything out of this."

**Manish Daga, Managing Director, CottonGuru**

## Valedictory Session: Maharashtra Showing Way in Cotton & Agro Commodities Marketing with Innovation & Technology







Nawin Sona Natesan, Secretary to Government of Maharashtra & Managing Director, The Maharashtra State Coop Cotton Growers' Marketing Federation Ltd (MSCCGMFL) stressed on the need of e-market for cotton adding that the government was constantly trying to make global cotton market reach the farmer.

"Indian cotton gets discounted at the global stage because of trash and contamination. So it is a sub-standard trade practice. We are not able to assure quality of cotton because of production is uneven and also there is a mixture at every stage, starting with aggregation and ginning," he said.



"I must congratulate our Chief Minister who has taken such a lead and made two things personified. One thing is innovation, another thing is technology. Innovation and technology are forerunners of progress and your government has proved that. Therefore I find this event very relevant as it has your presence."

**Suresh Kotak, Chairman, Kotak Group of Companies**



Talking about India-China business relations, Tang Guocai, Hon'ble Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Mumbai, shared how the two countries were closely related to each other informing that China was India's biggest trading partner in recent years with more and more Chinese enterprises investing in India.

"Last year, our total buy of cotton from India is close to USD 2 billion and our import from India for the agriculture products has increased by 8.5%. India is the most important supplier of cotton for China," Tang shared.



Talking about India-Bangladesh ties, Md Lutfor Rahman, Hon'ble Deputy High Commissioner, Bangladesh Deputy High Commission, said, "The major imports from India to Bangladesh constitute of cotton of course, textile yarn and fabrics, which constitute almost USD 1.7 billion, other than chemicals and raw accessories for the garment industry of Bangladesh."



"Today Maharashtra farmers are mainly facing problem of the production and low yield. The lowest yield in India is in Maharashtra. For that, recently, our association has decided to start a Cotton Farmer Training School. For that, we have allocated two big offices in our Cotton Exchange Building, in Mumbai. Also, for this farmer training school we have sanctioned a budget of Rs 125 lakh."

**Atul S Ganatra, President, Cotton Association of India**



Dignitaries during the validictory session at the event.



# smart - cotton

Where quality is not an accident



The event saw the launch of special issue of eGov, India's first magazine on innovation for governance.

The issue talked about innovations in marketing of cotton and other agro products.



Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister of Maharashtra; Ram Shinde, Minister for Marketing & Textiles, Government of Maharashtra; Anoop Kumar, Principal Secretary, Marketing, Animal Husbandry Dairy Development & Fisheries, Government of Maharashtra; Nawin Sona Natesan, Secretary to Government of Maharashtra & Managing Director, The Maharashtra State Coop Cotton Growers' Marketing Federation Ltd (MSCCGMFL) and other dignitaries launch 'Smart Cotton' logo at the event.



## Event Publicity on Social Media





# Some more moments...



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