

iTEAMS: BRIDGING FARM TO FORK DURING COVID-19

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The world is suffering due to global pandemic Covid-19. As the disease first appeared in the Wuhan city of China, which took millions of life globally. To spread the disease and further, more death, the lockdown of many nations has been done. The lockdown means restriction in moving of people and goods with an exception in essential produce. However, this restriction in moving brought difficulty in the food supply chain. As the people need foodstuff at their doorstep, food supply is restricted, so what options remain with the citizen? Yes, the only option remain is home delivery of food items by the central and state government. For that systematic delivery, a mechanism is needed. Fortunate that the Agriculture Department, Government of Meghalaya worked on that much before the Covid-19. The iTEAMS (Integrated Technology Enabled Agricultural System) which is playing a noble role to deliver the foodstuff to the doorstep of people living in hilly terrain region. The iTEAMS launched a toll-free number 1917 through which they connected with different stakeholders for agricultural operations.

How iTEAMS Bridging Farm to Fork during Covid-19

The World Health Organization (2020) has announced that the Covid-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) it's a global pandemic due to widespread of the disease in the world. The disease first appeared in Wuhan city of China. It claims millions of lives and breakdown of the economy. The biggest threat faced by the people in India due to lockdown as India is the 2nd populous and underdeveloped country. In this situation, food supply to ensure no one asleep empty stomach is the biggest challenge for the central/state government. However, the Meghalaya, a small state with undulating topography set up a model for the entire nation through the agri-innovation supply mechanism. iTEAMS is an innovation stand for the Integrated Technology Enabled Agri-Management System which ensures the supply of



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WHAT 1917iTEAMS DOES

1. Gives Advisories on growing crops & rearing livestock
2. Provides Agri Response Vehicles (ARVs) for transportation of goods.
3. Connect the Sellers and Buyers

WHAT 1917iTEAMS DOES NOT DO

1. Participate in Seller-Buyer Negotiations on Price, Quality and Quantity
2. Determine pickup and drop schedule with seller or buyer
3. Take responsibility for any loss, theft or damage to goods during transportation.
4. Packaging, Loading and Unloading is the responsibility of the party booking the Vehicle.

* In the current situation and because of shortage of ARVs, 1917iTEAMS may cancel booked services but will try to arrange commercial vehicles outside the system to meet the demand.

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locally produced agricultural foodstuff to the doorstep of consumers. The innovation released a toll-free number 1917 where buyers or sellers can register their-self to take benefits of iTEAMS.

Photo Source: Department of Agriculture, Government of Meghalaya

The iTEAMS operate in three features

- **Agri-Response Vehicle:** the lockdown was imposed just before harvesting of crops which have a great impact on the selling of crops. The iTEAMS Agri Response Vehicle component played a rescue entity for the farmers. The vehicle needs to be booked advance by calling to 1917 for the transportation of goods to the local market. However, during this global pandemic, the vehicle is not only transporting goods to the local market but also the doorstep of the consumer. The agricultural goods collected from the remote hilly areas directly from the producer farmer and providing vital links to the cities, towns, and markets. The transportation of goods includes banana, colocasia, peas, pumpkins, cabbage, cauliflower, brinjal, etc.

The vehicle also used for essential supplies of essential items such as milk as well as the Public Distribution System and Anganwadi materials such as Gram, Pulses, Rice, Sugar, Edible oil, Salts, etc.



Photo Source: Agri-Response Team

- **e-Marketing:** getting a good market and profitable price for the agricultural produce of the farmer is challenging. This challenges shortened by iTEAMS successfully by providing linkage between the buyer and sellers. The buyer and seller need to register for getting the advantages.
- **Agri-Advisory Services:** after registration, the stakeholders can access the Advisory-Services from the concerned department of Agriculture and all allied fields. The advisory services include plant protection, soil fertility, diseases, animal rearing, market intelligence, pricing, skill development programmes, subsidies, etc.

Conclusion

Covid-19 hampering globally in terms of economy, food supply, and loss of lives, jobs, etc. However, some of the government sectors such as banking, agriculture & allied, health, and defence personnel are working hard to minimize the loss at greater extend. Ensuring delivery of money, foodstuff, transporting migrants, side by side testing positive cases, supplying of protection kits for health workers, etc. In line with the delivery of foodstuff and linking farmers to market, the Integrated Technology Enabled Agri Management System is effectively bridging the gap between farm to fork. Nevertheless, this

is the battle to save humanity; therefore, we all the stakeholder should come forward and do their best.

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