

Myths and Misconceptions About Indian Agriculture and Factual Reality

Centre for Environment & Agriculture



“Our biggest weakness is not realizing / utilizing the strength of Indian agriculture. India's agri-input industry (seeds, fertilizers and pesticides) have played a significant role in making India a global leader in the field of agriculture.”

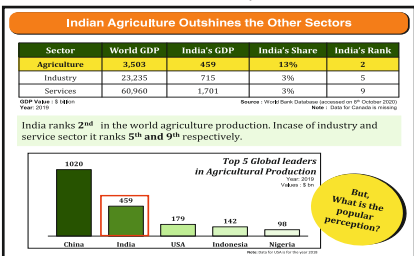
- Rajju Shroff
Chairman
Centre for Environment & Agriculture

What rank does India hold in the world population? Second. Even those with primary school education would give this right answer without a falter. Ask, instead, what rank does India hold in the world agricultural production? Even the most educated would fumble and fail to give the right answer. India ranks second in the world agricultural production too. However, this fact is unknown to many people.

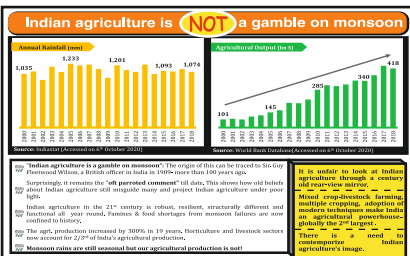
A myriad of misinformation and disinformation has relegated the Indian agriculture to a dark corner. No other sector remains as misrepresented and misunderstood as the Indian agriculture sector. Foreign funded environmental NGOs have played a malicious role in creating and sustaining most of the myths and misconceptions about Indian agriculture. Dispelling the deep-rooted myths and misconceptions about Indian agriculture and bringing to the fore the sunny side of Indian agriculture is the need of the hour. This data driven advocacy fact sheet addresses that long felt need.

Popular misconceptions about Indian Agriculture:

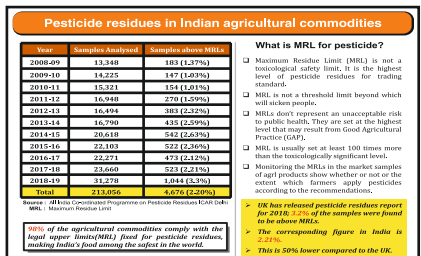
1 Indian agricultural sector is not as advanced as the other two sectors in the economy. **WRONG**



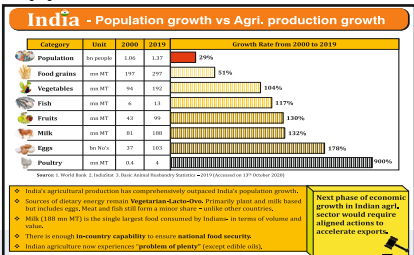
5 Indian agriculture is a gamble on monsoon. **WRONG**



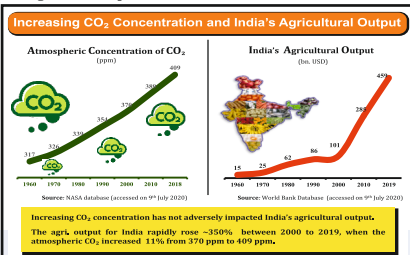
9 Indian agricultural commodities are heavily contaminated with pesticide residues. **WRONG**



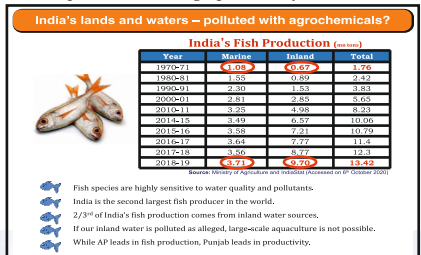
2 Indian agriculture is unable to feed the increasing population. **WRONG**



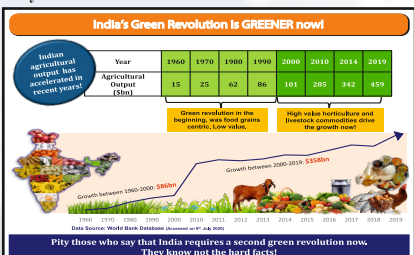
6 Increasing CO₂ in the atmosphere has adversely affected agricultural production in India. **WRONG**



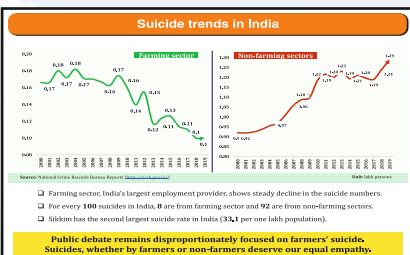
10 Indian rivers and inland water systems are polluted with pesticides affecting aquatic life systems. **WRONG**



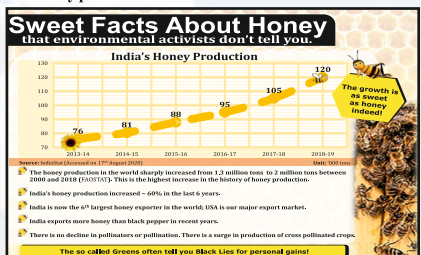
3 Indian agriculture's growth has declined in recent years. We need a second Green Revolution. **WRONG**



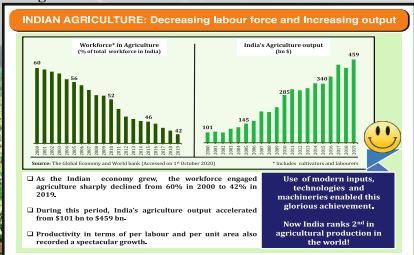
7 Farmers' suicides are rampant and on the increase in India. **WRONG**



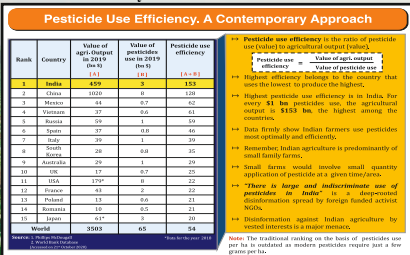
11 Pesticides use has adversely impacted honeybees and honey production in India. **WRONG**



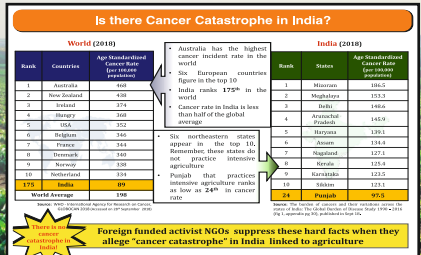
4 Nearly 60% of Indian labour force is engaged in agriculture. **WRONG**



8 Indian farmers use pesticides excessively and indiscriminately. **WRONG**



12 There is cancer catastrophe in India. **WRONG**



There are several such jaw dropping examples concerning Indian agriculture. However, they remain little known.

What does USDA say about India's Agricultural Policies?

Since the 1980s, Indian agriculture has undergone a shift in production as farmers have planted less area to food grains and more to high-value crops. This shift coincides with strong economic growth, which has boosted incomes and, in turn, expanded consumer demand for higher valued foods, such as vegetables, fruits, milk, and some meat products.

Yet, India's agricultural policies continue to follow a Green Revolution strategy developed to achieve grain self-sufficiency in the 1960s.

India's Agricultural Growth Propellers an analysis by
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Economic Research Service - April 04, 2016

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E : info@centegro.org | W : indianagriculturalfacts.com