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Schemes fail to boost food processing in Mahakoshal

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Ongoing developments in self-employment and entrepreneurship areas in different sectors are showing encouraging response and developments across the country. Surprisingly, in Mahakoshal region, in the Food Processing Industry sector, MSME investment ratio is very low. Yet, programmes failed to initiate opportunities in food processing industries and enterprise in the attention of rural masses failing to perform as desired.

There are schemes encouraged by the Ministry of Food Processing Industry, MSME Department, Agriculture Development and Farmers Welfare Department, National Agriculture Bank of Rural Development and nearly all the banks are providing banks and special waive off on agriculture loans as per policy of State Government. To enhance investment in Food Processing Industry sector, the Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture Industries has declared a scheme giving benefits like subsidies, technical assistance and now, new provision of providing facilities and counselling to run industry and its market linkage also provisioned. Jawaharlal Nehru Agriculture University, Vice Chancellor, Professor Pradeep Kumar Bisen opined that in Madhya Pradesh, where majority of farmers are small and marginal, the Mahakoshal region has huge potential and opportunities for investment. But surprisingly, in this region, which has ample resources and opportunities for investment, it is out of investors' plan.

He said, another major challenge is declining interest of younger generation in farming. The farmer's families are shifting to cities. It is due to less margin profit in small or marginal farmers. He added that to overcome the ongoing crisis, a whole new system in farming should be adopted, relating it to the market for profitability.

MCCI Vice President, Rajesh Chandok said that another major challenge for the new MSME in Food Processing sector is market linkage and education about products analysis, quality assurance and safety standards.

In order to enhance new investment in farming, development of resources and reliable market linkage are foremost needs. In Mahakoshal, the proposed schemes of Food Park or Food Processing Cluster funded by different departments are being kept in cold storage like proposed Food Park in Seoni and another is Sweet and Namkin Manufacturing Cluster.

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