

Press- Release

India – Netherlands Session on “Scaling up the Strategic Relationship in Agriculture, Dairy & Animal Husbandry Sectors” 19 January 2021: 1500-1700 hrs: Digital Platform

CII and Embassy of the Kingdom of The Netherlands celebrated the results of their AgTech partnership and announced the Joint Working Group of Agri Businesses between India and The Netherlands comprising of industry participation from both countries

India has a huge Agro based economy offering diverse opportunity for the private sector across the value chain. Netherlands is the second largest exporter of agricultural products in the world and has earned a distinctive position for itself based on production advantage, technologically advanced value addition and excellent agri logistics support. Indo - Dutch collaboration and expertise can help develop tailor made solutions for Indian farmers and industry. The Indo Dutch centres of excellence now being set up in India will provide opportunity to further strengthen private sector engagement in agriculture, horticulture, and dairy in the coming time.

A session on Scaling up the Strategic Relationship in Agriculture, Dairy & Animal Husbandry Sectors” was organized by Confederation of Indian Industry and the Embassy , Kingdom of Netherlands Session .

H E Mr Marten van den Berg, Ambassador, Embassy of the Kingdom of The Netherlands said “The bilateral agreement between India and Netherland focuses on sharing farming technologies with farmers, supporting effective implementation while renewing collaborations to improve business. India is a powerhouse of agriculture providing immense scope for Indo-Dutch collaboration in horticulture, dairy and post-harvest technologies. In addition, please be informed that a virtual trade mission to India led by Mrs. Sigrid Kaag, Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation will take place from February 08-12. One of the key themes of the mission is food losses and processing. Do join the mission, to meet and interact with the Dutch experts as well as find new opportunities of collaborations in the field of food, energy and water as well as our new agricultural counsellor, Mr. Michiel van Erkel ”

Dr Alka Bhargava, Additional Secretary, Dept of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, India said “ With an increased focus on reducing food loss, enhancing productivity , sustainable use of natural resources , both countries can focus on climate resilient high yielding varieties, technologies for water conservation and nutrition contributing towards the development of the agri sector”

To further add, **Ms Evelyn Geurtsen, Director-International Agribusiness, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, The Netherlands** said “ As The world is going through economic uncertainties, climate change, soil depletion, we need to see how will we feed 10 billion people by 2050. We need to create a secure future of food supply in sustainable way, this requires innovation and international co-operation. The private sector has an important role to play in solving challenges of food waste and food loss.”

Mr Atul Mehra, Chairman, Tasty Dairy Specialities Ltd mentioned that “Booming retail & food processing sector offers a huge opportunity for technological collaboration in post-harvest

management, primary & advance processing and packaging leading to enhanced farmer's income. The Joint working group on Indo-Dutch industry participants would focus on promoting business collaboration through technology research and capacity building activities”

Ms. Willemien van Asselt, Director International Strategy of the Topsector Agriculture & Food (public-private cooperation platform in the Netherlands) highlighted the outcomes of the first ever innovation mission to India on the topic of climate smart agriculture in September 2019, including 11 R&D proposals, 28 research collaboration proposals, and the launch of white papers on digital agriculture and robotics. She also looked ahead; with India being selected as focus country for bilateral innovation cooperation by the Netherlands, an Indo-Dutch agtech platform being established, and more innovation missions coming to India on the topics of climate smart agriculture and antimicrobial resistance.

Additionally, two bilateral agreements were announced between India and The Netherlands businesses.

One is the bilateral and joint research collaboration on using geospatial technology and methods for agricultural applications, collaborations in implementation of development projects in domain of climate smart agriculture, crop monitoring and disaster management. The second collaboration Agreement - Biomass India was focussed on the development of a paddy straw processing hub in Haryana and the subsequent development of additional processing hubs.

The panel discussion focused on discussions around the need to focus on feeding people in the future in sustainable and safe way through investing in nutrition, artificial intelligence and digital as pathways to move forward.

The session was attended by government and food industry professionals from India and Netherlands, Agriculture, food processing and professionals from academia amongst others.