

# Sustained Government Initiatives made India a Global Leader in Micro Irrigation

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## Abstract

Indian green revolution in early seventies of the last century made India not only a self sufficient nation in food grains but also enabled it to export to other countries. But soon after realization started that in the interest of maximizing food grain production we have over stressed our natural resources of soil and water. This opened up a new thought process of sustainability of use of natural resources. Increase in efficiency of utilization of natural resources became the favourite topic for researchers, policy makers and other stake holders in early eighties. Diversification of agriculture particularly encouragement to increasing horticultural production to meet the nutritional requirements of the largely vegetarian population in the country came to the focus of the policy makers. Government of India through its different initiatives supported by appropriate need based dynamic policies for promoting horticulture in general and micro irrigation in particular resulted in quantum jump in horticulture production, surpassing the food grain production in the country, during the last year. Government of India followed a multi-pronged strategy for promotion of micro irrigation in the country. It included policy guidelines, offsetting its high initial cost partly by Government funding, developing research base and encouraging industry for production of quality micro irrigation equipments locally. The real cause of success was the dynamism in Government policies to match the need of the time for promoting water saving strategies and simultaneously enhancing production of fruits and vegetables through National Horticulture Mission, Horticulture Board and Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture. The article presents a detailed firsthand account of the progress of micro irrigation in the country from its inception to the point of India becoming the country with the largest micro irrigated area in the world.

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## Biography

T B S Rajput is an Emeritus Scientist at Water Technology Centre, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, India. He has over forty years of experience of research and post graduate teaching in the field of Soil and Water Conservation Engineering.

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