

India's public spending on agriculture R&D not far behind China: Niti Aayog member

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Ramesh Chand, a Niti Aayog member, also expressed concern that private sector is investing in other places than in India's agriculture Research and Development (R&D) and this need to be changed.

NEW DELHI: India's public spending on agriculture research and development is not far behind neighbouring China, Niti Aayog member Ramesh Chand said Tuesday.

He however expressed concern that private sector is investing in other places than in India's agriculture Research and Development (R&D) and this need to be changed.

Chand said the food demand is set to rise with increase in population and the technology innovation will be a key driver to achieve the desired production.

He was participating in a panel discussion on the report 'Fixing Asia's Food System' commissioned by [Cargill India](#).

"The report says that India's public spending is 0.40 per cent of farm GDP on agri R&D whereas Brazil spends much more. But public spending on agri R&D is still not that bad here. We are not far behind China," he said.

Private investment in agri R&D is not much in India. However of late in China, private investment in farm research is on the rise. It is rising rapidly as compared to the public funding in China, he said.

"Globally, more intellectual property rights in farm technologies are being created by private sector. So, I do not say private sector is avoiding investment in agriculture," Chand said.

Emphasising the need to use technology in a more balanced way, Chand said technology used in the [Green Revolution](#) period had some adverse effects as it promoted use of fertilisers and pesticides. However, any shift from this would be a "dangerous trend" for the country.

He also talked about creating awareness on nutritious foods and absence of science in food manufacturing in the country.

Talking about food wastage, [Walmart](#) India CEO And President [Krish Iyer](#) said it is a serious problem and needs to be curbed given constrains of natural resources to grow food to meet the needs of the rising population.

Iyer enumerated four steps that retailers could take to check food wastage at supplier and retail levels -- upgradation of inventory system, partnering with farmers and supply chain, modification/elimination of some standard store operation and consumer awareness.

[Nestle](#) NSE 2.79 % India Managing Director and Chairman [Suresh Narayanan](#) said the challenge in the country is not only about quality nutrition but also about awareness on what constitutes good nutrition and healthy habits.

Food safety regulator [FSSAI](#)'s chief management services officer [Madhavi Das](#) and [Cargill](#) India Chairman [Siraj Chaudhry](#) were also present at the event.