

“The challenge is to develop technology for local produce”



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Views on Vision 2015...

The Ministry of Food Processing Industries' Vision 2015 document is an ambitious, well-thought-out document, with the potential to infuse growth in this sector. In view of that, the government can look at creating nodal agencies for each primary sector, with planned budget outlay for development of infrastructure, technology and skilled manpower. The industry should imbibe new technology and invest in R&D, which can be in collaboration with institutes or independently. We also have to invest in educational institutes, which can create the skilled manpower needed for promoting innovative technology and R&D.

Status of food processing machinery industry...

Food processing machinery industry has seen a major change in the past few years with the advent of better technologies. However, most of these machines are developed in foreign countries, where the products processed are different and hence, need local adaptation, which sometimes is not easy. Therefore, the challenge is to develop and adapt technology for the local produce.

Growth drivers...

With growing urban population and availability of higher per capita disposable incomes, each sector within the food processing industry will witness a sound growth. However, the growth in the fruit processing, beverage and value-added dairy products will be tremendous not only

due to increasing demand, but also due to increasing health-consciousness. India is also one of the world's largest food producers with a vast untapped agricultural land and produce. All these factors make India a prime location for global machinery manufacturing hub in the coming years.

Competitiveness of the Indian machinery manufacturers

Indian food machinery manufacturers are competitive in the global arena for low-key fabrication or simple machinery. However, the technology used is almost outdated. The global market has machinery with high end technology, automatic controls and high capacity for processing, which not only reduces spoilage of produce and processing cost, but also provides better quality products. Some companies (including HRS) are making headway into high technology processing by indigenising global technology. Food being a perishable commodity, the emerging technology is focussed on processing quickly and packaging efficiently to reduce contamination.

Growth prospects...

Food processing machinery has bright prospects in the coming years. This being attributable to all positives for a growing economy, viz, changing consumer tastes & preferences, higher population with more disposable income, investment in agriculture & better post-harvest technology, infrastructure like roads, cold chains, higher quantity of quality produce available for processing, contract farming, etc.