

Horticulture Special Issue

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# Agricultural Spectrum

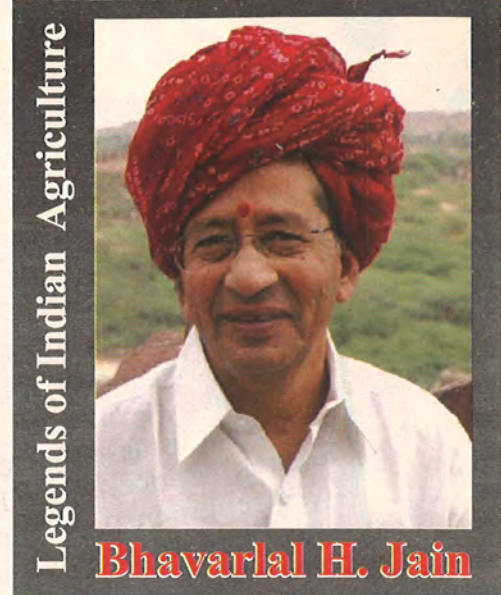


## Indian Horticulture

*India with more than 68 million tonnes of fruits and 130 million tonnes of vegetables is the second largest producer of horticultural crops in the world, next only to China. It has witnessed a phenomenal surge in recent years, owing to hi-tech interventions, improved R&D, quality seeds, post-harvest management, back-end support and apt government policies.....*

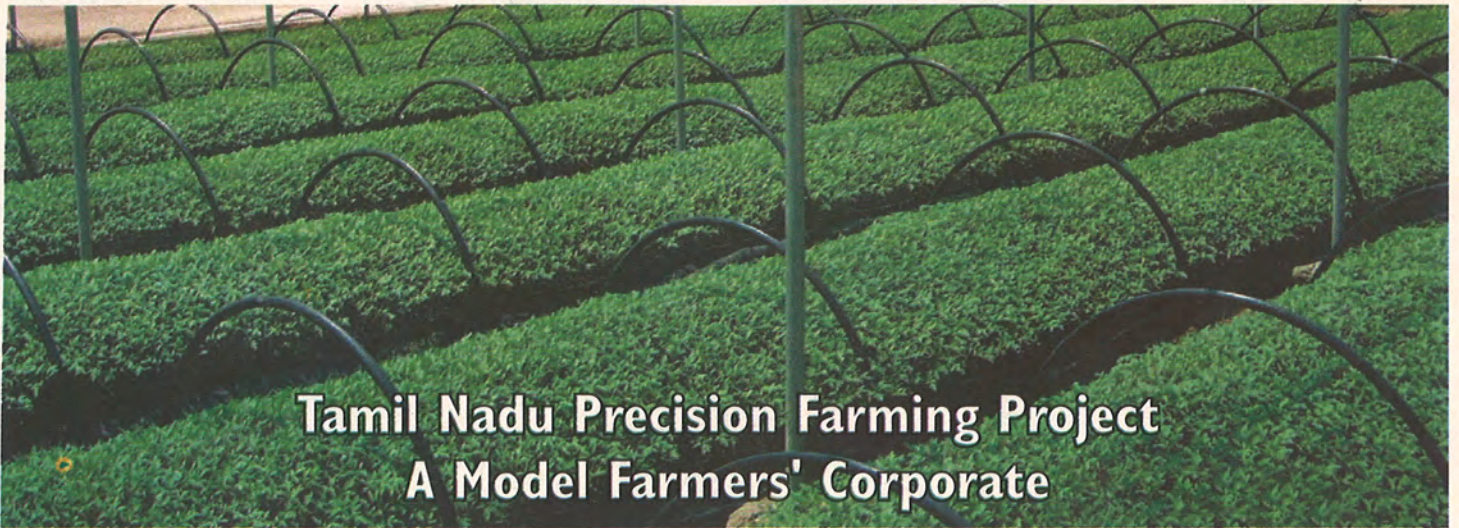


# Mechanising Indian Horticulture



Legends of Indian Agriculture

**Bhavarlal H. Jain**



## Tamil Nadu Precision Farming Project A Model Farmers' Corporate

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## Legends of Indian Agriculture

# 'The Agriculturist who introduced Contract Farming and Micro Irrigation...!'



**Bhavarlal H. Jain**

In a tiny hamlet at the foothills of Ajanta Caves was born a legend. His name is Mr. Bhavarlal Jain. He is the son of an illiterate mother and a partially literate father. But, he studied B.Com, LL.B, and was a gazette officer in the State Civil Service.

Mr. Jain's career began in the early 60s by selling farm inputs like crude oil, fertilizers, pesticides, seeds, tractors, and others. His strong wish to get firsthand experience in agriculture got him back to his native place to carry out various farm activities. This started the making of a man who remained committed to 'farm, farming, and farmer.'

### Pioneer of Contract Farming

In 1978, Mr. Bhavarlal Jain bought a sick 'Banana Powder Factory' and modified it for processing papaya latex into Papain.

He introduced 'contract farming' when it was not much in vogue and motivated over 2,500 small farmers to cultivate papaya, guaranteeing them minimum support price for their papaya latex. He became 'the first exporter of highly refined papain' to advanced nations earning valuable foreign exchange. The trait continues.

Today, he has extended the benefits of contract farming directly to a vast number of onion, banana, and mango growers across many states. He now buys back their produce at the ruling market price or the guaranteed price, whichever is higher. Exports of his world-class processed fruits and vegetables have reached five continents.

### The Founder of Micro Irrigation Industry

Since 1980, Mr Jain encouraged the use of cost-effective, innovative, long-life and easy-to-handle PVC piping to replace conventional short length wasteful cement pipes - an idea which did herald a revolution in farm irrigation, benefitting millions of farmers. His success in PVC pipes witnessed the setting up of over 150 small scale units across the country.

However, PVC piping avoided only conveyance losses from the well to the field boundary. The distribution/irrigation losses continued. The pathfinder, Mr. Jain, studied micro-irrigation technology, MIT, which promised not only to conserve water at every stage, but also to enhance farm productivity. However, it meant treading the path where many had failed. To win a tradition-bound farmer from age-old practice of furrow irrigation and get him to pledge his land for acquisition of hitherto unknown

technology was both a herculean task and a challenge to his creative faculties. Mr. Jain decided to march ahead with an 'integrated approach'.

He not only sold a complete range of quality hardware, but also provided pre- and post-sale package of required services: farm survey, soil and water analysis, preparation of system design, irrigation and fertigation scheduling, agronomic and engineering maintenance support, provision of trained operators, etc. From concept to commissioning, a tailor-made system was installed and tested on turnkey basis. This was a completely scientific approach adapted to ground realities.

During the process of promotion, propagation, and perfection of MIT, and in pursuit of its integrated delivery, Mr Jain pioneered a micro irrigation industry where none existed.

### His Unique Contributions

Mr. Bhavarlal Jain created two inspiring institutions of enduring value to the agricultural community:

- R&D and Demo Farm, sprawled in 1000 acres - It harbours a developed working watershed model, which has transformed barren rainfed hilly wasteland into over 150,000 horticultural and agro-forestry tree-cover with spectacular growth of flora and fauna in four years. Mr. Jain supervises this farm personally. This farm researches and demonstrates cost effective measures for Wasteland Development, Soil and Water Conservation, Green Houses, Fertigation, and adoption of Bio-Pesticides and Bio-fertilisers for

effective Farm Management and higher productivity for Agricultural, Horticultural, and Forestry crops.

- Hi-Tech Agri Training Centre - It educates and refreshes farmers, MI system operators, dealers, distributors, agricultural research scientists, students, academicians, and government extension staff as well as policy makers including administrators and politicians. It has become a pilgrimage place for the farming community from almost every state of the country.

Every year, over 20,000 visitors get inspired through events like farmer melas, award ceremonies, crop symposia, and workshops organized in these facilities, which serve the cause of Hi-Tech Agriculture and stand as lasting symbols of Mr Jain's vision, creativity, and indomitable devotion.

His trend-setting work has reached the nook and corner of India, covering over 1.2 million acres, benefitting about half a million small farm holders, irrigating 45 crops, and putting to use water-logged, saline soils and sloping, denuded forest and undulating lands. Mr Jain, thus, not only revolutionized the irrigation method, but also enhanced agricultural yields on a sustainable basis by improving land and water usage and efficiency. The achievement has been duly recognised even by Irrigation Association, IA, USA.

He has greatly contributed in improving the standard of living of small farmers by empowering them to be self-reliant through supply of high yielding planting materials, providing agronomic support, assisting in adopting hi-tech agri practices, buying back their produce at prices profitable to them, and sharing experiences of research and development in agriculture.

His expedition continues in areas like application of Bio-Technology for micro propagation (tissue-culture), introduction of new varieties of Banana and Onion, and preparation of vermicompost, bio-

fertilisers, organic manure, bio-pesticides in the service of Organic Farming.

He offers 'total solution' from Wasteland Reclamation to Watershed Development and sustainable hi-tech precision farming - an honest striving to enhance GNP by helping advance the second green revolution.

He centered all his activities in predominantly agricultural and industrially backward sleepy town like Jalgaon. It falls in the rain shadow region of Western Ghats in the Deccan plateau. All the focused activities that Mr. Jain has promoted are impacted with high social content. They are in harmony with national priorities: Agriculture, Food

Irrigation Industrial Houses around the world, honoured Mr. Jain with the international Crawford Reid Memorial Award, in 1997, 'in recognition of his significant achievements in promoting proper irrigation techniques and in fostering major advancements in the industry, outside the United States'. He is the first Indian and the second Asian to have received this award in the past 20 years.

Other personal National Awards include FIE Foundation Award 'for Innovation in Agriculture & Management' and IIIIE's Hon. Membership for 'Professional Achievement and Eminence Recognised Nationally'.

### Agriculturist with an Admirable Social Conscience

Keenly aware of his social responsibilities, Mr. Jain is heading many public charitable trusts, which are engaged in Medical, Educational, Cultural, and Social fields. His craving for diversified social canvas and commitment had led him to adore prominent public positions as member of Electronics for Social and Rural Development (GoI),

Development Panel for Plastic Processing Industry (GoI), National committee on Use of Plastics in Agriculture (GoI), and Second Water Commission (GoM).

This earnest person symbolizes an intensely Indian character. His life is driven more by ideology. His reach extends far beyond creation of physical assets. He is a passionate reader and vivid thinker. Commitment to rural upliftment through meaningful assistance is a part of his daily life. Three words characterize his life: land, library, and laboratory. Achieving symbiosis between material development and promotion of environment is an ever-continuing passion for him. In so little a time, he has accomplished so much. If you want to know him and feel his passion for things, see his work. His stated Mission is: "Leave this world better than you found it."



processing, Export promotion, Resource conservation, and Environment improvement.

The man is as tall as his purpose. Mr. Jain's purpose is to earn a 'pride of place' for Indian Agriculture by augmenting yields and adding value. His purpose is to improve productivity and conserve resources with the help of technology. He is lovingly called 'Bhoomi Putra' - Son of the Soil.

### Honours & Awards

He got the DSIR award for 'R&D efforts in Technology absorptions' and for 'R&D efforts in Agro-Industries Sector, AIPUB's NALLA VAZHAI AWARD for 'Outstanding contribution in popularizing Drip and Fertigation in Banana Tissue Culture Plants', and CFBP's Jammalal Bajaj 'Fair Business Practices' award.

The Irrigation Association of USA, the prestigious Association of over 7000