

## **COVID-19 in India**

March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Here in India though the number of cases [of COVID-19] as of now seems to be under control which I hope to be the case for the future as otherwise with such a huge population of 1.3 billion people things can get frightening.

There is a nationwide lockdown till April 14. We are able to deliver milk which comes under essential commodities but unfortunately the agri-inputs centres that we operate to serve farmers with critical inputs such as seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, etc. are closed and not allowed to remain open.

This is the sowing season for 2 crops at our place - maize and sugarcane for which farmer needs inputs right away plus wheat is a standing crop though ready to be harvested in few weeks but at this stage it gets insect attack for which inputs are needed at right time without any delay. This is a tough time for farmers too as they just don't know how to get access to these inputs. I am in talks with our District Magistrate on this issue and I hope they come out with solution soon as any delay can lead to losses for farmers.

Hope all goes well but we have to be equally concerned about farmers and ensure that food production does not suffer.

UPDATE as of March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020: As regards Agri-inputs retail, the Government of India gave permission to these businesses to operate from 7.00 a.m. to 10.00 a.m. This is a positive step taken and I am glad that our District Magistrate was cooperative enough to understand my concerns and inform us of the decision quickly. We are informing farmers and they are now feeling much better.

Nikki Chaudhary, Chaudhary Farms