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Title: Need to extend Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme to small and marginal farmers including dairy farmers-laid.

SHRI P.T. THOMAS (IDUKKI): In order to achieve the desired goal, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act should be extended to small and marginal farmers including dairy farmers. Apart from creating new employment, the Government is required to facilitate productive and sustainable livelihoods based on natural resources. More than 7 crore dairy farmers of our country will get a boost if the Government takes initiatives to bring them under the purview of Employment Guarantee Scheme. The government needs to consider those farmers who produce more than 5 litres of milk per day as NREGA employees and provide them minimum guaranteed wages. This may help a lot of dairy farmers to stick to their profession and contribute to the self-sufficiency in the sector. Even though the total production of milk in our country has substantially increased over the years, India's share is less than that of the world's average in per capita availability of milk. I, therefore, request the Government to take necessary steps to consider Dairy farmers as MGNREGA employees.