SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In Andhra Pradesh, agriculture has been a small farmer’s activity all along as the rearing of silkworm is highly labour intensive and requires a quality labour input which only family labour can afford. The state of Andhra Pradesh, and more specially the district of Rayalaseema mainly Anantapur is drought prone and continued drought this resulted in uprooting of mulberry. The scarcity of irrigation also acts as a constraint for expanding area under mulberry.

To make mulberry cultivation and rearing more financially viable at the level of rearers even under the scenario of reducing prices of reeling cocoons, there is an implicit need to improve the productivity of cocoons per unit area. Promoting new plantations with improved V1 variety which has very high yielding potential of 60-70 MT per hectare and suitable for shoot rearing technology, should be an important strategy. Rearing house with shoot rearing facilities is being promoted for various advantages they offer. Any improvements in the productivity and quality cocoons, consequently resulting in improved renditta is possible only with the adoption of improved rearing conditions. Specialized rearing of young age (Chawki) worms ensures a healthy batch. Such worms remains disease free, ultimately give successful cocoon crops. Further, small scale silkworm rearers cannot afford the equipment necessary to provide the ideal conditions for young age worms. In order to overcome these difficulties, specialized CRCs are being promoted by the Government agencies.

Though the production level has increased to great extent in the recent past, there still exists a wide gap between the actual yield obtained in the farmer’s field and potential of production level with the existing modern technologies. The main reason attributed for yield gap are i) natural and environmental factors, ii) socio-economic factors, which influence the adoption of technologies and usage of inputs, iii) linkage efficiency between research stations and farmers through extension agencies, v) inherent weakness in technologies itself and v) managerial efficiency of farms-inputs. The general belief is that the farmers are not fully exploiting their resources in order to achieve high yield. As a result, the production cost is increased and making Indian silk cost prohibitive. It is therefore, imperative to analyze the magnitude of the gaps in attainable yields and explore the possibilities of relaxing existing constitute in order to bridge the attainable yields.
The stability and sustainability of agriculture enterprise highly depends on its economic viability vis-a-vis other competing crops. One of the major reasons for the decline in mulberry area and there by reduction in cocoon production the recent years in Andhra Pradesh is the competition from the other crops. As the net returns from agriculture is very high compared to the other crops in the area, the salient features of the agriculture and its high profitability nature can be made known to the farmers through extension programmes to popularize sericulture.