

OBITUARY

Professor A. Vaidyanathan (1931-2020)



Professor A. Vaidyanathan, past President of the Indian Society of Agricultural Economics (1995-2003) died in Coimbatore on June 10, 2020. He was educated in Chennai, and did his post-graduate studies in the U.S. He obtained his PhD in Economics from Cornell University, USA and has worked for the UN FAO and the World Bank, Washington, D.C. He has also worked at the National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi. He made valuable contributions to planning and agricultural policy in India and played a major role in improving the statistical and data base in India. He was also former member of the Planning Commission and chaired the Government of India's Taskforce for reviving rural cooperative credit. He was also professor at the Madras Institute of Development Studies and Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram. Prof Vaidyanathan's research is concerned mostly with empirical analysis and interpretation of various aspects of Indian economy and more importantly, quality of data. He has studied and written on issues concerning planning and development strategy, agricultural and bovine economy, irrigation and water management, employment, poverty and quality of socio economic data. Besides academic publications, he has written extensively on policy issues and is an active participant in public discussions on these matters. His publications include 'India's Agricultural Development in a Regional Perspective', 'Performance of Indian Agriculture since Independence'; a critique of economic reforms titled 'Indian Economy: Crisis, Response and Prospects' and an edited collection on 'Elementary Education in India: A Grassroots Perspective'. He was particularly instrumental in digitisation of the Cost of Cultivation Survey Data for a few states and the outcome of this effort is available in the form of a Report. In his death, the country has lost a great visionary who is known for his sharp intellectual academic rigour.