

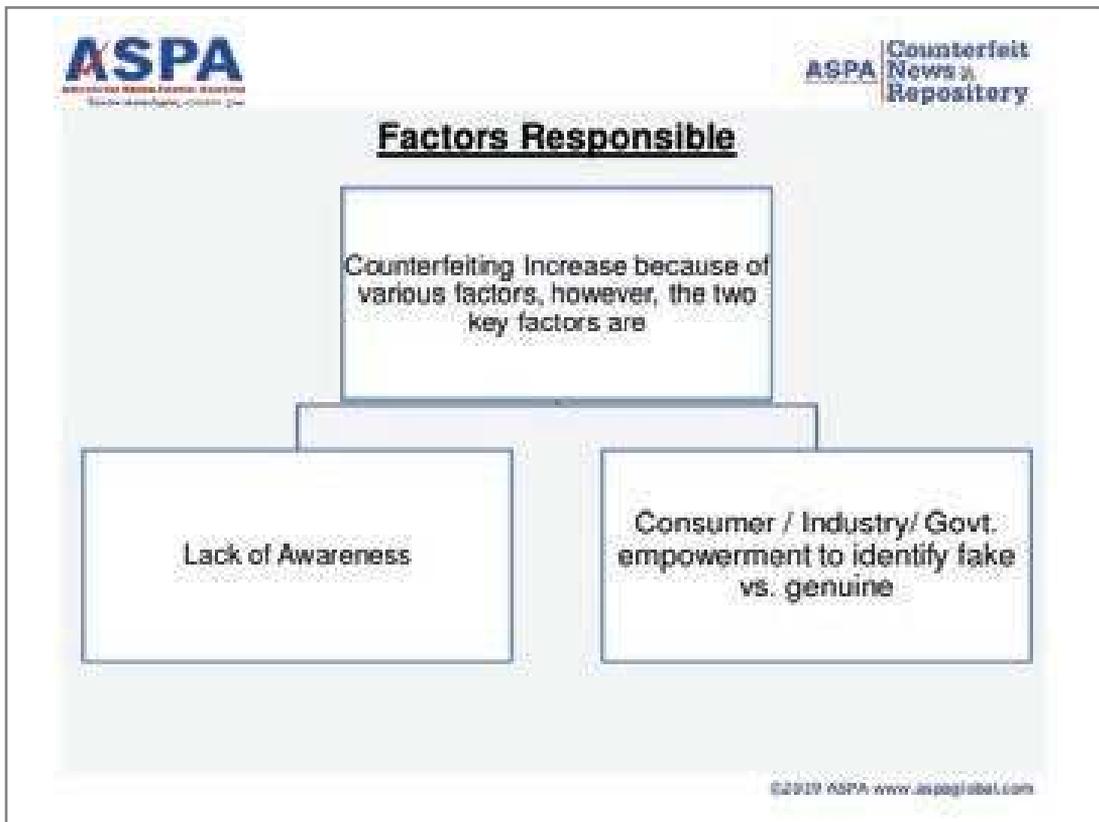
Chander Jeena

Secretary of Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA)

Collaborated Solutions-Staying Ahead of the Counterfeiters

Physical and Digital

Authentication with IoT solutions empowering Consumer, Industry and Government

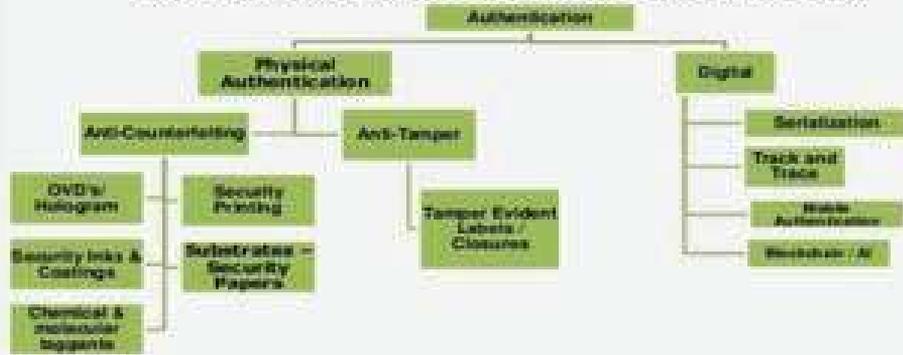


India is among the 15 leading exporters of agricultural products in the world. Total agricultural exports from India grew at a CAGR of 16.45 per cent over FY10-18 to reach US\$ 38.21 billion in FY18. Ministry of Commerce & Industry is planning to introduce an “Agriculture Export Policy” which is aiming at doubling the agricultural exports (US \$60 billion by 2022) from the country and thereby integrating Indian farmers and their agricultural products to the global value chain.

The growth of counterfeit plant products are on the rise globally. Illegal pesticides are deemed to

make up about 20-30 % of these markets. The nature and extent of counterfeit products and illegal trade varies per market and can originate from many different sources in many different forms. Counterfeit and illegal pesticides in current agricultural scenario have become threatening and the magnitude of problems are directly related to the health, economy and environment. Cases of illegal pesticides lessen the ability to regulate the agricultural sector effectively and bring quality products. It is important that farmer organisations, Co-operatives, Industry, NGO's and government or whoever works with the farmers at grass root level, should play a leading

Anti-counterfeiting Solutions / Technology



- Security buying, important consideration:
- ❑ Use at-least one level of overt authentication
 - ❑ Focus on ethical vendor which can provide multi layered security solution, have secure manufacturing / services and adhering to best practices
 - ❑ The solution should provide authentication element such as tampering resistance and can fulfill integration process (security, manufacturing, compliance etc.)
 - ❑ To select technology take help of published standards such as ISO 12931 and HASPO

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role in increasing awareness about the risks of using counterfeit products.

Chander Shekhar Jeena, Secretary of Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA), editor (The Authentication Times) and Advisory member (Tax Stamp & Traceability News, UK) shares his concerns and opinions and enlists the various factors that lead to counterfeiting.

Various factors leading to Counterfeiting

Difficulty in identification of counterfeit products due to lack of awareness

Lack of education and awareness at the farmer level and so only a very few are aware of the registered brands and often ignore the specific details on the products. Our farmers remain uninformed about the existence of this grave issue and are ignorant about how to deal with it.

Lack of monitoring and surveillance

In India, the responsibility of enforcement is divided between the regional and national

authorities, but the political divisions and sensitivities have led to weak enforcement coordination and action. There should be a coordinated approach between the Multi-disciplined specialists' with skills in policy and prosecution, chemicals, agriculture, customs and environment.

Focus on high-Profile sectors

National anti-counterfeit activities tend to focus on high profile sectors where the VAT losses are longest (luxury goods, alcohol, auto components, clothing, software, pharmaceuticals). Anti counterfeit activities needed to be done in the agrochemical sector, so that the farmers get the adequate information and details regarding the sources which impose threat to our environment and health.

Inadequate judicial frameworks and penalties

India has inadequate legislation to properly prosecute counterfeiting. Strict framework of penalties needs to be developed for people making or selling or for that matter using counterfeits.

Example of Collaborated Solutions: BAYER



High Security
Hologram, Cap
Seal

Track and Trace with Mobile App

Bayer CapSeal

- Beside a Hologram, the CapSeal contains a QR-code
- Scanning the QR code with CapSeal App provides the user immediate feedback regarding the authenticity of the code
- The user can immediately get in contact with Bayer, via just one click in the App
- The App is available in all languages
- Moreover, an unbroken CapSeal indicates that the bottle is originally closed by Bayer

Source: Bayer Material Science

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Challenges of quantifying the problem

It is difficult to present detailed data of the extent and growth of the problem because of its illegal nature. This is the same problem encountered by all sectors that face counterfeiting.

Chander expresses his concerns over Indian farmers lacking a tool/medium to differentiate genuine pesticides from fake ones at the time of purchase and that our farmers still rely on the visual appeal and can only check the quality of products with the marking of ISI/AGMARK. However, with the advancement in digital technology, it has become easy for unethical manufacturers to produce fake ISI/AGMARK product as well. Until the crops fail the farmers don't realize and there seems to be no way to analyse the contaminants also and therefore, there remains a constant need to spread awareness on 'How to identify genuine pesticides from the fake ones?'

Proposed solutions for India

Security label with track and trace features

Focussing on implementation of technology solutions is the need of the moment. As proactive steps, pesticide companies should join hands with authentication solution providers for public interest and for the brand protection measures. The authentication solutions play an important

role in consumer protection and help brand owners in increasing revenue by knocking off counterfeiters from the market. There are many technology based anti-counterfeiting solutions, where the Label of the product could be linked with the database of our Indian Government Kisan Call Centre. According to the Indian Government, nearly 70 lakh farmers across the country are registered with the KISAN SMS Portal. The farmers can easily check the originality of pesticides by giving a missed call or SMS at the toll-free number 1800-180-1551 by confirming the unique number printed at label. A message could be then sent to each farmer in his preferred language and that should contain information about the pesticide's batch number, expiry date and originality.

Case studies from the other industries like Pharmaceutical, Automotive components and Liquor -State Excise Department could be referred. Many brands seem to be adopting solutions such as security label with 2D and alphanumeric codes on each individual blister pack, bottle or injectable vial. All effective solutions, broadly speaking, help in identifying and authenticating the original from counterfeit. They deepen the divide between genuine products and their counterfeits by making a genuine product distinguishable in some manner and that it is difficult to replicate using commercially available manufacturing processes.



It is very important that a market surveillance program is in place, so that as soon as an infringement is identified, it is immediately tackled using administrative and/or legal recourse to punish the guilty. If no immediate measures are taken then the counterfeit markets would increase in size in next 5 years, will grow tremendously, and will be a very substantial loss to the Indian Government.

We need to create zero tolerance position towards illegal activities. Implementing a strategy to raise awareness deliver trainings and develop safety features. Empowering consumer and enforcement authorities with the latest new generation technological authentication solutions seems to be the only way as solutions.

