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HyFun Foods on Indiaâ??s Frozen Food Opportunity and Global Ambitions

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Haresh Karamchandani, MD & Group CEO, HyFun Foods

India’s frozen food sector is entering a period of rapid transformation, driven by urbanisation, evolving lifestyles, rising disposable incomes and growing demand for convenient meal solutions. The expansion of quick commerce, modern retail, food delivery and organised foodservice is further accelerating consumer adoption, while investments in cold-chain infrastructure are creating new opportunities across the value chain.

Against this backdrop, HyFun Foods has built an integrated farm-to-processing ecosystem, working with more than 7,500 farmers and exporting its products to over 40 countries. The company’s focus on traceable sourcing, value-added frozen foods, sustainable manufacturing and farmer partnerships reflects the broader evolution of India’s food processing sector.

In this interview with NUFFOODS Spectrum Asia, Haresh Karamchandani, MD & Group CEO, HyFun Foods, discusses the key drivers shaping India’s frozen food market, the impact of quick commerce and modern retail, the role of food processing in reducing post-harvest losses, and India’s growing potential as a global sourcing hub. He also shares insights into HyFun Foods’ sustainability initiatives and the infrastructure and policy priorities needed to support the next phase of growth in India’s cold-chain and frozen food industry.

India's frozen food market is witnessing rapid growth, driven by evolving consumer preferences and changing lifestyles. What key factors do you believe are accelerating the adoption of frozen and convenience foods in India, and how do you see the category evolving over the next five years?

India's frozen food market is growing at over 15 per cent CAGR, driven by urbanisation, rising disposable incomes, dual-income households, and the growing need for convenient meal solutions. The rapid expansion of quick commerce, modern retail, and cold-chain infrastructure has further accelerated category adoption.

Over the next five years, we expect frozen foods to move from being a convenience category to a household staple. Growth will be led by value-added products, healthier offerings, and increasing demand from Tier II and Tier III cities, making frozen foods one of the fastest-growing segments in India's food processing industry.

The rise of quick-commerce platforms, food delivery services, and QSR chains is reshaping food consumption patterns across urban India. How are these channels influencing demand for frozen food products, and what opportunities do they create for manufacturers such as HyFun Foods?

The rapid growth of quick-commerce platforms, food delivery services, and QSR chains has fundamentally transformed the way consumers access and consume food, with convenience becoming a key purchasing driver. These channels have played an important role in increasing the visibility and accessibility of frozen and ready-to-cook products, encouraging greater consumer adoption. With India's quick-commerce market expected to grow at over 40% annually, we see significant potential for the frozen food category to expand further.

For HyFun Foods, this evolution presents a strong opportunity to deepen our market presence, reach a wider consumer base, and introduce innovative products that align with changing consumption preferences. The data and consumer insights generated through these platforms also enable us to better understand evolving demand patterns and respond with greater agility through product innovation and portfolio expansion.

HyFun Foods has built a large-scale farm-to-processing ecosystem involving more than 7,500 farmers. How does this integrated model help improve supply chain efficiency, product quality, farmer livelihoods, and overall sustainability within the food processing sector?

Our 'seed to shelf' model is a key strength that enhances supply chain efficiency, product quality, and long-term sustainability. By partnering directly with over 7,500 farmers, we ensure a reliable supply of high-quality processing-grade potatoes with complete traceability from farm to finished product.

Through initiatives such as HyFarm, PaathShala, and VigyanShala, we provide agronomy support, scientific farming practices, and crop planning guidance that help improve yields, optimise resource usage, and provide farmers with income stability through a fixed procurement price, irrespective of fluctuations in market rates. This integrated approach not only creates a resilient supply chain but also promotes sustainable agriculture and responsible growth across the food processing ecosystem.

As India seeks to reduce post-harvest losses and strengthen agricultural value chains, what role can food processing and frozen food technologies play in enhancing food security, minimising wastage, and creating greater value for farmers?

Food processing and frozen food technologies play a critical role in reducing post-harvest losses, particularly in a country like India where an estimated 15–25 per cent of fruits and vegetables are lost due to inadequate storage, transportation, handling, and supply chain inefficiencies before they reach consumers. By extending shelf life, preserving nutritional value, and improving storage efficiency, frozen food solutions help minimise wastage and maximise the utilisation of agricultural produce.

For farmers, food processing creates stable demand, enables value addition, and provides access to organised markets, leading to more predictable incomes. As India continues to strengthen its food processing and cold-chain infrastructure, these technologies will be key to enhancing food security, improving supply chain efficiency, and increasing value creation across the agricultural ecosystem.

With exports to more than 40 countries, HyFun Foods has witnessed India's growing potential as a processed food sourcing hub. What factors are strengthening India's competitiveness in global frozen food markets, and what opportunities do you see for Indian food processors in the international arena?

India is increasingly emerging as a preferred sourcing hub for processed foods, driven by its strong agricultural base, improving food processing infrastructure, competitive manufacturing costs, and expanding cold-chain capabilities. Government initiatives such as the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme and PM Kisan Sampada Yojana have further strengthened the sector's global competitiveness.

With global demand for convenient and value-added foods continuing to rise, Indian processors are well-positioned to serve international markets with high-quality, traceable, and sustainably produced products. The opportunity lies not only in exports of processed agricultural products but also in establishing India as a reliable long-term partner in global food

supply chains.

Sustainability is becoming increasingly important across the food industry. How is HyFun Foods approaching energy efficiency, responsible sourcing, water management, and sustainable manufacturing as it scales operations to meet growing domestic and international demand?

Sustainability is embedded across our operations, from responsible sourcing to resource-efficient manufacturing. We work closely with our farmer partners to promote scientific farming practices that improve productivity while encouraging the efficient use of water, fertilisers, and other agricultural inputs. This approach supports responsible sourcing and encourages more sustainable agricultural practices.

On the manufacturing side, we have invested in a Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) system to enhance water stewardship and are developing a renewable hybrid energy plant that is expected to meet 50–60 per cent of our energy requirements. Alongside water- and energy-efficient manufacturing systems and waste-reduction initiatives, these efforts support our commitment to resource efficiency and sustainable growth. As demand continues to grow across domestic and international markets, our focus remains on building a resilient and sustainable food processing ecosystem.

Looking ahead, what are the biggest opportunities and challenges in expanding India's cold-chain and frozen food infrastructure, and what policy or industry interventions would help unlock the next phase of growth for the sector?

India's frozen food market is expected to grow at a double-digit CAGR over the coming years, creating significant opportunities for investment in cold-chain infrastructure, value-added food processing, and export-oriented manufacturing. Rising demand from quick commerce, modern retail, QSRs, and international markets will continue to drive sector growth.

However, challenges remain around cold storage capacity, refrigerated transportation, energy costs, and infrastructure access beyond major urban centres. To unlock the next phase of growth, continued investments in integrated cold-chain networks, faster adoption of energy-efficient technologies, and policy support for food processing infrastructure will be critical. Strengthening farmer linkages and export facilitation can further enhance India's position as a global processed food hub.