

Agri businessman

SANDEEP Sabharwal, the 44-year-old Delhite is an entrepreneur with a vision and also a businessman with the Midas touch. Six years ago, after investing Rs 16 lakh into his new business called Sohan Lal Commodities, last financial year it clocked a turnover of a whopping Rs 1,925 crore. Not a small achievement for a man who single-handedly charted its growth trajectory. Armed with an MBA degree, Sabharwal at the age of 25 entered the 30-year-old pulse processing family business started by his grandfather in Delhi. It was a great learning curve for him, as he had to deal with problems such as non-availability of commodities, abnormal losses during storage due to poor warehouses, bad crop protection and unavailability of structured finance. Sabharwal, after spending nine years doing all of this, set up his own business unit in August 2009.

“I invested about Rs 4.5 lakh from my own hard earned savings and borrowed Rs 11.5 lakh from friends and family members,” he recalls. He started with one warehouse and four employees, and his first customers were daal and besan millowners of Delhi. His business plan was smooth, as in the first year of operation itself, he clocked a turnover of Rs 4 crore, breaking even and booking a profit of Rs 9 lakh.

Success begets success. Today, Sabharwal has over 3,300 committed customers from across India and that number is growing. He was quick to seize business opportunity as he set up post harvest management services for farmers. Today he owns 850 warehouses with a throughput of more than 320 million tonne.

Sabharwal also successfully started Kisandhan Agri Financial Services one-and-half-year ago and disbursed with a seed capital of Rs 125 crore. Till date, his company has disbursed Rs 377 crore loans to 79,400 farmers across India against 34 agricultural commodities. This financial year, Sabharwal is close to a Rs 2,500 crore turnover.

Michael Gonsalves