

## Make optimum use of pesticides: Experts

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, MAY 6

The Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI) today launched a mass campaign to create awareness among farmers about the right and optimal use of pesticides for increasing the yield, quality and income.

During the launch here, Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare JP Dalal flagged-off five mobile vans to educate, engage and empower farmers.

Dalal said these mobile

Vans to spread message  
'Jaago Kisan Jaago'



FILE PHOTO

vans would spread the message 'Jaago Kisan Jaago' in true sense across Haryana

that by using pesticides with new technology and buying farm inputs against a GST bill would help the farmers increase their yield, quality and income significantly.

He urged farmers not to buy any pesticides and agriculture-related materials without a bill. Those sellers who fail to provide bills may be selling fake products and farmers need to be alert, Dalal added.

He further said at a time when our country was aiming to become a \$5 trillion economy, unscrupulous ele-

ments were flooding the Indian markets with low-quality and spurious agricultural inputs, which might derail the progress in the field of food production.

Meanwhile, ACFI director general Kalyan Goswami said there was an urgent need to check the sale of bio-products laced with unauthorised and unregistered chemical pesticides by dummy companies as it impacted the lives and livelihood of farmers and posed a grave threat to India's food security and environment.

## ACFI launches mass campaign to aware farmers on pesticides optimal use

NEERAJ SHARMA  
CHANDIGARH, MAY 6

India's leading Agrochemical Policy Platform the 'Agro Chem Federation of India - ACFI' has launched a mass campaign to create awareness among farmers about right & optimal use of Pesticides for increasing the yield, quality, and income. In our country, we have 2.4% arable land, 4% of water resources and 18% of the world population, but by minimal use of fertilizers & pesticides, we are the second largest producer of agri produce in the World. In spite of being the sec-



ond biggest producer, our country's share in international trade is hardly 3%. All the credit goes to our hard-working farmers and the scientists of our Nation, and especially to Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, our former Late Prime Minister who had sown the seed of the first green revolution by giving the slogan 'Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan' motivating all the countrymen. Today, 5 mobile vans

were flagged off by Shri J.P. Dalal, Hon'ble Agriculture Minister of Haryana at Chandigarh to educate, engage and empower the farmers of the State of Haryana who are the synonym of the real culture of agriculture and feeding the Nation with wheat and other essential commodities even when the world is craving for food-grains due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine crisis.



हरियाणा के कृषि मंत्री जेपी दलाल 'जागो किसान जागो' अभियान के तहत चलाई गई बैन को झंडी देकर रवाना करते हुए। (छाया : कमलजीत सिंह)

## 'जागो किसान जागो' अभियान के तहत 5 मोबाइल गाड़ियों को किया रवाना

चंडीगढ़, 6 मई (राम सिंह बराड़): हरियाणा के कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री जेपी दलाल ने कहा कि वर्तमान राज्य सरकार किसान के हित के लिए कोई भी पहल करने के लिए हमेशा तैयार रहती है और किसान के हितों को सर्वोपरि मानते हुए सरकार अति-सक्रियता से लगातार कार्य कर रही है जिसके तहत परंपरागत, जैविक व प्राकृतिक खेती पर फोकस किया जा रहा है। दलाल आज यहां चंडीगढ़ में 'सतत कृषि के लिए एग्रोकैमिकल की भूमिका-खुशहाल भारत के लिए किसानों का सशक्तिकरण' विषय पर आयोजित तीसरी राष्ट्रीय

संगोष्ठे में उपस्थित किसानों, कृषि से जुड़े बुद्धिजीवियों व अन्य महानुभवों को संबोधित कर रहे थे। संगोष्ठे के दौरान उन्होंने कहा कि फसलों में उपयोग होने वाली खाद व उर्वरकों के नकली उत्पादों की बिक्री घोर अपराध है। इसके अलावा, हरियाणा के किसान धान का उत्पादन अधिक कर रहे हैं जबकि हमारे यहां पर पानी कम है और धान में पानी की मात्रा अधिक प्रयोग होती है इसलिए वर्तमान सरकार ने फसल विविधिकरण पर भी बल दिया है और किसानों को प्रोत्साहित करने के लिए विभिन्न योजनाओं को संचालित भी किया है।



# एसीएफआई ने किसानों को शिक्षित करने के लिए शुरू किया जागरूकता अभियान

## ACFI launches mass campaign to aware farmers on pesticides optimal use

HR AGRICULTURE MINISTER FLAGS-OFF 5 MOBILE VANS TO EDUCATE FARMERS ON RIGHT INPUTS USE

By: Chandrajit

**CHANDIGARH, MAY 6:** India's leading Agrochemical Policy Platform the 'Agro Chem Federation of India - ACFI' has launched a mass campaign to create awareness among farmers about right & optimal use of Pesticides for increasing the yield, quality, and income.

In our country, we have 2.4% arable land, 4% of water resources and 18% of the world population, but by minimal use of fertilizers & pesticides, we are the second largest producer of agri produce in the World. In spite of being the second biggest producer, our country's share in international trade is hardly 3%. All the credit goes to our hard-working farmers and the scientists of our Nation, and especially to Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, our former Late Prime Minister who had sown the seed of the first green revolution by giving the slogan 'Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan' motivating all the countrymen.

Today, 5 mobile vans were flagged off by Shri J.P. Dalal, Hon'ble Agriculture Minister of Haryana at Chandigarh to educate, engage and empower the farmers of the State of Haryana who are the synonym of the real culture of agriculture and feeding the Nation with wheat and other essential commodities even when the world is craving for food-grains due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine crisis.

These 5 mobile vans will be the carrier to create a knowledge based Rural Haryana by ensuring 'Jago Kisan Jago' in true sense and will ignite their minds to regain the glory of the wonder that was the State of Haryana, the land of Kurukshetra where the holy war of Mahabharata was held to reestablish the truth and end the unrighteousness and to destroy the wicked and protect the virtuous. These 5 mobile vans

will educate the farmers across Haryana and spread the message that by using pesticides with new technology, buying agri-inputs against a GST bill their yield, quality and income can be increased significantly.

ACFI along with its esteemed member companies are trying to create awareness against the illegal, smuggled, duplicate, counterfeit network which are deceiving the farmers and endangers our national resources, especially the soil and the Mother Earth. Misbranded pesticides are not only spoiling the earth, but these are also very much harmful to our environment, animals and human health as nobody knows about their quality and standard. On the other side, in the name of bio-products/ bio-stimulants, miscreants are cheating the farmers by supplying chemical laced bio-products which are having a cocktail of 10-12 pesticides as per the reports of the Govt. of Karnataka. From February - May (2020) the state has drawn 250 samples of bio-products which were tested in the laboratories of the Govt. of Karnataka.

It is quite disturbing that this year, 9 Lacs acres of chili crops were destroyed in South India, especially, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana due to the attack of black thrips which couldn't be controlled as chemical laced bio-products were used by farmers in sub-lethal dose due to which resistance has been developed in the insect and no pesticide was working and farmers had to plough back their fields.

It is quite disturbing that even the pesticides which aren't registered in India were found in the cocktail of chemical pesticides in the garb of bio-products. These are done by fly-by-night operators. It is shocking to note

that some farmers took the extreme step of committing suicide being pressured by the avoidable situation had India allowed speedy registration of new technology pesticides as per the Insecticides Act, 1968 and Insecticides Rules, 1971 and controlled in a timely manner the menace of fake, illegal, counterfeit, misbranded pesticides.

The recent 6 raids conducted by the Police in Delhi are the biggest example where huge consignments of such misbranded, fake, illegal, counterfeit pesticides had exposed this menace yet again; but strict actions are still awaited.

We can clearly see the scope of growth of Agriculture by increasing per hectare yield and quantum of Agri-produce in India, provided new technology pesticides are used appropriately in the prescribed quantities. These new technology products are not made available to our farmers which is evident from the fact that out of 1,175 pesticide molecules (both chemical and biological origin) registered the World over, China has 950+, USA has 1057+, Pakistan & Vietnam have 450+, whereas only 299 molecules are registered for use in India. This is because of our lax registration system, non-promotion of new technology pesticides and usage of fake, illegal, counterfeit, misbranded pesticides. These are key reasons of the Indian GDP from Agriculture being almost 1/3rd in comparison to China.

An IARI report of 2008 estimates 8-90% crop losses due to non-usage of quality pesticides as per pest infestation & climatic conditions. As per Lok Sabha Q.No. 2928 answered on 13.03.2018, the Govt. of India estimates 10-20% annual crop losses (today's value is approximately ₹ 7-12 lac crores).

FAO estimates 40% crop losses. The EU Parliament Agri Science committee estimates 40% reduction in even if PP isn't done from pests, diseases, etc. This economic value showing a huge "opportunity-loss" can surely be reduced to a great extent by "new-technology". These also resulted in India lagging behind all major developed countries in agri-yield for all major crops.

Addressing a press conference at the launch ceremony, Hon'ble Agriculture Minister, Shri J.P. Dalal said that "At a time when our country is aiming to become a US\$5 trillion economy, unscrupulous elements are flooding Indian markets with low quality and spurious agri-input products, which may derail the country's progress achieved in the field of food production. The same should be controlled by all stakeholders. ACFI has taken a very good step to educate our farmers which should be lauded and supported."

Addressing the press conference, Dr. Kalyan Goswami, Director General, ACFI said,

"There is an urgent need to check the sale of bio-products laced with unauthorized and unregistered chemical pesticides by dummy companies as it impacts the lives and livelihood of farmers and poses a grave threat to India's food security and environment."

He has urged the Union Government to take effective steps to control illegal import of pesticides by misdeclaration which is not only causing a huge loss to farmers, but also impacting the nation's revenue collection."

He has stressed that it is important for farmers to buy only good quality agri-inputs like fertilizers and pesticides, and also use them in the right quantity. Use of quality products can

augment the country's agriculture export to a much higher level".

"Dr Goswami opined that the farmers need to insist on an invoice or bill with a GST number whenever they purchase agro-chemicals. Insisting on invoice will help in checking the sale of harmful agri-inputs. It will also be a win-win situation for all the stakeholders including farmers, consumers, and industry."

Addressing the press conference, Shri Pawan Pahal, National General Secretary, Rashtriya Kisan Progressive association (RKPA) said,

"We will do a nationwide campaign and fight as per our mission and vision of RKPA for reduction of the GST from current 18percent to 5 percent flat so that we can purchase our crop protection product by Bill only. I request all state governments to take stock of our key demand".

"Also we request Hon'ble PM and all Chief ministers and to ACFI also to provide us best of the technology for crop protection so that we can tap the global Market to export our commodities. We don't want economical pesticides but best product."

Photos Caption:

Pic 1: Mr. J.P Dalal ( in middle ) Haryana Minister for Agriculture & Farmer Welfare address a press conference on 'Jago Kisan Jago' at a hotel in Chandigarh on Friday.

Pic 2: Mr. J.P Dalal ( in white kurta ) Haryana Minister for Agriculture & Farmer Welfare during the flag-off of 'Jago Kisan Jago' mobile vans to spread awareness among farmers at a hotel in Chandigarh on Friday.

For more information:

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## ACFI launches mass campaign to aware farmers



## जेपी दलाल ने किसानों को जागरूक करने के लिए 5 मोबाइल वैन को प्लैग ऑफ किया



ऐसी जहाँ बड़े / चण्डीगढ़

भारत की अग्रणी कृषि रसायन निर्यातकों के संगठन एग्रो केम केडोरेलन अफ इंडिया ने किसानों को कृषि-उत्पन्न के सही एवं उचित इस्तेमाल के बारे में जागरूक करने के लिए एक अभियान की शुरुआत की है, जहाँ किसानों को फसल को उपरदकान, गुणवत्ता और आय बढ़ाने में मदद की जा सके।

चण्डीगढ़ की चण्डीगढ़ के एक होटल में हरियाणा के कृषि मंत्रि श्री जे.पी. दलाल ने हरियाणा के किसानों को शिक्षित एवं सतर्क बनाने के मुद्दा पर 5 मोबाइल वैन को हरी झंडी दिखाकर गन्ना किया।

ये 5 मोबाइल वैन जहाँ किसान जहाँ के गन्ने के ब्याप, खरीदने हरियाणा के किसानों को शिक्षित करेंगे। ये 5 मोबाइल वैन चण्डीगढ़ के किसानों को कृषि में नई तकनीकी, अपुनिक बोटनकाओं के उपयोग, जैवसटी बिल पर कृषि-उत्पन्न को खरीद के लिए जागरूक बनाएंगी, जहाँ राज्य में फसल उपरदकान एवं गुणवत्ता बढ़ाकर किसानों की आय बढ़ाई जा सके।

अभियान की शुरुआत चण्डीगढ़ पर प्रेम सम्मेलन को सम्बोधित करते हुए कृषि मंत्रि ने कहा, ऐसे समय में देश 5 ट्रिलियन डॉलर की अर्थव्यवस्था बनाने के लक्ष्य की ओर बढ़ रहा है, चण्डीगढ़ बाजार में इन गुणवत्ता के जहाँ कृषि-उत्पन्न उत्पादों की व्यापक मौजूदगी देना की इच्छा में चण्डीगढ़ बन सके हैं और देश में खोज उपरदकान के लक्ष्यों को नज़र्य कर सके हैं। इस शिक्षित पर मिशन के लिए सभी शिक्षणकों को सहयोग अपेक्षित है। इसके के संरक्षण

एसीएनएड में किसानों को शिक्षित करने की दिशा में सहायक बदन उठाना है।

उत्तरि कल्याण गैरकामी, खरिदनेइलाक, एसीएनएड ने कहा, जैविक उत्पादों में अनधिकृत एवं अनधिकृत रसायनों की मौजूदगी और इनकी शिक्षा पर लक्ष्य लक्ष्य जलद से जलद जलद है, क्योंकि इसका असर जहाँ एक और किसानों की उदय पर चहुं रहा है, जहाँ दुसरी और यह देश की खरिद सुरक्षा और चण्डीगढ़ के लिए भी बढ़ा खरिद है।

उत्तरि इस बात पर जैर दिख कि किसानों के लिए जलद है कि उन्हें अच्छे गुणवत्ता के कृषि-उत्पन्न जैसे उपरक एवं बोटनका उपलब्ध करार जलद और वे इनक इस्तेमाल करी ब्याप में हों।

उत्तरि कल्याण गैरकामी ने अगरी बात को

जहाँ रखते हुए कहा, किसानों को बोटनका खरीदने समय जैवसटी नंबर के साथ बिल लेना बखरिद। इसमें शक्तिकरक कृषि-उत्पन्न की शिक्षा पर अंकुश चलाया जा सकेगा है। इसमें किसानों, उपरकामी और उद्योग जलद-सच्चे को लक्ष्य होगा। गुणवत्तापूर्ण उत्पादों के उपरयोग से देश के विद्योत को भी नर सर तक चहुंखवा जा सकेगा है।

श्री पवन पालन, एसीएनएड के अध्यक्ष, एसीएनएड के अध्यक्ष बोटनका ने कहा, हम एक एसीएनएड अभियान चलाएंगे और जैवसटी को 18 चण्डीगढ़ में कम कर 5 चण्डीगढ़ लक्ष्य के मिशन पर काम करेंगे, जहाँ हम शिक्षित चण्डीगढ़ के साथ फसल सुरक्षा उत्पादों की खरीद को सुविधा कर सके।

ये राज्य सरकारों में निवेश करार हू कि हमारे चण्डीगढ़ पर ध्यान दें।

## 5 mobile vans flagged off to ensure judicious use of farm chemicals in Haryana

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Agriculture Minister JP Dalal on Friday flagged-off five mobile vans to ensure judicious use of crop protection chemicals that support sustainable farm management. The mobile vans will educate, engage and empower the farmers of Haryana. The campaign is part of agro-chemical policy platform, Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI), which is creating awareness among farmers about the right and optimal use of pesticides for increasing crop yield, quality and income.

Speaking at the launch ceremony, Dalal said unscrupulous elements are flooding Indian markets with low-quality and spurious agri-input products, which may derail the country's progress in food production. "This should be controlled by all the stakeholders. The ACFI has taken a very good step to educate our farmers which should be lauded and supported," he said. ACFI Director General, Kalyan Goswami urged the Union government to take effective steps to control illegal import of pesticides.

## ऐसी जहाँ बड़े ने किसानों को जागरूक करने के लिए 5 मोबाइल वैन को प्लैग ऑफ किया



### चण्डीगढ़ 6 मधी (जसबीर सिंघ सैधी)

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ये 5 मोबाइल वैन जहाँ किसान जहाँ के गन्ने के ब्याप, खरीदने हरियाणा के किसानों को शिक्षित करेंगे। ये 5 मोबाइल वैन चण्डीगढ़ के किसानों को कृषि में नई तकनीकी, अपुनिक बोटनकाओं के उपयोग, जैवसटी बिल पर कृषि-उत्पन्न को खरीद के लिए जागरूक बनाएंगी, जहाँ राज्य में फसल उपरदकान एवं गुणवत्ता बढ़ाकर किसानों की आय बढ़ाई जा सके।

अभियान की शुरुआत चण्डीगढ़ पर प्रेम सम्मेलन को सम्बोधित करते हुए कृषि मंत्रि ने कहा, ऐसे समय में देश 5 ट्रिलियन डॉलर की अर्थव्यवस्था बनाने के लक्ष्य की ओर बढ़ रहा है, चण्डीगढ़ बाजार में इन गुणवत्ता के जहाँ कृषि-उत्पन्न उत्पादों की व्यापक मौजूदगी देना की इच्छा में चण्डीगढ़ बन सके हैं और देश में खोज उपरदकान के लक्ष्यों को नज़र्य कर सके हैं। इस शिक्षित पर मिशन के लिए सभी शिक्षणकों को सहयोग अपेक्षित है। इसके के संरक्षण

रवाना कीटा गिआ लास समागम मंके पंडरकार संमेलन दरान पंडरकार नाल राल करदिया खंडी मंडरी नें किरा, 'इह 5 मंघटील वैन पुरे हरिआटे 'च' माग किसान जारों सुनिश्चित करके किसाना नु सिधिअत करनगीआ अते इह संदेस देटगीआ कि नवीं तकनीक कीटनसका दी वरतें करके, जीअसटी बिंल दे धिलाव खंडी समिगरी धरीद के छुनुा दी छुपन, कुआलिटी अते आमदन नु पुमिधता नाल वघादिया जा सकदा है ' ऐसी जहाँ बड़े ने साडे किसाना नु सिधिअत करन दे लही ईक बहुरत वघोआ कदम चुकिया है, जिसदी जेडन अते कामजाब करन दे लही 5 सलापा अते समरथन कीटा जाटा मंघटील वैन नु हरी झंडी दिधा के चाहीदा है '



# एसीएफआई ने कृषि-इनपुट के सही इस्तेमाल पर शुरू किया जागरुकता अभियान

## हरियाणा कृषि मंत्री जेपी दलाल ने किसानों को जागरुक करने के लिए 5 मोबाइल वैन को रवाना किया

चण्डीगढ़।स्टेट समाचार।जगमीत सिंह घुमण

भारत की अग्रणी कृषि रसायन निर्माताओं के संगठन एग्री कैम फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडिया ने किसानों को कृषि-इनपुट के सही एवं उचित इस्तेमाल के बारे में जागरुक बनाने के लिए एक अभियान की शुरुआत की है, ताकि किसानों को फसल की उत्पादकता, गुणवत्ता और आय बढ़ाने में मदद की जा सके।

शुक्रवार को चण्डीगढ़ के एक होटल में हरियाणा के कृषि मंत्री श्री जे.पी. दलाल ने हरियाणा के किसानों को शिक्षित एवं सशक्त बनाने के मुख्य उद्देश्य से 5 मोबाइल वैन को हरी झण्डी

दिखाकर रवाना किया।

ये 5 मोबाइल वैन 'जागो किसान जागो' के नारे के साथ, ग्रामीण हरियाणा के किसानों को शिक्षित करेंगी। ये 5 मोबाइल वैन पूरे राज्य के किसानों को कृषि में नई तकनीकों, आधुनिक कीटनाशकों के उपयोग, जीएसटी बिल पर कृषि इनपुट की खरीद के लिए जागरुक बनाएंगी, ताकि राज्य में फसल उत्पादकता एवं गुणवत्ता बढ़ाकर किसानों की आय बढ़ाई जा सके।

अभियान की लॉन्च समारोह पर प्रेस सम्मेलन को सम्बोधित करते हुए कृषि मंत्री ने कहा, 'ऐसे समय में देश 5 ट्रिलियन डॉलर की अर्थव्यवस्था बनने के लक्ष्य की ओर बढ़ रहा है, भारतीय बाजार में कम गुणवत्ता के जाली कृषि इनपुट उत्पादों की व्यापक मौजूदगी देश की प्रगति में बड़ी बाधा बन सकती है और देश में भोजन उत्पादन के लक्ष्यों को नाकाम कर सकती है। इस स्थिति पर नियन्त्रण के लिए सभी हितधारकों का सहयोग अपेक्षित है। इसी के मद्देनजर एसीएफआई ने किसानों को शिक्षित करने



की दिशा में सराहनीय कदम उठाया है।' डॉ. कल्याण गोस्वामी, महानिदेशक, एसीएफआई ने कहा, 'जैविक उत्पादों में अनधिकृत एवं अपंजीकृत रसायनों की मौजूदगी और इनकी बिक्री पर लगाम लगाना जल्द से जल्द जरूरी है, क्योंकि इसका असर जहां एक ओर किसानों की आय पर पड़ रहा है, वहीं दूसरी ओर यह देश की खाद्य सुरक्षा और पर्यावरण के लिए भी बड़ा खतरा है। उन्होंने इस बात पर जोर दिया कि किसानों के लिए जरूरी है कि उन्हें अच्छी गुणवत्ता के कृषि इनपुट जैसे उर्वरक एवं कीटनाशक उपलब्ध कराए जाएं और वे इनका इस्तेमाल सही मात्रा में करें।

हरियाणा के कृषि मंत्री जेपी दलाल 'जागो किसान जागो' अभियान के तहत चलाई गई वैन को झंडी देकर रवाना करते हुए। (छाया : कमलजीत सिंह)

# 'जागो किसान जागो' अभियान के तहत 5 मोबाइल गाड़ियों को किया रवाना



## एसीएफआई ने कृषि-इनपुट के सही इस्तेमाल पर शुरू किया जागरूकता अभियान हरियाणा कृषि मंत्री जेपी दलाल ने किसानों को जागरूक करने के लिए 5 मोबाइल वैन को पलैग ऑफ किया

### सरकार किसान के हित के लिए कोई भी पहल करने के लिए हमेशा तैयार : दलाल

#### ● परंपरागत, जैविक व प्राकृतिक खेती पर किया जा रहा फोकस

चंडीगढ़, 6 मई (सवेरा ब्यूरो) : हरियाणा सरकार किसान के हित के लिए कोई भी पहल करने के लिए हमेशा तैयार रहती है। किसान के हितों को सर्वोपरि मानते हुए सरकार अति सक्रियता से लगातार कार्य कर रही है। जिसके तहत परंपरागत, जैविक व प्राकृतिक खेती पर फोकस किया जा रहा है। हरियाणा के कृषि मंत्री जे.पी. दलाल चंडीगढ़ में 'सतत कृषि के लिए एग्रो कैमिकल की भूमिका-खुशहाल भारत के लिए किसानों का सशक्तिकरण' विषय पर आयोजित तीसरी राष्ट्रीय संगोष्ठी में उपस्थित किसानों, कृषि से जुड़े बुद्धिजीवियों व



कृषि मंत्री जे.पी. दलाल चंडीगढ़ में 'जागो किसान जागो' अभियान के तहत 5 मोबाइल गाड़ियों को हरी झंडी दिखाकर रवाना करते हुए। जगमोहन

अन्य महानुभवों को संबोधित कर रहे थे। उन्होंने कहा कि फसलों में उपयोग होने वाली खाद व उर्वरकों के नकली उत्पादों की बिक्री घोर अपराध है। सरकार इस अपराध पर नकेल कसने के लिए सख्त कार्रवाई करते हुए पारदर्शी तरीके से अच्छे व बेहतरीन खाद व उर्वरकों को बेचने के लिए कटिबद्ध है। किसानों को लूटने वाले लोगों को किसी भी प्रकार से माफ नहीं किया जा सकता। सरकार फसलों में उपयोग होने वाले अच्छे व बेहतरीन खाद व उर्वरकों को तय मात्रा अनुसार प्रयोग करने के लिए हर संभव सहयोग करने के लिए तैयार है। क्योंकि सरकार का मंतव्य कृषि को बढ़ावा देकर किसानों की आय को बढ़ाना है।

कैमिकल के प्रयोग से होने वाली फसलों को विदेशों में कर दिया जाता है खारिज : कृषि मंत्री

ने कहा कि वे परंपरागत, जैविक व प्राकृतिक खेती पर बल देने में विश्वास रखते हैं। अधिक कैमिकल के प्रयोग होने की वजह से फल, सब्जी, धान, चावल की फसलें विदेशों में खारिज कर दी जाती हैं, इसलिए किसानों को अपनी फसलों में तय मात्रा के अनुसार उर्वरकों व खाद का प्रयोग करना चाहिए और नकली खाद व उर्वरकों को प्रयोग बिल्कुल नहीं करना चाहिए। उन्होंने किसानों से अपील करते हुए कहा कि जब भी वे अपने खेतों के लिए खाद व उर्वरकों को खरीदें तो उसका बिल अवश्य लें।

बिल न मिलने पर नकली सामान होने की आशंका रहती है। सरकार ने हरियाणा में सूक्ष्म सिंचाई को बढ़ावा दिया है। इस कड़ी में माइक्रो सिंचाई में 85 प्रतिशत तक उत्कर्षों में छूट दी जा रही है। इस वर्ष कृषि का बजट भी लगभग

27 प्रतिशत तक बढ़ाया गया है। गन्ना में एशिया की सबसे बड़ी मंडी को खोला जाएगा। पिंजौर में सेब मंडी, गुरुग्राम में फूलों की मंडी, सोनीपत में मसाला मंडी खोलने की कवायद जारी है। किसानों के हित ज्यादा सुरक्षित रहें, उसके तहत हरियाणा में 14 फसलों को खरीदा जा रहा है।

कार्यक्रम के दौरान परिजात इंडस्ट्रीज प्रा. लि. के मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी केशव आनंद ने बूके देकर कृषि मंत्री जे.पी. दलाल का स्वागत किया। प्रसिद्ध व वयोवृद्ध किसान नेता भगवान दास ने कृषि मंत्री को शॉल ओढ़ाकर सम्मानित भी किया।

कार्यक्रम के बाद दलाल ने 'जागो किसान जागो' अभियान के तहत 5 मोबाइल गाड़ियों को हरी झंडी दिखाकर हरियाणा के विभिन्न ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में किसानों को जागरूक व शिक्षित करने के लिए रवाना भी किया। इससे पहले परिजात इंडस्ट्रीज प्रा. लि. के मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी केशव आनंद, पंजाब कृषि विश्वविद्यालय के पूर्व वाईस चांसलर प्रो. एम.एस. कंग, धानुका ग्रुप के चेयरमैन आरजी अग्रवाल, भारत सरकार के सीआईबी-आरसी के चेयरमैन व पूर्व कृषि एवं बागवानी कमिश्नर डॉ. एसके मल्होत्रा, वूपीएल के सीएमडी पदमभूषण रज्जू श्राफ और इंडियन कैमिकल कार्बोसिल के नार्थन रिजन के चेयरमैन राजेश श्रीवास्तव ने भी उपस्थितजनों को संबोधित किया।

## Mobile vans to ensure judicious use of farm chemicals in Haryana



# “The government is making efforts to improve marketing and remuneration for organic farmers”

*Taking forward Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for cleaner agriculture, Union agriculture minister NARENDRA TOMAR outlines the plans to push natural and organic farming in a conversation with ANILESH S. MAHAJAN*

**Q.** PM Modi and your ministry are pushing hard to unleash the potential of natural and organic farming. What all have you done so far?

**A.** PM Modi has strongly battled for natural farming. This has raised awareness for this form of agriculture in the country. Last year in December, at Gujarat's Anand, the state's governor, Acharya Devvrat, made a strong presentation in front of thousands of farmers. Natural farming, under the ministry's Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), is now done in farms spread over 5 lakh hectares. States like Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh alone have 3 lakh hectares of these farms, followed closely by Madhya Pradesh. The satisfaction is that the awareness about natural farming is increasing. Consumers, too, are getting more health-conscious; that is increasing the demand for natural and organic food products. The segment is also attracting young entrepreneurs.

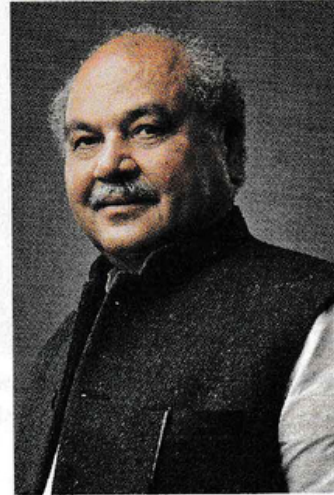
**Q.** Where do you see the country's organic produc-

tion going in the next five years? In which areas is your ministry working to realise the potential of organic farming?

**A.** India has made strong and unprecedented progress in organic farming. The country stands fourth in the world today in terms of area under organic farming and tops the list in terms of organic products. The area under organic farming was 11.8 lakh hectare in 2013-14 and has crossed 38 lakh hectare now [under PKVY, Namami Gange, National Program for Organic Production and Bharatiya Prakritik Krishi Paddhati]. It has already benefitted 15 lakh farmers practising farming on 12 lakh hectares. The initial focus is on the 5 km corridor along the Ganga. States too have been incentivised to support organic and natural farming. To achieve this, we have formed a high-level committee of scientists and experts, and work is in progress.

**Q.** What are you doing to build the market infrastructure for the same?

**A.** The government is mak-



**“THE DEMAND FOR ORGANIC FOOD IS RISING AS PEOPLE TURN MORE HEALTH-CONSCIOUS. YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS ARE GETTING ATTRACTED TO THE SEGMENT”**

ing efforts to improve the market access for organic and natural farmers and get good remuneration for produce. For certification of the produce, organic groups have to be linked with Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) which can ensure them post-harvest facilities. For the Northeast alone, 170 FPOs have been formed so far. These FPOs are helping farmers market their produce directly. Other than this, 130 FPOs have been floated under PKVY. In the

future, too, the plan is to link all organic and natural farmers with markets through these FPOs.

**Q.** PM Modi is a strong votary of crop diversification. The push for organic and natural farming and minimum support price (MSP) for oilseeds and pulses were seen as steps in that direction. What has been our success so far?

**A.** The government regularly fixes the MSP for 22 crops and the FRP (fair & remunerative price) for sugarcane. Under the National Food Security Mission, states are assisted to buy pulses, millets, oilseeds, cotton etc.; the Centre and states are buying 25 per cent of oilseeds and pulses from the farmers. Any proposal from the states to make further purchases is cleared quickly. This is already reflecting in pulse production numbers. Pulse production rose to 27 million tonnes in 2021-22 from 16.3 MT in 2015-16, a massive 65 per cent jump. This has also helped us bring down imports to 2.32 MT in 2020-21 from 6.36 MT in 2016-17. PM Modi has also committed to forming a committee to ensure transparency and smooth implementation of MSP. Crop diversification and promotion of organic and natural farming will be a critical component in it.



# Godrej Agrovvet plans doubling capex to ₹500 crore in FY23

To invest ₹300 cr in expanding Astec Lifesciences

**VISHWANATH KULKARNI**

Bengaluru, May 12

Godrej Agrovvet (GAVL), a diversified agribusiness company, is doubling its capital expenditure to over ₹500 crore in the current financial year and plans to make major investments in Astec Lifesciences, the agrochemical active ingredients subsidiary. The company has been incurring a capex of ₹200-250 crore annually in recent years.

“Of the ₹500 crore capex planned for the year, more than ₹300 crore will be invested in scaling up Astec Lifesciences, where we see big growth opportunity,” said Balram Singh Yadav, Managing Director, GAVL.



Balram Singh Yadav, MD, Godrej Agrovvet

“We are very optimistic on Astec. A lot of investment is going to get committed in Astec Life sciences over the next three years during which we expect to double the capacity,” he said.

## Scaling R&D

“Our strategy is to create technology platform. We are very good in Triazole platform, then we created our capability in Sulphonyl urea and pyrdimines. Similarly, we have 2-3 more platforms in

which we want to invest for which we need to build capabilities first. We have a very good R&D centre coming up at Rabale with an investment of ₹125 crore and that will open up a lot of opportunities in contract manufacturing,” Yadav said.

GAVL expects to commissioning the R&D centre for Astec in October, which will be almost triple the existing facility in Dombivili.

“We are also scaling up our R&D team to over 200 scientists,” he added.

## Revenue growth

GAVL reported an 18.5 per cent growth in net profits to ₹408.5 crore for FY22, while its revenue grew 32.7 per cent to ₹8,306.1 crore from the previous year.

Astec LifeSciences reported 22 per cent growth in revenue to ₹676.6 crore during FY22.

## Deepak Fertilisers Q4 consolidated PAT up 144% at Rs 283 crore

Deepak Fertilisers on Wednesday reported a 144.30 per cent jump in consolidated profit after tax (PAT) at Rs 282.91 crore for the quarter ended March 2022. The company's PAT stood at Rs 115.80 crore during the corresponding quarter of 2020-21, Deepak Fertilisers and Petrochemicals Corporation said in a BSE filing.



## Prioritise residue-free farming over organic farming

THIRUKUMARAN NAGARAJAN

Over the past few years, there has been a paradigm shift in consumer preferences. Indian buyers are becoming increasingly health-conscious and watchful of the food they consume. In light of this trend, two modes of farming – residue-free and organic, have become increasingly popular.

Simply put, residue-free farming techniques entail the protection and growth improvement of seedlings and plants by using organically procured bio-fertilisers and biocides.

The produce is also grown using synthetic pesticides, which are applied at predetermined intervals so that the residue is not present in enormous quantities, conforming to the (MRL) Maximum Residue Level.

Organic farming, on the other hand, is an agricultural system that relies on pest controls and bio-fertilisers that are obtained from animal and plant waste. It even involves the plantation of nitrogen-fixing cover crops.

Residue-free farming eliminates

the shortcomings of organic farming techniques. It is essential to promote residue-free over organic farming for the following reasons:

**Consumption:** Research now reveals that there are no clear indicators to suggest that organic produce offers a higher nutritional value when compared to fruits and vegetables grown using other techniques. Residue-free farming practices have been successful in overcoming this downside. Since it does not involve any toxin throughout the production process, the fruits and vegetables, thus produced, are best for those with allergies and other dietary restrictions. Their overall nutritional value and quality are high. Despite the obvious benefits, farmers in India do not fully embrace residue-free farming, which is mostly neglected by buyers and sellers in the local market.

Several State governments have recognised the importance of residue-free produce. The ₹2,200-crore State of Maharashtra Agribusiness and Rural Transformation (SMART) project plans to sup-

ply the urban population of Pune residue-free produce.

**Production:** According to a study, the yield capacity of organic farming methods is so low that relying solely on these techniques will be insufficient to meet the demands of a constantly rising population. Further, the production of organic items is expensive, and in some instances, the mark-up of these produces is as high as 40 per cent. Residue-free techniques, on the other hand, are economical, and they do not hamper production quantity. It makes use of modern practices like poly-houses, grafting, bio-



fertiliser management, and rainwater harvesting. The Centre has launched the All India Network Project on Pesticide Residues (AINP-PR) to combat pesticide contamination in several food commodities. Numerous agritech players are also collaborating with farmers to produce residue-free fruits and vegetables.

**Environmental:** Traditional farming practices depended largely on chemical fertilisers and

pesticides. These substances are not only detrimental for consumers but also impoverish the quality of the surrounding environment. For instance, they lead to soil degradation, water pollution and loss of aquatic life, among others. Though organic farming eradicates this problem, the cost of doing so is very high. The yield is insufficient. Residue-free practices entail minimal or no usage of chemicals. They do not hamper any other aspect of farming. As the name suggests, it leaves no harmful traces behind. To instil a culture of food safety in the country, FSSAI has introduced a list of crop contaminants and their acceptable levels. According to regulation, the certified levels of mentioned elements cannot be breached during production.

**Trade and international standards:** India apart from its domestic consumption also caters to international fresh food demand. However, Indian goods face rejection because they fail to fall under the international Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs). For example, the EU refused consignments of table grapes of India as they failed to fall under their strict

MRL. In 2020, the crops that faced issues on the international front included chillies, basmati rice and sesame seeds. Developed countries encourage and promote residue-free crops. Good agricultural practices, as well as well-defined MRL standards, are used to ensure residue-free produce, and the slightest deviation from their preset parameters renders the entire consignment useless. To make indigenous produce more competitive in the export market, FSSAI has issued a set of MRLs for the compliance of domestic producers. These standards are set after considering the global requirements.

The subcontinent's focus on residue-free and clean produce has seen a dramatic increase in recent years. Apart from the government and its subsidiary bodies, a plethora of agri-tech players have also entered the picture to spread awareness. Many private players are leveraging technology to empower farmers, streamline the supply chain, incorporate end-to-end traceability and minimise wastage through residue-free cultivation.

The writer is CEO and Co-Founder, Ninjacart

## DCM Shriram focusing on mfg versatile drones

The company is engaged in businesses of sugar, chemicals and industrial fibre and has a turnover of around Rs 8,000 cr

NEW DELHI

DCM Shriram Industries is focusing on developing and manufacturing versatile drones that will be used not just in the defence sector but across the board, its Joint President Rudra Shriram has said. The company is engaged in the businesses of sugar, chemicals and industrial fibre and has a turnover of around Rs 8,000 crore. It had last year invested \$1 million (about Rs 7 crore) to purchase 30 per cent stake in Turkish drone company Zyrone Dynamics. "Luckily, we entered the (drone) market at the correct time and we have products ready of the market," Shriram said in an interview.

He said the idea is to manufacture drones completely in India. "The idea is to Make in India. Even for them (Zyrone), it is expensive to manufacture there. So, they can concentrate on technology development and we can concentrate on manufacturing at scale," he noted. He said DCM Shriram has a research and development (R&D) facility in Delhi and it has licences to manufacture defence drones across its facilities in India.

He further said it will not take the company a long time to scale up its manufacturing capability of

drones once it gets the orders. "Currently, it (drone) is at a testing stage. So, there is no real scale right now...In the next few weeks, we will



be sending our products (drones) for proper qualitative trials," he added. He clarified that the company has not won any contract from the Indian defence forces as yet. When asked what made the DCM Shriram Group interested in the drone sector, he replied, "We basically took a view to get into defence manufacturing particularly when the Defence Procurement Procedure 2013 (DPP 2013) came out. It set a fairly

level playing for manufacturing for defence sector in India."

"In armed forces, there is a requirement for equipment that they are not able to get from traditional defence public sector undertakings or other companies. So, one of the verticals we looked at then was UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles)," he added. The DCM Shriram Group entered the drone sector at a right time when the drone policy and other aspects were being talked about, he noted. He, however, said maturity in the commercial drone sector is a little far away right now and a "committee" should be formed by the government to take decisions regarding issues such as air traffic management.

## Sensor-based use of drone application in agriculture is the need of hour, says Joint Secretary Agriculture

**NEW DELHI:** Shomita Biswas, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Govt of India on Friday said that as the technology advances in India, we will soon have sensor-based use of drone application for which we all stakeholders have to jointly collaborate.

"The eco-system is now in place, and it is up to the industry and Start-ups to leverage this eco-system," she added.

Addressing the day-2 of 2<sup>nd</sup> edition International Summit 'Artificial Intelligence & Digital Applications in Agriculture', organized by FICCI, Ms Biswas said, "Once the sensor-based applications of

drones start then we might not require huge data generation. Currently, we don't have sensor based targeted approach of application of pesticides on nutrients through drones."

Biswas further stated that in terms of mechanization, India is 40 percent mechanized country, but we now need some parameters by which we can also assess our technological progress as well including use of drones, AI, IoT, etc.

She also urged various universities and institutes working on judicious use of pesticides through drones to share the data and research findings with all stakeholders. We are saving up to 30 percent of the pesti-

cides and it will come down further when we adopt targeted approach as part of the sustainable agriculture, she added.

Highlighting the importance of Start-ups, Ms Biswas stated that the Start-ups should work on solutions at lower cost for the farmers along with providing good after sales service. "I urge the Start-ups to come forward and provide these services. The government agencies should also involve Start-ups to find solutions for certain services," she noted.

Dr V Praveen Rao, Vice Chancellor of Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University (PJTSAU) while highlighting the initia-

tives of the university stated that in the last 3 years have given a lot of insights into the drones. We look at drones in a cyber, physical management cycle. "Due to labour scarcity, we are now seeding rice directly through drones. We are introducing high intensity planting of cotton in the state, and we want to use drones for this as well," he added.

Dr SK Malhotra, Former Agriculture Commissioner, Chairman, CIB&RC and Prjobject Director, DKMA said that we are now focusing on smart farming. There are many drone Agristart ups who are impacting agriculture with appropriate solutions and many more likely

to join as this is an upcoming project. "We need to provide the bio-solutions to the farmers if we have to do judicious use of consumption of pesticides," he asserted.

T R Kesavan, Chairman, FICCI National Agriculture Committee & Group President, TAFE Ltd said that drone is going to change the way the Indian agriculture will work and technology in agriculture will make it easy for everyone to access.

"Agricultural technology which can meet the needs of the farmer is going to be a big difference as far as India and the world is concerned," he added. MPOST



# Govt mulls banning 9 pesticides for basmati

Amritsar to get centre for testing residue content in rice soon

**RUCHIKA M KHANNA**

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

**CHANDIGARH, MAY 29**

The high-pesticide residue in basmati, cultivated in Punjab, threatens its export potential. With the AAP government aiming at reducing the area under the water-guzzling paddy, the focus has also shifted to reduce the use of pesticide on the basmati crop.

The government is mulling banning the use of nine pesticides on basmati this year. A centre for testing the pesticide content in basmati is also to come up in Amritsar, with the help of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority.

In 2019, when these pesticides were banned, the export of basmati from Punjab had seen a surge. In the wake of failure to ban these pesticides last year, basmati exports had taken a beating, claim exporters. They say in 2019, basmati exports from India were 4.71 million metric tonne, with Punjab accounting for 40

## TIMELY DECISION TO HELP EXPORT MORE

“If the state issues the notification on time, we’ll be able to increase exports to West Asia by almost 10-15% than last year. Saudi Arabia, UAE, Iran and Iraq are the biggest markets following the European standards for testing the residue level of pesticides. Arvinder Singh, EXPORTER

per cent of these exports. In 2021, the all-India exports had fallen to 4.02 million metric tonne. In 2020, the government again banned the use of pesticides. Since the ban came late, it led to a fall in exports to 4.33 million metric tonne.

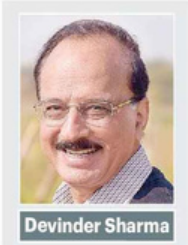
Vikram Marwaha, a basmati exporter from Tarn Taran, said since the state was focusing on increasing the area under basmati, they were expecting higher returns for farmers as the global demand has been on the upswing. “The appreciation of dollar will help in better realisation and we see farmers getting at least 10 per cent higher value,” he said. Last year, the highest price that the basmati growers got for their produce was Rs 4,200 per quintal.

Last year, the area under basmati had fallen. The department is planning to increase the area under basmati from 4.85 lakh hectare to 5.50 lakh hectare, says Agriculture Director Gurwinder Singh. “There is a scope to increase the area under basmati to 7.50 lakh hectare. Slowly, we will be moving towards this. Though the yield of basmati is lower than non-basmati paddy, the returns are higher. If the farmer gets up to Rs 3,700-4,000 per quintal, he is on a par with the farmer growing non-basmati paddy. The department will be spreading awareness against the use of pesticides banned by importers, so that farmers get best price,” he said.



# How agriculture could resolve India's **unemployment crisis**

Instead of hoping that someday mfg sector will provide additional non-farm jobs, the right challenge that policy makers need to take up now is to shift the focus to rebuilding agriculture



Devinder Sharma



Two years after millions of daily wage workers trudged home, walking hundreds of kilometres on foot, after a lockdown was suddenly imposed, the Centre for Monitoring of Indian Economy (CMIE) has come out with a study on India's labour force participation rate which says that 900 million people are not even interested in getting a job. "They even stopped looking for employment, possibly too disappointed with their failure to get a job under the belief that there were no jobs available," the report said.

In a country where job creation tops the country's political agenda, you will agree that 900 million not clamouring for any job is not a small number. It is almost equal to the combined population of Russia and the United States. That such a large proportion of India's population is disenchanted with any possibility of finding a decent job, and instead has decided to drop off the employment register, is a pointer to a historical blunder in economic thinking and approach. The bigger tragedy however is that we still fail to acknowledge where we have gone wrong.

When the lockdown happened, an estimated 100 million people had walked back inter-state and intrastate, many with their children in lap and baggage to drag. The reverse migration that the country witnessed on their TV Channels was perhaps no less distressing than the migra-

tion that shook the country at the time of the partition. Some migrant workers had returned back to the cities when the pandemic had eased, but a majority had preferred to stay back. Despite such a large influx, a distressed agriculture was still able to absorb the additional migrant workforce.

The CMIE now says that in March alone industrial jobs fell by 16.7 million. Agriculture made up for the job losses, adding another 15.3 million to the already existing workforce. But still I find that the dominant economic thinking relies on the revival of non-farm activities, and not agriculture, to create ample employment opportunities. This is what Economic 101 had programmed us to believe - to achieve higher economic growth; the number of people dependent on agriculture has to be brought down. This outdated economic thinking continues to dominate our public policy. Even now when the world is witnessing a job-loss growth, with automation and artificial intelligence taking over industrial production, our economic thinking - howsoever irrelevant it may be in the times we are living in - hasn't changed. While a big drop in employment opportunities by the big industry is being pointed to, some media publications even prefer

to quote a 2020 study by McKinsey Global Institute, which says India needs to create another 90 million jobs by 2030. In my opinion, this is an outdated economic thought, a narrative built during the era neoliberal economics began to dominate. It still continues to prevail. I find even some of the best brains, and that includes economists, academicians and writers, are unable to look beyond what they had studied in their graduation courses. Times have changed, and so have the employment dynamics but our economic thought process hasn't.

Let's first try to see what we are missing out. In both the cases - first the lockdown period and now the slump in labour force participation rate in March 2022 - the underlying message is that agriculture, despite the neglect and apathy over the decades, alone has the potential to absorb large sections of the population. Instead of pushing small farmers to migrate to the cities in search of menial jobs, revitalising agriculture can easily turn the tables, providing for gainful employment. Give farmers a guaranteed price, along with enhanced public sector investments, and agriculture can easily turn into a powerhouse of economic growth. And let me reiterate, agriculture alone has the potential to re-

boot the economy. After all, the 900 million people who have lost interest in seeking employment are not sitting idle. Whether we like it or not, a majority of them have a foot in farming, and with their household food security taken care of, they may be engaged in other part time activities. Instead of still hoping that someday the manufacturing sector will be back on track, and the higher economic growth projections that we continue to make - 9 per cent and above - will provide for additional non-farm jobs, the right challenge that policy makers need to take up now is to shift the focus to rebuilding agriculture.

Although many economists feel elated when some reports appearing at different times indicate an increased rate of out-migration from villages, this economic thought is borne out of a mindset that refuses to see the changes on the horizon. With roughly 50 per cent of India's population, a little more than 600 million, dependent on agriculture, the challenge should be on how to make farming a viable enterprise. Instead of pushing people out of the villages, the better option would be to make villages prosperous. Just because the US and European Union have relentlessly pushed farming population to move to the cities

doesn't mean that we too have to blindly follow that prescription.

Let us not forget that a farmer is also an entrepreneur. Despite having small landholdings, 86 per cent owning less than 5 acres, they still continue to produce a record harvest year after year. With a continuous decline in public sector investments in agriculture, which the RBI had in a study calculated it to be around 0.4 per cent of the GDP between 2011-12 and 2017-18, we can't expect the small farmers to perform a miracle. But still they continue to provide a strong economic base for the country to rely on. If only we had given farmers their right due, and provide them with the right kind of public infrastructure, I am sure they would be able to convert farming into a favoured economic enterprise for the future.

But first and foremost, our policy makers must acknowledge the historical blunder to treat agriculture as an economic burden, to treat agriculture as a laggard. For long, I have maintained that the policy of sacrificing agriculture for the sake of industrial growth is only helping in building a strong army of agricultural refugees, who are being deliberately driven out of agriculture to swarm into the cities in need of cheap labour. The over-emphasis on industrial sector had turned focus away from the agrarian community. That was a mistake.

If only, we had stood firm and instead focused on resurrecting agriculture, it would have been the most appropriate way to achieve Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas. Instead of worrying about the lack of non-farm employment, let's shift the attention to making farming a viable entity.

*(The author is a noted food policy analyst and an expert on issues related to the agriculture sector. He writes on food, agriculture and hunger)*

## CM to undertake natural farming, says it's 21st century's agriculture

Move from chemistry lab to nature's lab, he told cultivators

OUR STAFF REPORTER  
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Emphasising on the need to promote natural farming, chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced on Wednesday that he would undertake the farming in 5-acre land from kharif season this year.

He was addressing farmers virtually who were tak-

ing part in training programme based on natural farming at Nasrullahganj in Sehore district.

Natural farming is a chemical-free, traditional method. It is considered as agroecology-based diversified farming system, which integrates crops, trees and livestock with functional biodiversity, says NITI Aayog's report.

"Natural farming is the farming of the 21st century. Natural farming means moving from a chemistry laboratory to a nature's laboratory", Chouhan told farmers.

Making an appeal to farmers to undertake natural farming at least in half of their agriculture field, Chouhan sought to allay the apprehensions that nat-

ural farming reduces the agricultural yield.

"I am pleased to inform you that natural farming doesn't reduce the yield whether it's wheat, paddy, fruits or vegetables. These are free of chemicals and full of nutritious elements. Taste is also different," he said.

He added, "Natural farming also means zero budget

farming, less input cost and more profit (for farmers). It also enhances fertility of soil and requires less water. Chemical fertilisers do result in an increase in the amount of the produce but when a farmer starts repaying loans he has nothing left with him. Most of the money spent on farming is spent on fertilisers and pesticides."



## Promote natural farming, agri products: Secy

**TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE**

**SHIMLA, MAY 12**

Take effective steps to promote natural farming and agricultural products in the state, said Agriculture Secretary Rakesh Kanwar, who presided over a two-day workshop organised at Mashobra State Agricultural Management and Extension Training Institute today.

He said stalls should be installed at fairs and other programmes be organised for promotion of various activities in the state and added that two-way communication during workshops brings positive results.

He also gave directions to officers for effective implementation of various programmes and schemes of the department.

Agriculture Director Dr Narendra Kumar Dhiman said efforts should be made to promote various technologies developed by the university among farmers so that they are benefitted. He said officers should also keep reviewing various schemes of the department. — TNS

## FarmRise, IRRI tie up to provide advisory services to farmers

**OUR BUREAU**

Mumbai, May 5

Powered by Bayer, FarmRise — a platform for Android mobile devices which provides agronomic information and counsel to smallholder farmers — has signed a Memorandum of Association with International Rice Research Institute (IRRI).

FarmRise and IRRI will offer nutrition advisory to farmers and provide personalised crop management recommendations for rice and wheat grown in rain-fed and irrigated areas.

Both the organisations will conduct an in-depth study with farmers on the usability and share the experience with the paddy growers. The initiative will address the farmers' imbalance in fertiliser usage, thereby reducing the overall cost and improve the net yield.

As part of this collaboration, agronomy advisory will be provided to rice growers, with a scope of expanding the services across the South-East Asia in future.



# Farmer indebtedness a symptom, not the syndrome

**I**N THE LAST FEW YEARS, promising farm loan waivers has become a common feature in manifestos of political parties. The recently-concluded assembly elections in Punjab, Uttarakhand, and Uttar Pradesh were no different. Farm loan waivers are seen as an easy route to address the situation of distressed farmers. If waivers were such an effective solution, then why, in only a matter of few years, are farmers distressed again and are driven to the point of needing another round of waivers? Besides, do waivers impact spending quality of the implementing state governments? Or do they trigger inflation?

We explored these questions in our Nabard-funded study on farm loan waivers in Maharashtra, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, titled *Farm Loan Waivers in India: Assessing Impact and Looking Ahead*.

The study analysed the budgets of the state governments concerned and the impact of farm loan waivers on the same. We conducted a survey of about 3,000 farmers in Punjab, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. The study presents an analytical assessment of survey responses. We have analysed secondary data to explain financial and behavioural pattern of stakeholders like state governments, bankers and farmers. We share some key findings here.

Instead of being the immediate cause of distress, indebtedness emerges to be a symptom of economic or financial distress faced by a farmer. Nearly 87-98% respondents agreed that income and production-related issues were bigger problems than indebtedness. Instability of income due to increased cost of cultivation, damage to crop/livestock or fall in market prices emerged as the primary reason for farmer distress in the three states. The high degree of threat to crops from stray cattle was yet another important

cause of concern to farmers in the three states. Climate and weather-related issues caused much distress to the farmers. Issues with infrastructure mainly on account of erratic power supply, problems of marketing like non-transparency in market transactions, and excessive dependence on middlemen, and absence of crop insurance or delay in receiving compensation were cited as important triggers of distress.

Inability to earn enough from farming makes a farmer indebted, and the recurrent losses and falling margins make him default on loan repayment. A vicious cycle of poverty, of income losses leading to debt, which leads to distress, which in turn sparks off further debt and distress, continues unabated for a farmer. A farm loan waiver addresses the farmer's indebtedness. However, with unaddressed factors of distress (like continued production losses, volatility in market prices, unstable incomes, etc), the condition of farmers after a loan waiver only improves for a short period. In a matter of time, the farmer is indebted again and driven to a point of needing a fresh round of waiver. Therefore, it appears that a farm loan waiver proves to be a 'jury-rigged expedient'—

a quick fix that requires recurrent application.

Anywhere between 72% and 85% of the respondents in our survey agreed that loan waivers pushed honest farmers to default on their agricultural loans. It also emerged that that these increased the chances of wilful defaults by farmers. About 68-80% respondents in the three states mentioned this. More than 90% respondents in

each of the three states stressed that waivers only benefited a small percentage of the actually distressed farmer population. Interestingly, little or no problem in accessing fresh credit for a waiver beneficiary in all the three states was reported.

As per the Nabard All India Rural Financial Inclusion Survey 2016-17, only about 30.3% of agriculture households took loans from institutional sources and about 70% of agriculture households who did not take any loans from institutions were left outside the ambit of benefits from any loan waiver scheme. Via our survey, we found that about 40% of the highly distressed small farmers in all three states of Punjab, Maharashtra, and UP, did not receive benefits under farm loan waivers. More than 90% respon-

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**By addressing the issues embedded in the farm-loan NPA definition, the government can actually increase the likelihood of the farmer repaying and will also be able to provide timely help to a genuinely distressed farmer**

dents in each state felt that loan waivers did not benefit all the distressed farmers.

As per RBI, a crop loan account becomes a non-performing asset (NPA) when the instalment of interest (and principal) remains overdue for two crop seasons for short duration crops and for one crop season for the long duration crops like sugarcane. We found that this definition imposes an additional burden of repayment on farmers, forcing them to default. For example, in case of default (after two failed crop seasons), the farmer's access to fresh credit stops and it can be resumed only after he clears all his pending dues. In other words, if after two failed crops (and that is how he presumably defaulted), a farmer wishes to restart his credit cycle, then from his third (presumably successful) crop, he will have to clear instalments of three crop cycles. This is extremely tough for a distressed farmer, particularly when (i) incomes themselves are low and fluctuate and the next income (from his fourth crop) will come only after a gap of 4 to 6 months and (ii) he has to fend for his family who would have suffered from loss of income in the earlier two crop cycles.

By addressing the issues embedded in the farm-loan NPA definition, the government can actually increase the likelihood of the farmer repaying and will also be able to provide timely help to the genuinely distressed farmer.

Waivers provide immediate and short-term relief to farmers. But what is needed is a long-term solution to the structural problems faced by farmers.

Therefore, policy makers need to acknowledge indebtedness as a symptom of farmer distress and view loan waivers as a temporary solution to that symptom. The government should evolve alternative means to targeted relief and support to farmers who face distress on account of various factors.

## Govt promoting use of 'Kisan Drone' for crop assessment: Tomar

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, 2 MAY

The government is promoting the use of 'Kisan Drone' for crop assessment, digitization of land records, and spraying of pesticides and nutrients for which provision has also been made in the Union Budget, Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar said today.

Modernisation of the country's agricultural sector was high on the agenda of the government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he



said inaugurating a conference on "Promoting Kisan Drones: Issues, Challenges and the Way Ahead" organised as part of "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav". He said the use of drones in agricultural activities was in the larger interest of the farm-

ers.

Tomar said the government was promoting the use of drones as it reduced the cost and increased the income of farmers. For promoting the use of "Kisan Drones", the government was providing 50 per cent or a maximum Rs. 5 lakh subsidy to SC-ST, small and marginal, women and farmers of the North-eastern states to buy drones.

For other farmers, financial assistance would be given up to 40 per cent or a maximum Rs. 4 lakh, the minister added.

In order to provide agri-

cultural services through drone application, financial assistance @ 40 per cent of the basic cost of the drone and its attachments or Rs.4 lakh, whichever was less, was also provided for drone purchase by existing and new Custom Hiring Centers (CHCs) under the cooperative society of farmers, farmers' producer organizations and rural entrepreneurs, Tomar said.

The government was also helping farmers access modern technology to improve the efficiency of inputs such as seeds, fertilizers and irrigation, he added.



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