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Farmers welfare integral part of new India says Agri Minister

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Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister Radha Mohan Singh, while addressing the conference of Vice Chancellors of State Agriculture Universities and Directors of ICAR institutes in Pusa, New Delhi, said that in the "Sabka Sath - Sabka Vikas" mantra of Hon'ble Prime Minister, Farmers' Welfare is an integral part of New India. Under this, a number of strategic initiatives have been taken to accelerate the progress of agriculture and to transform the farm sector. In this direction, various initiatives have been taken by the Agriculture Universities and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

He said that in the last four and half years, the ICAR has supplemented the Government's "Soil Health Card" initiative and has developed a mini Lab "Mridaparikshak" for soil testing. For problems related to climate change, 45 Integrated Farming System Models (IFS) have been created by including all the 15 agro-climatic regions to benefit small and marginal farmers.

Singh said that with the efforts of Modi government, for the first time, on the lines of ICAR's leading institute IARI-Pusa, IARI-Assam is being established and IARI-Jharkhand has been established. An Administrative block in IARI-Jharkhand was recently inaugurated. At the same time, 6 new colleges have been opened under Central Agricultural University (CAU), Imphal and Indian Institute of Agricultural Biotechnology (IIAB) has been established in Ranchi, Jharkhand.

He informed that various policy initiatives taken by the government in the last four and a half years have resulted in record production of food grains and horticulture crops in the country in the current year. The food grain production rose by 7.5% to 284.83 million tonnes in 2017-18 from 265.04 million tonnes in 2013-14. In 2017-18, pulse production stood at 25.23 million tonnes, which is close to the self-dependency mark. As a result, its import fell to 5.65 lakh tonnes in 2017-18 from 10 lakh tonnes in 2016-17, thereby saving Rs 9775 crore in foreign exchange. The first advance estimates of 2018-19 pegs horticulture production at 314.67 million tonne against 311.7 million tonne in 2017-18.

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