

Tobacco farmers switch to natural farming methods

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Aim is to tide over severe drought conditions

Natural farming is being adopted by farmers cultivating Flue Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco in a big way to tide over the prevailing drought conditions. Tobacco Board chairperson K. Sunitha has said the board has succeeded in its endeavour to motivate farmers to adopt natural farming methods at all auction platforms in Andhra Pradesh last year.

The tobacco growers have been facing severe drought conditions for the last four years, resulting in deterioration of yield and quality and in production of more low grade crops in Prakasam, Nellore and West Godavari districts.



“The Tobacco Board is emphasising on protecting the soil health so that the growers use more organic fertilizers. For this, the growers can choose green manuring to enrich the soil to face drought conditions by keeping minimum moisture in the soil. This year, the Tobacco Board has made arrangements to supply 3,20,000 kg of sunhemp seeds to the growers of Prakasam, Nellore and West Godavari districts for green manuring,” said Ms. Sunitha.

In natural farming, growers should not stop sowing of green manure seeds because of scanty rainfall. They can sow these seeds by adopting natural farming methods by dipping the seed in Drava Jeevamrutham prepared with cow dung and cow urine for 10 minutes. The growers have followed this method in Prakasam for sunhemp seeds sown recently and they have germinated in the recent rain.

Alternative crops

The growers should also allocate at least one acre to cover with 365 days green cover to get additional benefits. The chairperson has visited fields in Zaheerabad, Davuluripalem, Attota in Guntur district and Darsi, Medarametla in Prakasam district. Further, she has advised the growers to go for mixed cropping wherever feasible. The growers chose alternative crops too.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/tobacco-farmers-switch-tonatural-farming-methods/article28268997.ece>