

Union Agriculture Minister inaugurates the National Conference on Soil Health Management for Sustainable Farming

Prime Minister committed to achieve the goal of sustainable development: Shri Narendra Singh Tomar

22 crore Soil Health Cards distributed to farmers across the country: Union Agriculture Minister

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Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar today inaugurated the National Conference on Soil Health Management for Sustainable Farming. On this occasion, Shri. Tomar said that due to chemical farming and other reasons, soil fertility is getting eroded and climate change is going to be a big concern for the country as well as the world. He said Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has concerns about climate change and from time to time prepares plans and keeps working on these plans. He said Prime Minister Shri Modi is committed towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



On the occasion of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and World Soil Day, NITI Aayog in collaboration with GIZ affiliated to the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany, Chief Guest Shri Tomar said that the lack of organic carbon in the soil is a serious concern for us. To meet this serious challenge and for better soil health, we have to promote natural farming, which is beneficial for the environment. He said that to promote natural farming, the Government of India under the leadership of Prime

Minister Shri Modi is working with the States. The Government has re-adopted the Indian Natural Farming System for Agriculture. Natural Farming System is an ancient technique used by farmers for farming and at that time people also knew how to live in harmony with the nature, he added. States like Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu etc. have made many innovations to promote natural farming. During the last year, an additional area of 4.78 lakh hectares has been brought under natural farming in 17 States. To promote natural farming, the Central Government has approved the National Mission on Natural Farming as a separate scheme with an expenditure of Rs. 1,584 crores, Shri Tomar said. Under the Namami Gange programme, the project of natural farming is going on along the banks of the Ganges, while the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and all Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), Central and State Agricultural Universities and Colleges are making all-round efforts to promote natural farming.

Shri Tomar said that the Government of India is also working through Soil Health Card. In two phases, more than 22 crore Soil Health Cards have been distributed to farmers across the country. Infrastructure development is also being done by the Government under the Soil Health Management Scheme, in which there is a provision to set up different types of Soil Testing Laboratories. So far, 499 permanent Soil Testing Laboratories, 113 Mobile Soil Testing Laboratories, 8,811 Mini Soil Testing Laboratories and 2,395 Village-level Soil Testing Laboratories have been established. He said that there was a time when the policies were production-oriented, due to chemical farming, agricultural yield increased, but now the situation has changed, and with climate change, keeping soil health intact is a big challenge. He said that if an attempt is made to exploit the earth contrary to the principles of nature, the consequences can be dangerous. Today, due to chemical farming, the soil's fertility is being eroded, the country and the world should avoid this and fulfill our environmental responsibility.

In the conference, Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog, Shri Suman Berry, Member Prof. Ramesh Chand, CEO Shri Parameswaran Iyer, Senior Advisor Ms. Neelam Patel, Central Agricultural University Vice Chancellor of Jhansi, Dr. A.K. Singh and Mr. Drik Steffis, along with several scientists, policymakers and other stakeholders were present. Various technical sessions were addressed by experts at the conference.

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