

SOIL HEALTH CARD SCHEME OF CENTRAL GOVT: A SUCCESS STORY

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Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare

Soil Health Card scheme of Central Govt: A success story

In second phase 11.69 crore Soil Health Cards distributed to farmers in two years

Use of Chemical Fertilizers declines by 10%

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The Soil Health Card scheme launched by the Modi Government during the financial year 2014-15 with a view to address the decline of soil nutrients, has started reaping fruit. In the second phase of the scheme 11.69 crore Soil Health Cards have been distributed to farmers in the last two years.

Under the guidance of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and directions of the Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, the Ministry is issuing the Soil Health Cards. This has enabled the farmers to understand the soil health parameters and improve its productivity by judicious application of soil nutrients.

A study conducted by the National Productivity Council (NPC) says the application of Soil Health Card recommendations has led to a decline of 8-10% in use of chemical fertilizers and also raised productivity by 5-6%.

Under the Central Government's Soil Health Card Scheme Phase-I (Years 2015 to 2017) 10.74 crore cards were distributed, while under the Phase-II 11.69 crore cards have been give away during the period 2017-19.

In the current financial year a pilot project "Development of Model Villages" is being implemented under which the sampling and testing of cultivable soil is being encouraged in partnership with the farmers. Under the project a Model Village has been selected for aggregation of soil samples and analysis of each agricultural holding. As part of the scheme 13.53 lakh Soil Health Cards have been distributed during the year 2019-20.

For the setting up of Soil Health Laboratories under the scheme the states have been sanctioned 429 static labs, 102 new mobile labs, 8,752 mini labs, 1,562 village-level laboratories and strengthening of 800 existing labs.

The scheme provides for the analysis of soil composition by the State Governments once in every two years so that remedial steps can be taken to improve soil nutrients. Farmers can track their soil samples and also obtain their Soil Health Card report.

While the Soil Health Management Scheme has turned out to be a blessing for the farmers, it is

also creating jobs for the agrarian youth. Under the scheme village youth and farmers up to 40 years of age are eligible to set up Soil Health Laboratories and undertake testing. A laboratory costs up to Rupees Five Lakhs, 75% of which can be funded by the Central and State Governments. The same provisions apply to Self Help Groups, Farmers' Cooperative Societies, Farmers Groups and Agricultural Producing Organisations.

Interested youth farmers and Organisations can submit their proposals either in person to the Deputy Director (Agriculture) / Joint Secretary (Agriculture) or in their offices in respective districts. For details visit websites agricoop.nic.in or soilhealth.dac.gov.in or dial Kisan Call Centre (1800-180-1551).

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