

UNION AGRICULTURE MINISTER CALLS FOR FARMERS' MOVEMENT ON INTEGRATED SOIL NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT BASED ON SOIL HEALTH CARD

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Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare

Union Agriculture Minister calls for farmers' movement on integrated soil nutrient management based on Soil Health Card

Launch mission mode awareness campaigns on increasing use of bio and organic fertilisers and reducing chemical fertilisers: Shri Narendra Singh Tomar

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The Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar has called for making integrated soil nutrient management a farmers' movement. Reviewing the progress of the Soil Health Programme here today, he directed running mission mode awareness campaigns on increasing use of bio and organic fertilisers and reducing chemical fertilisers strictly based on recommendations of Soil Health Card.

During 2020-21, the major focus of the programme would be on mass awareness programme for farmers in over 1 lakh villages covering all districts of the country. Shri Tomar advocated the setting up of village level Soil Testing Labs by youth having education in agriculture, Women Self Help Groups, FPOs etc. He said the SHC scheme will focus on enabling employment generation after appropriate skill development.

The Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers' Welfare will launch a comprehensive campaign on soil test based rational application of fertilisers and promotion of organic farming including Bhartiya Prakritik Krishi Padhati (BPKP) for safe nutritious food in association with the Departments of Panchayat Raj, Rural Development and Drinking Water and Sanitation.

Under the SHC scheme Soil Health Cards are provided to all farmers at an interval of 2 years. Launched by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on February 19, 2015 at Suratgarh, Rajasthan, these cards provide information to farmers on nutrient status of their soil along with recommendation on appropriate dosage of nutrients to be applied for improving soil health and its fertility.

Deterioration of soil chemical, physical and biological health is considered as one of the reasons for stagnation of agricultural productivity in India.

Soil Health Card provides two sets of fertilizer recommendations for six crops including recommendations of organic manures. Farmers can also get recommendations for additional

crops on demand. They can also print the card as their own from SHC portal. SHC portal has farmers database of both the cycles and is available in 21 languages for the benefit of the farmers.

A 2017 study by the National Productivity Council (NPC) found that the SHC scheme has promoted sustainable farming and led to a decrease of use of chemical fertilizer application in the range of 8-10%. Besides, overall increase in the yield of crops to the tune of 5-6% was reported due to application of fertilizer and micro nutrients as per recommendations available in the Soil Health Cards.

APS/PK/MS/BA

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