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Shri Radha Mohan Singh addresses a gathering at the Two-Day Rabi Conference – 2017-18 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi

Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister, Shri Radha Mohan Singh said that considering its importance, the Government has accorded top priority to the agriculture sector and Finance Ministry announced Rs.62,376 crore fund allocation for the sector in 2017-18. The government's aim is to increase the productivity and ensure farmers can get the remunerative price of their produce. The Government is also ensuring that along with special focus on dairy/animal husbandry/fishery, the agriculture education, research, and expansion system is further extended. Shri Radha Mohan Singh said that it is our responsibility to make special efforts to improve the agricultural sector so that it provides strong trade opportunities. Shri Singh said this today at the Two-Day Rabi Conference – 2017-18 organized at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

Shri Radha Mohan Singh said at the Rabi Conference, crop wise target is fixed and arrangement of supplies to different states is decided in consultation with the officials of various state governments. The use of recent technologies and new practices in the agriculture sector is also reviewed. At the conference, strategy for the upcoming Rabi season is discussed, ideas and experiences are exchanged and a roadmap is prepared.

Shri Singh said that Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has a dream of doubling farmers' income by 2022 and to make his dream come true, we have launched several schemes. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana, Soil Health Card scheme, Neem Coated Urea and e-NAM are some of the major schemes which have been launched to increase production and farmers' income.

On the occasion, Union Agriculture Minister said that he has written to the State Governments to devise a strategy and focus on production to post-production activities while strategizing. Shri Singh said that to improve crop production, the Ministry has started the National

Food Security Mission (NSFM), National Horticulture Mission (NHM), Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), National Mission on Agricultural Extension and Technology and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

Shri Radha Mohan Singh said that there is a special emphasis is to increase the production and productivity of oilseed crops. For this, the National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP) has been started in 2014-15, which has three Mini Missions (MM) namely – MM on Oilseeds, MM on Oil Palm and MM on tree-borne oilseeds.

Expressing his happiness, Shri Singh said that various schemes of the Ministry have been converted into special missions, schemes, and programs to achieve of 4% targeted annual development in agriculture and allied sectors. The joint efforts of stakeholders resulted in a record food grain production in the country estimated to be 275.68 million tonnes in 2016-17. The production of the current year is 18.67 million tonnes, which is more than the average production of food grains in the last five years (2011-12 to 2015-16). The production is 24.11 million tonnes more than the production of food grains in 2015-16.

The total production of rice in the country is estimated at 110.15 million tonnes in 2016-17. This is 4.73 million tonnes more than the average rice output of 105.42 million tonnes in the last five years. During the year 2016-17, the production of rice has increased substantially to 5.74 million tonnes compared to 104.41 million tonnes in the year 2015-16.

Production of wheat is also estimated at 98.38 million tonnes, a record. Wheat production in 2016-17 is 6.09 million tonnes more than 92.29 million tonnes during 2016. Union Agriculture Minister said that the government is also protecting the interests of farmers by announcing the minimum support price for major agricultural commodities.

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