

A Glimpse on the Initiatives and Achievements of the Ministry of Agriculture

Union Minister of Agriculture, Shri Radha Mohan Singh has said that all round development of the Agro Sector is the higher priority of the Government. It has taken a number of initiatives for the development of Agro and allied sector which include advance research facilities for farm techniques, use of information technology to transfer information and knowledge to the farmers at grass root level and improved crop insurance and finance to the farmers.

Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Mody, with his clear thinking and vision for agriculture and agricultural development, is leading the nation to an effective and speedy implementation of agricultural programmes. His vision is to reduce the gap from lab to land to increase productivity, to use new technologies on a continuous basis in agriculture and to increase the exports of agricultural commodities leading to rapid economic growth. During the last four months, from the constitution of the new Government in May 2014, we have been seen examples proving how effective leadership can boost the country's economy.

Pasted below are the major highlights of various initiatives and achievements undertaken by the Ministry of agriculture.

- ✚ The deficit of rain in June 2014 was (-) 43%, which by July 2014 became (-) 22%. To cope with this deficit rainfall, Government took some important measures, such as **diesel subsidy scheme, additional financial assistance to protect horticulture crops, increase in seed subsidy, additional fodder development scheme**, waiving of import duty on oil cakes etc.
- ✚ In some rain deficit parts of the country, there is still a possibility of adverse impact on Rabi crops due to lack of adequate soil moisture. The Rabi Conference was held on 17-18 September 2014 with the State officials and an effective plan has been prepared to combat this challenge. We have targeted to achieve production of 94 million tonnes of wheat, 14 million tonnes of Rabi paddy, 12.5 million tonnes of pulses and 11 million tonnes of oilseeds in the ensuing Rabi season.
- ✚ Ministry of Agriculture has prepared a **Mission Mode Scheme to issue Soil Health Card** to all farmers. A programme has been formulated to issue 3 crore Soil Health Cards in 2014-15, 5.5 crore in 2015-16 and 5.5 crore Soil Health cards in 2016-17. State-wise allocation has been made for establishing 100 Mobile Soil Testing Laboratories in 2014-2015.

- ✚ Under the **Prime Minister Krishi Sinchai Yojana**, being launched shortly, the implementation of small and major Irrigation schemes held up for years will be expedited under the joint monitoring of Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Rural Development and Agriculture Ministry.
- ✚ In order to check rising prices of fruits and vegetables, these have been kept outside the purview of APMC Act in Delhi. Other States have also been advised to take similar steps. Some States have already taken steps in this direction. In a short span of time, we have completed all formalities to set up a Kisan mandi in Alipur, Delhi, which will be inaugurated on 25th September. Farmer Producer Organizations have started direct marketing of onion and potatoes at reasonable prices in Delhi. With the help of newly announced **Price Stabilization Fund**, work is going to commence very soon to buy from farmers and sell directly to consumers at reasonable prices, Potato and Onion in the initial phase and gradually extending this to other vegetables.
- ✚ **Saffron Park** inaugurated in Kashmir with an aim to improve the productivity, quality and marketing of saffron.
- ✚ Under Agri Marketing Infrastructure, the **Grameen Bhandaran Yojana** has been made more effective, as a result of which the budget for the entire year has been released in only 4 months.
- ✚ A project titled "**Bhartiya Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Pariyojana**" has been formulated to promote Organic Farming. The objective is to promote eco-friendly concept of cultivation reducing the dependency on agro-chemicals and fertilizers and to optimally utilize the locally available natural resources for input production.
- ✚ **Crop insurance schemes** currently under implementation suffer from several deficiencies and operational difficulties. Suggestions have been sought from Chief Ministers of all the States/UTs in this regard. It is proposed to roll out new crop insurance scheme for insuring the production, productivity and income risk faced by the farmers.
- ✚ Information relating to **registration of Multi State Cooperative Society has been made available online**, in order to facilitate easy availability of information to the applicant and ensure transparency.
- ✚ **A project has been sanctioned to ICRISAT**, an international institution for Rs. 12.65 crores for developing new varieties of chickpea, utilizing analysis of chickpea genome.
- ✚ **Mobile SMS:** In the last 100 days, 32.29 crore agriculture based information and advisories were sent to farmers over mobile which is almost equal to the number during the period since inception of this facility (16th July, 2013) till 25th May, 2014. Till date 186 crore **SMSs** have been sent to farmers which is not only the highest amongst all the e-

Services of the Central Government but also the biggest initiatives from the Government towards providing SMS based Citizen Services.

- ✚ The Department has started obtaining Farmers' Feedback on the quality of information received by farmers through IVRS and SMS under the **m-Kisan Portal** and the **Kisan Call Centres** (through toll free number 1800-180-1551).
- ✚ **USSD technology has been implemented by the Department as a new initiative** in a big way towards use of Information Technology in **mobile telephony**. Under this service the farmers can obtain selected information available on internet through an interactive session on SMS without having internet connection. This information is also provided through pull SMS.
- ✚ **A Farmers' Portal (www.farmer.gov.in)**(at present in Hindi and English) for the farmers and also **m-Kisan portal (www.mKisan.gov.in)** to present mobile based services in an integrated manner have been launched on internet.
- ✚ **E governance and Digitization:** ICAR has started implementation of e governance to promote disposal of administrative matter electronically.

Agricultural Research and Education

Efforts have been initiated to establish new Research Institutions on the lines of Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) in the States of Asom and Jharkhand that are expected to give a new direction to the development of farming and farmers in these states. The primary objective of national institution is to strengthen the agricultural research and education. These institutions will provide guidance and national leadership in transfer of technology and setting up of standards and quality benchmarks. It is expected that the establishment of these institutions will help to bring the green revolution in the eastern parts of the country.

- New Agricultural Universities in Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan
- New Horticultural Universities in Telangana and Haryana
- Foundation Stone of Indian Institute of Agricultural Biotechnology laid in Ranchi, Jharkhand on 25 August, 2014 by Hon'ble Union Minister of Agriculture.

✚ **New National Initiatives sanctioned in EFC Meetings**

- **Farmer FIRST** (Farmer, Innovation, Resources, Science & Technology) Project involving linkage of farmers with scientists, technology assessment, demonstration and training and capacity development of farmers (Budget allocation Rs. 300 crores).

- **Student READY** (Rural Entrepreneurship and Awareness Development Yojana) program in agricultural education for developing entrepreneurship among youth through skill development of students in project mode will be implemented in different agricultural universities (Budget allocation Rs. 50 crores).
- **ARYA** (Attracting and Retaining Youth in Agriculture) - an innovative program to check the migration of rural youth and retain their interest in agriculture through creation of new employment opportunities will be implemented in project mode (Budget allocation Rs. 100 crores).

🚧 **Four new Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)** namely Bogaigaon, Morigaon and Buxa districts of Assam and Ramgarh district of Jharkhand has been established. A review was undertaken of all KVKs in the country and a work plan initiated for meeting the infrastructural and human resource requirements of all the KVKs within a year.

🚧 New improved variety "**Swarna Vaidehi**" of Makhana released to the farmers.

Rashtriya Gokul Mission: Rashtriya Gokul Mission, a project under the National Program for Bovine Breeding and Dairy Development, is being launched with the objective of conserving and developing indigenous breeds to enhance their productivity through professional farm management and superior nutrition and upgradation of indigenous bovine germplasm with an outlay of Rs. 500 Crores.

National Kamdhenu Breeding Centre: The National Kamdhenu Breeding Centre will be a repository of indigenous germplasm and a source of Certified Genetics in the Country. Elite certified germplasm will be made available to Farmers, Breeders, Breeding Institutes and Trusts maintaining Indigenous Breeds. A Nucleus Herd of all the Indigenous
