



Mission on Sustainable Dry Land Agriculture, Tamil Nadu

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Summary of the Initiative

The Agriculture Department of Tamil Nadu launched the Mission on Sustainable Dry Land Agriculture (MSDA) mission in 2016 for Dry Land farming, focusing on improving the production and productivity of millets, pulses, and oilseeds. The Mission covered various aspects such formation of dry land clusters, village clubs, comprehensive land development, value addition, strengthening FPOs, custom hiring centers, animal husbandry, etc.

Situation before Initiative

Government of Tamil Nadu intends to have more than 4% growth in agriculture. Around 70% of the population are involved in agricultural activities as this is one of the major means of their livelihood. The Agricultural Department of Tamil Nadu thus decided to implement various development Schemes and generate innovative technologies to ensure growth in the State's agriculture as well as to improve the economic status of the cultivation sector. MSDA is one of the major initiatives taken by the Government to enhance millet area and cultivation, increase value addition, and thereby mitigate malnutrition in the State.

Nature of Initiative

The State Government, with a focus to increase the income of farmers in dryland area, announced a special Scheme Mission on Sustainable Dryland Agriculture (MSDA) with a sanctioned, amount of Rs.802.9 Crore, in 25 districts with the main objective of developing 25 Lakh acre of dryland by forming 1000 dry land clusters of 2,500 acre each. Many districts with dry land agriculture land have been identified for converting them into fertile land for growing millets.

The following activities were implemented under MSDA:





Impact of Initiative

MSDA has had a great impact on transforming millet and other crop cultivation. Total area of millet increased by 25% despite a 24% deficit in the rainfall. During 2019-20, Rs.100 crores were extended to target 10 lakh acre of dry land to benefit 3.70 lakh dry land farmers by forming another 400 dryland clusters and implementing the welfare activities¹⁰. Cultivation of millets, pulses, oil seeds and cotton in 15 lakh acre of dry land was encouraged with distribution of seeds and other inputs at 50% cost with extended subsidy to 5.73 Lakh dryland farmers and ploughing subsidy at Rs.500/acre for 15 lakh acres.

174 Value Addition Machinery Units for Millet and other processing units were commissioned with a financial assistance of Rs.10 Lakh /unit or 75 % of the machinery cost whichever is less. 801 Village level Custom Hiring Centers have been established which enabled timely availability of machinery and created employment to rural youth. Through this scheme, soil moisture conservation techniques and improved dryland technologies were disseminated to dryland farmers to reap higher yield in dryland crops like millets, thereby improving socio economic status of the farming community.

Source : [State Missions and Initiatives to Promote Millets](#) 

Source: <https://data.vikaspedia.in/short/lc?k=Qr4l2S4gvRO9SpIgj1rQ>

