



# Shri Radha Mohan Singh inaugurates India's Western Regional Agriculture Fair – 2017 in Bikaner

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Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Radha Mohan Singh inaugurated India's Western Regional Agriculture Fair – 2017 in Bikaner today.

Shri Singh, while addressing the people, said that most of the blocks in Rajasthan have gone into dark zones. In such circumstances, the scientists are to develop such techniques and high yielding varieties of seeds which are adaptable with lesser quantity of water. He further said that the farmers and agriculture scientists should work together for the utilization of every drop of water in agriculture. The Minister of Agriculture briefed this today on the eve of inaugural function organized in the complex of Swami Keshwanand Rajasthan Krishi University, Bikaner on the occasion of Indian Western Regional Agriculture Fair 2017.

The Minister of Agriculture said that the government has initiated Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana to channelise maximum potential for irrigation and to get rid of the problems related to drought. He added that the scheme aims at water for every farm. The government has started another ambitious programme titled as Soil Health Card Scheme for the farmers. Now, the farmers will be capable to get the knowhow of nutritious elements existed in their soil resulting in better production on their farms.

The Minister of Agriculture further said that Government of India has fixed an ambitious target for making the farmers income double in the next five years. To achieve this target, the out of box initiative has been taken instead of traditional system. Towards this, the establishment of National Agriculture Mandi E-NAM portal is an revolutionary initiative for the farmers with which farmers can sale their agricultural products on better prices in any of the mandis.

Shri Singh said that the agriculture budget for 2017-18 has been increased to Rs. 51,026 crores from Rs. 44,250 crores in the previous year. A separate fund has been set up amounting to Rs. 20,000 crores meant for irrigation with the assistance of NABARD. The government has increased agriculture loan up to Rs. 9 lakh crore this year which would enable the farmers to get more loans. He added that till 2013-14 under National Food Security Mission, only 3 crops – rice, wheat and pulses were covered. Now, seven crops viz. rice, wheat, pulses, jute, sugarcane, cotton and cereals have been covered under the mission.

Thereafter the Minister of Agriculture addressed the people in a function organized in Veterinary and Veterinary Science Univeristy, Rajasthan (Rajuvas), Bikaner. He said that for the first time in the country a new initiative titled as Rashtriya Gokul Mission has been initiated with the allocation of Rs. 500 crore for preserving and promoting the domestic species of bovines under National Bovine Breeding and Dairy Development Programme. Under this mission, 14 Gokul Villages are being set up and 35 Animal Breeding Centers are being made sophisticated by providing the bulls of improved species with the assistance of more funds. Further, 3629 bulls have been allocated for genetic improvement.

Shri Singh further said that government had incurred only Rs. 45 crores during 2007-08 to 2013-14 for the growth of the domestic species of bovines whereas the existing government has sanctioned a sum of Rs. 582.09 crores for 35 proposals obtained from 27 states only within a span of 1½ years by December, 2015. This amount has been multiplied 13 times more during two last years. Two new National Kamdhenu Breeding Centres (each in Madhya Pradesh – North India and Andhra Pradesh – South India) are being established for which Rs. 50 crore have been allotted.

The Minister of Agriculture said that for removing the shortfalls of trained veterinary physicians, the strength of veterinary colleges has been increased from 36 to 46 and the strength of the students to be admitted in these colleges has been increased from 60 to 100. He further said that the number of total seats in 17 veterinary colleges have been enhanced from 1914 to 1334. The number of veterinary post graduate students has been increased up to 1½ times more. Even 1½ times more seats have been enhanced in veterinary colleges. Extensive modifications have been made in Veterinary Minimum Standards Regulations, 2008 to transform the existing graduate veterinary courses and parameters as per the approved standards on global level.

Shri Singh further added that new scheme – National Bovine Productivity Mission has been started in November 2016 with the amount of Rs. 825 crores. This scheme is comprised of four components – Pashudhan Sanjivini Nakul Swasthya Patra, Unnat Prajanan Taknik, Rashtriya Desi Nasal Genomic Kendra, e-Pashudhan Haat. He further added that outbreaks have been reduced from 377 to 109 as compared to the year of 2013 by dint of the improved techniques for the treatment of foot and mouth diseases of animals under Animal Health Improvement Programme.

On this occasion, Minister of Agriculture briefed that total milk production during 2015-16 was 52.21 million ton which increased to 54.50 million ton in 2016-17. An increase of 4.38% has been recorded in the area of milk production. During 2015-16 the total production of eggs was 27.33 billion which increased up to 29.09 billion during 2016-17. An increase of 6.42% has been recorded in eggs production. During 2015-16, the production of meat was 2.24 million ton which enhanced to 2.23 million ton in 2016-17. An increase of 8.74% has been recorded in meat production.

Shri Singh briefed that Government of India has taken a decision to celebrate 3<sup>rd</sup> December as Agriculture Education Day to commemorate the anniversary of 1<sup>st</sup> President and Agriculture Minister of India, Bharat Ratna, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, for inspiration of youth. Similarly, it has been decided to celebrate 15<sup>th</sup> October as Women Agriculture Day. He further informed that the report of 5th Dean Committee on ICAR is being implemented from academic session of 2016-17. Three new Central Agricultural Universities have been established. Simultaneously two new IARI (Jharkhand, Assam) are also being set up. The government has decided to implement Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Improved Agriculture Education Scheme in 100 education institutes of the country so as to promote agriculture education on grass root level. He added that record 310 new species of crops have been released this year and 663 Krishi Vigyan Kendras have been set up to make the agriculture and livestock techniques accessible to the farmers.

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