



Shri Singh inaugurates two-day National Conference on Agriculture for Kharif Campaign-2017

Posted On: 25 APR 2017 5:19PM by PIB Delhi

The National Conference on Agriculture for Kharif Campaign - 2017 is being organised on 25th and 26th April, 2017 at New Delhi. The Conference was inaugurated by Shri Radha Mohan Singh, Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare and also addressed by Shri Parshottam Rupala and Shri Sudarshan Bhagat, Ministers of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

The Conference was attended by Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers' Welfare, besides Agriculture Production Commissioners / Principal Secretaries / Secretaries / Directors of the State Departments of Agriculture, Horticulture and Agriculture Marketing, Senior Scientists from ICAR and other officials from relevant Ministries and agencies.

In his inaugural address, Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare applauded efforts of the Central and State Governments in attaining an estimated record production of about 272 million metric tons in foodgrains and 33.6 million tons oilseeds. Shri Singh particularly referred to the expected quantum jump in pulses production, which is estimated at a record breaking 22.14 million metric tons as per the second Advance Estimates. Shri Radha Mohan Singh pointed out to the encouraging first stage forecast of the South West monsoon during Kharif 2017 and exhorted the States to make all necessary arrangements of agricultural inputs for our farmers. Shri Singh further stressed on the commitment of the Government to double the income of farmers by the year 2022 and the initiatives taken by the Central Government towards this end. A roadmap has been prepared to scale up pulses production to 24 MMTs by 2021. Union Agriculture Minister complimented states that have achieved the target of delivery of soil health cards to all farmers and exhorted the others to complete the first phase by in the next 2-3 months. Shri Singh pointed out that the second cycle of the Soil Health Card scheme will commence in May 2017. Shri Singh referred to growing popularity of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and hoped that the States will expand the coverage further this year. Union Agriculture Minister encouraged States to implement the Paramparagat Krishi Yojana in a mission mode to promote organic farming, particularly in the rainfed and hilly areas. Shri Singh reiterated the need to introduce marketing reforms in agriculture sector to enable farmers a better price realisation.

In his address, Shri Parshottam Rupala Minister of State for Agriculture highlighted the achievements made under flagship schemes of the Department and made a particular reference to the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana which was launched from Kharif, 2016. Under this new scheme, comprehensive risk coverage from pre-sowing to post-harvest losses has been provided. Minister of State, Shri Rupala exhorted the States to leverage technology in the implementation of the scheme and achieve the targets for insurance coverage of 40% and 50% of the total cropped area/farmers during 2017-18 and 2019-20 respectively.

In his address, Shri Sudarshan Bhagat, Minister of State for Agriculture stated that it was absolutely imperative that all flagship schemes of the Governments are given the highest priority to bring about material improvements in the lives of our farmers.

Union Agriculture Secretary, Shri Shobhana K. Pattanayak in his address pointed out the multipronged strategy needed to double farmers' income by 2022. He laid particular emphasis on initiatives to reduce cost of production, bridging the yield gaps in productivity and ensuring better price realisation for our farmers. He particularly emphasised the necessity for adoption of technology in this regard.

Eight Groups have been formed for in depth discussion on following topics:

- I. Market reforms - introduction of contract farming, effective role of e-NAM and inter-market trading on e-NAM platform.
- II. Sustainability of pulses production in the coming season.
- III. Best Mechanization practices to avoid burning of straw.
- IV. Utilization of Corpus fund under PMKSY.
- V. Doubling of farmers' income based on paper circulated by Prof. Ramesh Chand, Member, NITI Aayog.
- VI. Making North-East and the Himalayan States a power houses of horticultural development - Organic Farming.
- VII. Issues related to Horticulture
- VIII. Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)

The Groups will be expected to come up with recommendations on each of the topics in the plenary in the concluding day of the Conference tomorrow.

