



**Press Information Bureau
Government of India**



Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare

Soil Health Card

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(Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare)

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"Swasth Dharaa. Khet Haraa." – Healthy Earth. Green Farm.

-Prime Minister Narendra Modi

1. Introduction

The Soil Health Card Scheme^[1] was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi^[2] on 19.02.2015 at Suratgarh, Rajasthan. On the occasion, the Prime Minister gave the slogan: "Swasth Dharaa. Khet Haraa." - Healthy Earth, Green Farm. Referring to the song "Vande Mataram," he said that in order to achieve a land that is truly "Sujalam, Suphalam," it is necessary to nurture the soil. PM Modi added that soil health card scheme is a step towards fulfilling this dream.

The scheme^[3] has been introduced to assist State Governments to issue soil health cards^[4] to all farmers in the country. Soil health card provides information to farmers on nutrient status of their soil along with recommendation on appropriate dosage of nutrients to be applied for improving soil health and its fertility.

The International Year of Soils^[5] was celebrated in 2015; the same year, the unique programme of soil health card was launched in India to assess the nutrient status of every farm holding in the country.

2. Objectives^[6]:

- To issue soil health cards^[7] every two years to all farmers, so as to provide a basis to address nutrient deficiencies in fertilization practices.
- To strengthen functioning of Soil Testing Laboratories^[8] (STLs) through capacity building, involvement of agriculture students and effective linkage with Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)^[9] / State Agricultural Universities (SAUs).^[10]
- To diagnose soil fertility related constraints with standardized procedures for sampling uniformly across states and analysis and design taluka / block level fertilizer recommendations in targeted districts.
- To develop and promote soil test based nutrient management in the districts for enhancing nutrient use efficiency.
- To provide financial assistance to farmers to apply corrective measures for deficiencies and popularizing balance and integrated nutrient management practices for their cropping systems.
- To build capacities of district and state level staff and of progressive farmers for promotion of nutrient management practices.

3. Key features of Soil Health Card Scheme^[11]

- Soil Health Card is a printed report that a farmer will be handed over for each of his holdings. It will contain the status of his soil with respect to 12 parameters, namely N (Nitrogen), P (Phosphorus), K (Potassium) [Macro-nutrients]; S (Sulphur) [Secondary- nutrient]; Zn (Zinc), Fe (Iron), Cu (Copper), Mn (Manganese), Bo (Boron) [Micro – nutrients]; and pH, EC, OC (Physical parameters). Based on this, the SHC will also indicate fertilizer recommendations and soil amendment required for the farm.
- The card will contain an advisory based on the soil nutrient status of a farmer's holding. It will show recommendations on dosage of different nutrients needed. Further, it will advise the farmer on the fertilizers and their quantities he should apply, and also the soil amendments that he should undertake, so as to realize optimal yields.
- The government is planning to cover as many as all farmers under the scheme.
- The scheme will cover all the parts of the country.
- In the form of soil card, the farmers will get a report and this report will contain all the details about the soil of their particular farm.
- A farm will get the soil card once in every three years.

4. Benefits of the Soil Health Card Scheme^[12]

- Under the scheme, soil is tested and a formatted report provided to farmers. So, they can decide which crops they should cultivate and which ones they should skip.
- The authorities test the soil on a regular basis and they provide a report to farmers. So, farmers need not worry if the nature of the soil changes due to certain factors. Also, they always have updated data about their soil.
- The work of the government does not stop at listing down measures required to improve the quality of the soil. In fact, Government also employs experts to help the farmers in carrying out the corrective measures.
- Farmers get a proper soil health record, thanks to the scheme. Farmers can also study the soil management practices and plan the future of their crops and land accordingly.

- Generally, in government schemes, the person carrying out the study for a particular farmer gets changed, but in the Soil Health Card Scheme, the government is paying attention to see to it that the same person carries out soil analysis for a farmer. Such efforts are helping to enhance the effectiveness of the scheme.
- The soil card gives the farmers a proper idea of which nutrients their soil is lacking, and hence, which crops they should invest in. It also tells the farmers which fertilizers they need.

5. Financial Progress of Soil Health Card Scheme^[13] :

(Rs in crore)

Year	Funds released
2014-15	23.89
2015-16	96.47
2016-17	133.66
2017-18	152.76
2018-19	237.40
2019-20	107.24
Total	751.42

6. Key Achievements

- Soil Health Cards issued[14]:** In Cycle- I (2015-17), 107348416 Soil Health Cards were issued to farmers. In Cycle-II (2017-19), 119773040 Soil Health Cards have been issued to farmers across the country.
- Setting up / strengthening of soil testing laboratories^[15]** - So far, 11531 new labs (491 static, 107 mobile, 8811 minilabs and 2122 village level labs) and strengthening of 829 labs have been sanctioned to the states.
- Organization of demonstrations, trainings and farmer melas^[16]** : Since 2015, around 6.04 lakh demonstrations, 36928 farmers' trainings and 7425 farmers' melas are organized/conducted under the programme. Along with state/ district agriculture machinery and *panchayats*, village level rural development workers like Krishi Sakhis, Pasu Sakhis are involved in educating farmers on right use of fertilizers.
- So far 6,954 villages have been identified[17] by the States in which against the target of 26.83 lakh samples / Soil Health Cards, 21.00 lakh samples have been collected, 14.75 lakh samples analysed and 13.59 lakh cards distributed to farmers. Apart from this, 2,46,979 demonstrations and 6,951 Farmer Melas approved to States
- The Government is also implementing the Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) scheme and promoting customized and fortified fertilizers for balanced use of fertilizers. So far, 21 fertilizers have been brought under the NBS scheme. At present, 35 customized and 25 fortified fertilizers notified by the Government are in use.
- During 2019-20, a pilot project 'Development of Model Villages' was taken up where soil samples collection has been taken up at individual farm holding with farmer's participation instead of sample collection at grids. Under the pilot project, one village per block is adopted for holding based soil testing and organization of larger number of demonstrations up to a maximum number of 50 demonstrations (1 hectare each) for each adopted village.
- While the Soil Health Management[18] Scheme has turned out to be a blessing for the farmers, it is also creating jobs for the agrarian youth. Under the scheme, village youth and farmers up to 40 years of age are eligible to set up Soil Health Laboratories and undertake testing. A laboratory costs up to Rs 5,00,000, 75per cent of which can be funded by the Central and State Governments. The same provisions apply to Self Help Groups, Farmers' Cooperative Societies, Farmers Groups and Agricultural Producing Organisations.^[19]

7. Implementation of Soil Health Card Scheme^[20]

Soil Health Card Scheme has been implemented in 32 States and UTs. The ranking of the States/UTs as per percentage of farmers covered is as follows:

States/UTs Ranking	Per cent Target Achieved	States/UTs
1	100	Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand and Dadra and Nagar Haveli.
2	90-95	Kerala
3	85-90	Haryana and Uttar Pradesh
4	80-85	Bihar, West Bengal and Goa

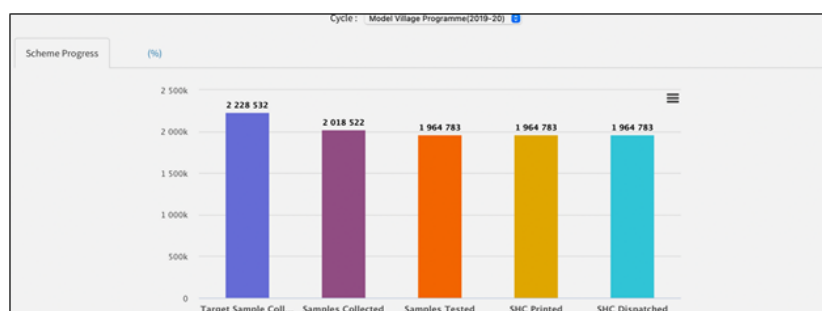
5	70-80	J&K
6	50-70	Puducherry and Andaman & Nicobar
7	40-50	Odisha
8	30-40	Sikkim
9	5-30	Nagaland
10	< 5	Arunachal Pradesh

8. Study on Impact of Soil Health Card Scheme by National Productivity Council^[21]

National Productivity Council (NPC)[22] carried out a study on 'Soil Testing Infrastructure for Faster Delivery of Soil Health Card in India' and submitted its report in February 2017. The study was conducted in 76 districts in 19 States covering 170 soil testing labs and 1700 farmers.

Some of the findings of the study are as follows:

- More than 90 per cent of farmers surveyed informed that they have not got their soil tested before the implementation of this scheme.
- 92 per cent farmers reported not having used balanced fertilizer and micro nutrients in absence of information related to availability of nutrients in their soil.
- As a result of application of fertilizer and micro-nutrients as per the recommendations on the Soil Health Cards, it was reported that there has been a decrease of use of chemical fertilizer application in the range of 8-10 per cent.
- Overall increase in the yield of crops to the tune of 5-6 per cent was reported due to application of fertilizer and micro nutrients as per recommendations available in the Soil Health Cards.



9. Scheme Progress[23]

Source

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