

# [***Union Minister Shri Arjun Munda and Shri Giriraj Singh inaugurate four major key initiatives of Agriculture Sector i.e Revamped Soil health card portal & mobile application, School Soil Health Programme, Krishi Sakhi convergence Programme and Central Fertilizer Quality Control and Training Institutes’ portal in New Delhi today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BGY-81C1-DY46-217S-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers’ Welfare Shri Arjun Munda and Union Minister for Rural Development Shri Giriraj Singh inaugurated jointly four major key initiatives of Agriculture Sector i.e Revamped ***Soil health*** card portal & mobile application, School ***Soil Health*** Programme, Krishi Sakhi convergence Programme and Central Fertilizer Quality Control and Training Institutes’ (CFQCTI’s) portal for fertilizer sample testing today in Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi.

During the event, Shri Arjun Munda said that the objective of these initiatives is to benefit the farmers even in remote areas and enable them to do farming with ease. He said that if our farmers are empowered by all such facilities, then they will make an important contribution not only for themselves but also for the country and the world. Union Minister said that the government is doing this work to create a cooperative-based India with the basic mantra of prosperity through cooperation.

Shri Arjun Munda also highlighted the importance of ***soil***. He said that ***Soil*** is our mother earth and it is our responsibility to keep the ***soil health*** good for the sake of every living being. Shri Munda said that the role of Krishi Sakhi is very important in maintaining better ***soil health***. Under the leadership of the Prime Minister, this great force has emerged, which can educate farmers about ***soil health***. He said that with women empowerment, we are moving towards meaningful results while taking steps towards the goal. Union Minister also highlighted the role of students in maintaining the good ***soil health***. He said that the school ***soil health*** programme is the key initiative which will guide students to understand the importance of ***soil*** and our environment. Under this, ***soil*** laboratories were established in some Kendriya and Navodaya Vidyalayas in rural areas. Training was given to students and teachers, who would participate in the development of their villages and agriculture sector.

During the event, Shri Giriraj Singh said that Krishi Sakhi Training Program has been launched as a joint initiative to certify Krishi Sakhis as “Para-Extension Workers”. He thanked Prime Minister Shri Modi that ***soil health*** has been given prime importance since he came to power at the Centre. Shri Singh said that in the form of programs like Krishi Sakhi and Drone Didi, a big force is engaged in doing good work in the country. He stressed upon the role of ***soil*** organic carbon in making the ***soil*** healthy and said that when the ***health of soil*** and animals improves, the ***health*** of humans also improves automatically.

Shri Giriraj Singh said that Real time data will also be available through the facilities launched today. He highlighted the role of Krishi Sakhi in making aware the farmers for sustainable agriculture practices and said that Krishi Sakhi will not only benefit farming, but will also increase its credibility in the society and will also increase confidence among farmers. He also advised to use organic and natural farming practices for wellbeing of the entire humanity. Shri Singh expressed hope that the market of organic products will increase significantly in the coming days. He urged to ensure contribution of all Krishi Vigyan Kendras in promoting organic farming. Union Minister Shri Singh said that the institutions related to agriculture should also keep real time data of carbon. He said that through such facilities, work is being done to implement Prime Minister Shri Modi’s dreams 100 percent in the country.

Revamped ***Soil health*** Card Portal and Mobile Application - ***Soil health*** card portal has been revamped and mobile application has been introduced for ***soil*** sample collection and testing. Portal has ***soil*** lab registry and the status of labs can be seen on real time basis. Labs are mapped with geo-coordinates on the portal.  Portal has facility to show the real time data of ***soil*** sample collection, test in labs and generation of ***Soil Health*** Card. App based QR code enabled ***soil*** sample collection system has been introduced in ***Soil Health*** Card Mobile Application. Under the new Portal, Centralized Dashboard at National, State and District Level have been provided. Geographic Information System (GIS) analytics are available on real time basis. Farmer can download ***Soil Health*** Card (SHC) through SMS Notification and by entering mobile number on the portal. Portal is having fertilizer management, Emoji based ***Soil health*** card, nutrient dashboard, heat maps of nutrients. Progress can be monitored now on real time basis through this initiative. Now, geo-coordinates of farmers filed from where samples are collected are being captured automatically through mobile application. App also registers plot details and workable in online and offline mode. Farmers can keep track of their ***soil*** sample till generation of ***Soil Health*** Card.

School ***Soil Health*** Programme- Department in collaboration with Department of School Education and Literacy has undertaken a pilot project on school ***soil health*** programme. Under the project, 20 ***soil*** labs were set up in 20 schools of Kendriya and Navodaya Vidylaya of rural areas. Study modules were developed and training was given to students and teachers. Mobile application was customized for the school programme and portal is having a separate segment for the programme where in all the activities of students has been documented. Now, this programme has been scaled up in 1000 schools. Kendriya Vidyalya, Navodaya Vidyalya and Eklavya Model Schools have been taken under this programme. Schools are being onboarded on the portal and online batches are being created. DA&FW through National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) will setup ***soil*** labs in these schools. School students will collect ***soil*** samples, test in the labs set up in schools and generate ***Soil health*** Card. After generating ***Soil Health*** Card, they will go to the farmers and educate them about recommendation of ***Soil health*** Card. The programme will provide students with the chance to conduct experiments, analyze ***soil*** samples, and explore the fascinating biodiversity within the ***soil***. By engaging in practical activities, students will develop critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and a holistic understanding of the interconnectedness of ecosystems. Furthermore, the ***Soil*** Lab Programme is not just about scientific exploration; it is about cultivating a sense of responsibility and respect for our environment. Students will learn about sustainable agricultural practices, the impact of human activities on ***soil health***, and the role each one of us plays in preserving the delicate balance of our ecosystems.

Krishi Sakhi Convergence Programme- In the heart of rural India, a silent revolution is taking root. The Krishi Sakhis are the driving force behind a rural transformation. To further fuel this revolution, as a part of the Convergence Initiative, between the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmer Welfare and Ministry of Rural Development - an MoU was signed on 30.08.2023 between the Ministries to converge their programs. As a part of the MoU, a joint initiative i.e Krishi Sakhis Training Programme to certify 70,000 Krishi Sakhis as “Para-Extension Workers” was launched. Krishi Sakhis play a pivotal role in implementing schemes like National Mission of Natural Farming (NMNF), Bio Resource Centres, Prdhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), and many more because of their strength which lies in their Commitment, Passion, Hard work & enthusiasm. Being local, knowing the local language, culture, practices and having undergone all the joy and sorrow together with the villagers and farmers, they understand the ecosystem better. Krishi Sakhis, most of them farmers themselves understand better and are in an advantageous position to explain to their friends, families, villages in a more relatable manner.

“They teach what they practice, They're the catalysts for rural development”.

Krishi Sakhis aren't just agricultural guides; they're farmers, friends of farmers, community resources, and awareness creators, connecting research institutions with the grassroots for technology dissemination. Krishi Sakhis, women from villages identified by SRLMs are being trained to bridge the gap in rural agricultural services with their innate potential and firmly rooted to farming & villages. This is the story of change and empowerment shaping the future of agriculture.

Certified Krishi Sakhis become para-extension workers, community resource persons for creating awareness and building capacity of farmers and also acts as a link between farmers, KVKs, Agriculture and Allied Departments. From a skilful communicator in agriculture to an innovative problem solver, Krishi Sakhis emerge as extraordinary individuals. Equipped with knowledge on agro ecology, Natural resource management, crop diversity, ***health*** and nutritional security, they become the backbone of sustainable farming in their villages.

They act as key resources, guiding farmers to access the benefits of these initiatives. They would carry out awareness generation meetings on Natural Farming, ***Soil health*** Management and Testing as part of Janbhagidari. These initiatives will have a direct impact on increasing the livelihood of the Krishi Sakhis and ensure wider reach for the agriculture programme and schemes. Till date close to 3500 Krishi Sakhis have already been trained and the program is being simultaneously implemented in 13 states.

Krishi Sakhis as Catalyst of Transformation: In the fields of change, Krishi Sakhis are the seeds of progress, nurturing a future of sustainable agriculture. These Krishi Sakhis are extraordinary women reshaping rural India.

CFQCTI Portal- In Fertiliser Quality Control System (FQCS) portal One Time Password (OTP) / SMS application facility has been introduced for sample collection at Ports and its testing. In the new portal, an OTP will be generated by the system and to be sent to the mobile number of authorized persons of the Importer wherein the person can verify the details are filled up by the Fertilizer Inspector in the prescribed Form-J as FCO,1985. In case of any anomaly, the authorized person may refuse to confirm OTP. The sample shall be allotted by the system automatically to the concerned Labs on randomize basis and the analysis report shall be issued through the system to the email-id of the authorized person of the Importer or directly to the Importer as the case may be. In second phase, the Portal can be updated for indigenously manufactured fertilizers sampling including live sampling at ports/dealer sale point etc.

The Meeting was attended by Secretary, Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW); Secretary, Rural Development; Director General, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and senior officers of Government of India. All States Agriculture Departments; various schools of Navoday Vidyalay Samiti (NVS); Kendriya Vidyalay Sangthan (KVS) and Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS); Krishi Sakhi; Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) workers; various Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) also joined the occasion through Video Conferencing.

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