

INCREASING PROBLEM OF STUBBLE BURNING

Relevant for: Indian Economy | Topic: Agriculture Issues and related constraints

To support the efforts of the Governments of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi to address air pollution and to subsidize machinery required for in-situ management of crop residue, a Central Sector Scheme on 'Promotion of Agricultural Mechanization for In-Situ Management of Crop Residue in the States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi' is being implemented from 2018-19. Under this scheme financial assistance @ 50% of the cost of machinery is provided to the farmers for purchase of crop residue management machinery and financial assistance @ 80% of the project cost is provided to the Cooperative Societies of Farmers, Farmers Producers Organization (FPOs) and Panchayats for establishment of Custom Hiring Centres of crop residue management machinery. During the period from 2018-19 to 2022-23, funds amounting to Rs. 3,138.17 crores have been released for these States and more than 39,000 Custom Hiring Centres(CHCs) have been established and more than 2.30 lakh crop residue management machines have been supplied to these CHCs and individual farmers of these four States.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research has developed Pusa bio-decomposer, a microbial consortium of fungal species (both in liquid and capsule forms) for rapid decomposition of paddy straw. Use of this consortium accelerates process of paddy straw decomposition in the field itself. The Ministry of Power has brought "Revised Policy for Biomass Utilization for power generation Through Co-firing in Coal based Power Plants" which mandates co-firing of 5-7 % of suitable biomass pellets along with coal in coal based power plants. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has notified Bioenergy Programme which promote the conversion of biomass and other waste material into other useful forms of energy. The Oil Central Public Enterprises have set up Second Generation (2G) ethanol bio-refineries for production of ethanol using agricultural crop residue as feedstock. Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) initiative of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas involves extracting economic value from bio-mass/waste including rice straw to generate Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) as an alternative, green transport fuel. In December 2022, the Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has constituted a committee to examine the issues of paddy straw collection, storage, densification and transport to the various units utilizing the paddy straw and suggest solutions for establishing supply chain at appropriate locations.

This information was given by the Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar in a written reply in Rajya Sabha today.

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