

Scientists urged to develop yield-raising agrochemicals with zero effect on environment

Hukumdev Narayan Yadav inaugurates 5th National Conference on Agrochemicals
NEW DELHI, November 18, 2015. Mr. Hukumdev Narayan Yadav, Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture, today urged the scientific community to rise up to the challenge of developing agrochemicals that increase the yield but have no adverse impact on the environment.

While delivering the inaugural address at the **5th National Conference on Agrochemicals** on the theme **'Ushering in the 2nd Green Revolution-Role of Crop Protection Chemicals'**, organized by FICCI in association with the Department of Agriculture Cooperation & Farmers Welfare and the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Government of India, Mr. Yadav said that one of the main reasons for India's low yield was small agricultural landholding on which powerful tractors and other machines could not be deployed. He suggested that these small lands should be aggregated and cultivated with technologically advanced machines for increasing productivity.

Mr. Yadav said that training the farmers was also essential. Farmers, the users of agrochemicals, at present, are not adequately informed about its use and impact. Many a times, farmers without knowledge apply inappropriate amount of agrochemicals resulting in crop failure.

On the occasion, the dignitaries released the report 'Ushering in the 2nd Green Revolution – Role of Crop Protection chemicals' prepared by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) and TATA Strategic Management Group (TSMG) Chemical Practice's endeavor to highlight the need and importance of adopting a Second Green Revolution in the country. The same covers the aspect as to how crop protection chemicals sector will play a critical role in it, in order to bring further prosperity to the Indian agricultural sector.

Mr. Surjit K Chaudhary, Secretary, Department C&PC, Ministry of C&F, Government of India, said that agrochemicals play a crucial role in increasing agricultural productivity. However, he said that the sector was marred with contradiction such as India uses minimum agrochemicals but is worst affected with its harmful side effects. Similarly, India is an agrarian economy but agriculture did not make a significant contribution towards GDP. Also, India was blessed with fertile lands but still our economy was not driven by it.

He said that India was thinking in terms of 2nd green revolution but the need of the hour is to enhance the scientific knowledge of farmers to allow them to comprehend the right use of agrochemicals and their impact on the produce, which can eventually lead to higher productivity. He added that training the farmers on how to apply agrochemical and in what quantity was essential. Mr. Chaudhary said that the Government of India was initiating programs for farmers but these facilities and products did not reach them on time, leaving the farmers to fend for themselves.

Dr. Ram K Mudholkar, Chairman FICCI Crop Protection Sub Committee & Business Director, Dupont Crop Protection (South Asia), said that the world's population currently stands at 7 billion and is estimated to rise to 9.3 billion by 2050. This will require global food production to increase by 70% over the same time period in order to meet the increased demand. To add to the problem, 25% to 40% of world crop output is lost due to the attack of pests, weeds and diseases. To minimize these losses, and to enhance yield, it is essential to use crop protection chemicals responsibly. Correct and judicious use of crop protection chemicals support sustainable farm management and delivers significant socio-economic benefits to meet the challenges of feeding an ever growing population.

In his keynote address **Mr. Joerg Rehbein, Head of Bayer CropScience, Indian Subcontinent**, said that a holistic approach that delivers sustainable productivity was needed in agriculture and for it the focus should be on leading innovation, enabling small and large farmers, enabling policy framework driving sustainable solutions, enhancing human health and entering partnerships. Mr. Rehbein added that through innovations and adequate use of crop protection solutions crop yield could be almost doubled. But innovation in crop protection was vital to safeguard harvests and secure food supply.

In his vote of thanks **Mr. Krishan Bir Chaudhary, President, Bhartiya Krishak Samaj**, urged the government to set a minimum qualification in agriculture mandatory for agrochemical selling institutions and also requested the authorities to consider agrochemicals for the lowest tax bracket under GST. He added that there should be a provision for quality check and sampling of readymade food products that were being imported heavily in the country. Mr. Chaudhary also implored the government representatives to reconsider the decision of data exclusivity for agrochemicals, as it may not be in the interest of the farmers.

Sharing FICCI's perspective, **Mr. Vinay Mathur, Deputy Secretary General, FICCI**, said that agrochemicals are recognized as an essential input for increasing agricultural production and preventing crop loss before and after harvesting. Indian agrochemical industry has contributed significantly towards increased agriculture output and improved public health. He also invited the stakeholders of the agriculture industry to EIMA Agrimach India 2015 to be held at The Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) commonly known as Pusa Institute from December 3-5, 2015. It is the only business to business event of its kind offering a single venue interface between Indian and global players in the agri-machinery sector.

FICCI MEDIA DIVISION