

97th Foundation Day of ICAR Celebrated; Union Agriculture Minister Addressed the Gathering

Agricultural revolution has taken place under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi-Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Union Agriculture Minister stated – "Scientists are the modern-day Rishis who value others more than themselves.

Over the past 11 years, there has been continuous growth in food grains, horticulture, and milk production: Shri Chouhan.

There is a need to increase the production of pulses and oilseeds; scientists must undertake focused research: Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan

The Minister stated that through the 'Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan', 500 research topics have emerged, which will be seriously pursued.

We will prioritize designing smaller agricultural machines tailored to the needs of marginal farmers: Shri Chouhan

Cheating farmers will not be tolerated; forcing them to buy non-essential products will not be allowed:

Shri Chouhan

Posted On: 16 JUL 2025 9:04PM by PIB Delhi

Union Agriculture, Farmers Welfare and Rural Development Minister, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, attended the 97th Foundation Day celebration of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) at the Bharat Ratna C. Subramaniam Auditorium, NASC Complex, Pusa, New Delhi today. On this occasion, he conferred the National Agricultural Science Awards to outstanding scientists across various categories, including women scientists, young researchers, and innovators. He also inaugurated the 'ViksitKrishi Exhibition', showcasing cutting-edge agricultural technologies and innovations, released 10 new agricultural publications, and launched several MoUs to strengthen research collaborations.

The event was attended by Shri Bhagirath Choudhary, Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare; Shri Devesh Chaturvedi, Secretary, MoA&FW; Dr. M.L. Jat, Secretary (DARE) & Director General (ICAR), along with Directors of various Indian agricultural research institutes from across the country, senior officials, scientists, and a large number of farmers.



Addressing the gathering, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan extended his regards to the entire ICAR team on behalf of all citizens of India. The Union Minister said that ICAR also deserves congratulations on behalf of the countries with which it has signed agreements and those to which Indian agricultural products are being exported. He further added that ICAR is worthy of gratitude from the 800 million people in India who receive food grains through the public distribution system. He emphasized that ICAR's Foundation Day is a matter of great pride and should be celebrated as a festival.



The Union Agriculture Minister described scientists as modern-day sages, stating that their intellectual capabilities are unparalleled. He emphasized that through their dedication and expertise, scientists are paving the way for the welfare and progress of farmers. He offered his deepest respect and heartfelt gratitude to the scientific community.

Under the leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, the country's food reserves are abundant. We are now exporting wheat, and there has been a significant increase in rice production as well. In today's Cabinet meeting, discussions were held regarding rice storage, as production has reached such levels that additional storage facilities are being arranged. This marks a record growth in agricultural output. Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan stated that a new revolution is underway in the agriculture sector under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

Shri Shivraj Singh stated that during the Green Revolution (1966–1979), India's foodgrain production increased by 2.7 million tonnes annually. Between 1980 and 1990, this annual growth rose to 6.1 million tonnes. From 2000 to 2013–14, the average yearly increase was 3.9 million tonnes. However, from 2013–14 to 2025, the annual growth in foodgrain production has reached 8.1 million tonnes. Over the past 11 years, foodgrain production has seen a 2.5 to 3-fold increase, reflecting a remarkable leap in agricultural productivity.

Shri Shivraj Singh highlighted the significant growth in the horticulture sector, stating that from 1966 to 1980, fruit and vegetable production increased by 1.3 million tonnes annually. This growth rose to 2 million tonnes per year between 1980 and 1990, and further to 6 million tonnes annually between 1990 and 2000. In the past 11 years alone, horticultural production has grown by 7.5 million tonnes annually, reflecting a steady and substantial rise.

He also highlighted the significant progress in milk production, driven by the adoption of advanced technologies. Between 2000 and 2014, milk production grew by 4.2 million tonnes annually, which further accelerated to 10.2 million tonnes per year between 2014 and 2025. These figures underscore the remarkable advancements made in the dairy sector over the past decade.

The Union Minister stated that, despite challenges such as climate change, fragmented landholdings, viral infestations, and complexities in livestock management, India has consistently witnessed growth in agricultural production owing to the outstanding efforts of its scientific community, which deserves acknowledgement. He emphasized the importance of promoting natural farming as a sustainable solution to safeguard the planet for future generations. Urging scientists to lead this transformation, he called for a greater focus on producing high-quality, environmentally friendly agricultural outputs through natural methods. Shri

Chouhan further stressed the urgent need to enhance per-hectare productivity of pulses and oilseeds, calling for intensified research and innovation in these critical areas. He expressed confidence that the scientific community will rise to the occasion and drive progress in these domains.

He also urged ICAR to ensure ethical partnerships in MoUs by evaluating seed and input pricing, and directed a collaborative approach between ICAR and the agriculture department. Addressing the issue of exploitation in the agri-input market, he announced plans to launch a toll-free grievance number for farmers and warned against the sale of substandard products like unauthorized bio-stimulants. He proposed the establishment of low-cost fertilizer centres similar to Jan Aushadhi Kendras for medicines.

Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan stated that the *Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan* was the largest agricultural initiative of its kind in the world. The campaign brought forth several key insights and paved the way for crop-specific and region-specific consultations aimed at identifying challenges and solutions. Following discussions on soybean and cotton, similar meetings will soon be held on sugarcane and maize.

He acknowledged concerns raised over declining cotton yields despite the development of numerous varieties, attributing the issue to viral attacks that are also affecting Bt cotton. The campaign has led to the identification of 500 critical research topics that will now be pursued in a focused manner.

Importantly, the Minister emphasized that future research agendas will no longer be decided solely at Delhi-based research institutes but will be guided by the needs of farmers and conditions in the field. He urged adopting the principle of “*One Team, One Goal*”, and called for the formation of dedicated scientific teams to work with a clear, unified focus on farmer welfare.

The Union Agriculture Minister expressed the need to develop advanced technologies, including portable fertilizer testing tools, in response to farmers' demands. He emphasized that since most Indian farmers operate on small landholdings, there is a greater need for compact, efficient machinery rather than large-scale equipment. He also called for research focused on extending the shelf life of perishable agricultural produce and stressed that farmer-identified challenges must guide the research agenda. While signing MoUs, he stated that it is essential to ensure that partnering companies offer seeds and inputs at fair and affordable prices. He urged ICAR and the Department of Agriculture to work in close coordination on these issues.

Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan urged them to report any instances of fraud through a toll-free helpline, which will be officially launched soon. He assured that any kind of deception against farmers will not be tolerated, and strict action will be taken against those found selling substandard seeds or fertilizers. Referring to the unregulated sale of over 30,000 bio-stimulants, he highlighted that decisive steps have already been taken, and letters have been sent to Chief Ministers of all States and Union Territories urging prompt action. He firmly reiterated that no farmer should be coerced into purchasing unnecessary or non-beneficial products.

The Minister also proposed exploring the idea of setting up affordable fertilizer outlets, similar to Jan Aushadhi Kendras that provide low-cost medicines to the public.

Concluding his address, Shri Chouhan urged scientists to reaffirm their commitment to farmer welfare on the occasion of ICAR's Foundation Day. He remarked that scientists do not merely work for a livelihood their lives are akin to a sacred offering (yajna), devoted to the service of society. Expressing full confidence in their capabilities, he encouraged them to continue contributing meaningfully to the vision of a developed India.

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(Release ID: 2145393)