

PROMOTING FARMING AS A VIABLE CAREER OPTION AMONG YOUTH

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The data on exact number of farmers is not maintained Centrally. However, as per the Agriculture Census conducted by Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, the Number of operational holdings* based on previously conducted three agriculture censuses on quinquennial basis, are given as below:

S. No.	Agriculture Census	Number of Operational Holdings* (in Crore)
1	2005-06	12.92
2	2010-11	13.83
3	2015-16	14.65

**All land which is used wholly or partly for Agricultural production and is operated as one technical unit by one person alone or with others without regard to the title, legal form, size or location.*

Agriculture is a State subject and Government of India supports the efforts of States through appropriate policy measures, budgetary allocation and various schemes/ programmes. The various schemes/ programmes of the Government of India are meant for the welfare of farmers and to attract younger generation in increasing production, remunerative returns and income support to farmers. The Major schemes/programmes initiated by DA&FW to enhance overall income of farmers and remunerative returns in the agriculture sector are as under:-

1. Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)
2. Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maan Dhan Yojana (PM-KMY)
3. Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)/ Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS)
4. Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS)
5. Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF)
6. Formation and Promotion of 10,000 new Farmer Producers Organizations (FPOs)
7. National Bee Keeping and Honey Mission (NBHM)
8. Namo Drone Didi
9. National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF)
10. Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay SanraksHan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)
11. Agri Fund for Start-Ups & Rural Enterprises' (Agri SURE)
12. Per Drop More Crop (PDMC)
13. Sub-Mission on Agriculture Mechanization (SMAM)

14. Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)
15. Soil Health & Fertility (SH&F)
16. Rainfed Area Development (RAD)
17. Agroforestry
18. Crop Diversification Programme (CDP)
19. Sub-Mission on Agriculture Extension (SMAE)
20. Sub-Mission on Seed and Planting Material (SMSP)
21. National Food Security and Nutrition Mission (NFSNM)
22. Integrated Scheme for Agriculture Marketing (ISAM)
23. Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)
24. National Mission on Edible Oils (NMEO)-Oil Palm
25. National Mission on Edible Oils (NMEO)-Oilseeds
26. Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region
27. Digital Agriculture Mission
28. National Bamboo Mission

Government has taken various initiatives to promote farming as a viable career option for youth, among which the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has set up 731 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) in the rural districts of the country for dissemination of new technologies of agriculture and allied sectors through technology assessment, demonstration and capacity development among the extension functionaries and the farmers of the concerned district. The KVKs perform following activities for the purpose:

- a. on-farm testing to identify the location specificity of technology under various farming systems;
- b. frontline demonstration to establish the production potential of improved agricultural technologies on the farmers' fields;
- c. capacity development of extension functionaries and farmers for knowledge and skill up gradation;
- d. production of quality seeds, planting materials and other technology inputs for the farmers;
- e. extension activities to develop awareness of improved agricultural technology among the farmers.

Besides, 100 KVKs of the country are implementing project namely Attracting and Retaining Youth in Agriculture (ARYA) for retaining younger generations of farming families into the sector, These KVKs organize skill development programmes for the youth of rural areas to take up various enterprises related to agriculture and allied sectors like, mushroom production, fruits and vegetable processing units, horticulture nursery, protected cultivation, fish farming, poultry, goat farming, piggery, duck farming, bee keeping, vermicomposting, etc

The Government is implementing Skill Training of Rural Youth (STRY) with the objective to impart short term skill training (seven days duration) to rural youths and farmers in agriculture and allied sectors for upgradation of their knowledge and skills and promote wage/self employment in rural areas. The component aims at providing short duration skill based training programs to rural youth including women farmers on agri-based vocational areas for creating a pool of skilled manpower. Recently, the STRY programme has been subsumed under Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) cafeteria.

A Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Support to State Extension Programs for Extension Reforms" (ATMA) is being implemented in 740 districts of 28 states & 5 UTs in the country. The scheme promote decentralized and farmer-friendly extension system in the country. The objective of the Scheme is to support State

Government's efforts and to make available latest agricultural technologies and good agricultural practices in different thematic areas of agriculture and allied to farmers through different extension activities viz; Farmers Training, Demonstrations, Exposure Visits, Kisan Mela, Mobilization of Farmers Groups and organizing Farm Schools etc.

This information was given by Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Ramnath Thakur in a written reply in Lok Sabha today.

RC/ KSR/AR

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