



National Conference on Agriculture

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Recently the Union Minister of State for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare inaugurated the '**National Conference on Agriculture for Rabi Campaign 2019.**'

- In the Conference, he highlighted the fact that the Centre-State cooperation has made possible an all-time **high production** of **rice** (116 million tonnes), **wheat** (102.5 million tonnes), **pulses and oilseeds**.
Although the concern was expressed regarding the **shortage of oilseeds** for which a separate mission might be launched in the future to increase the **capacity and reduce import** of edible oils.
- The Minister emphasized that the demand for fertilizers should be made after consultation with farmer organizations at the **District level** so that the availability can be ensured to farmers at the crucial stages of crop production.
- **Seed mini-kits** for rabi crops, pulses and oilseeds will be distributed to the farmers, with the active involvement of State Agriculture Departments.
- Keeping in view the agricultural slowdown, several changes were announced:
 - **Kisan Credit Card:** Major changes in terms of
 - Waiver of the registration fee,
 - Minimum time for issuance of **Kisan Credit Cards**,
 - Widening the range of loans, etc. have been made for covering a large number of farmers.
 - Inputs from State Agriculture Departments were received for modifying and initiating better review mechanism for **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)**.
 - **45-biofortified varieties** with an enhanced percentage of nutrients, proteins, etc. were also released.
 - The State Agriculture Departments will be organizing **Fertilizer Awareness Drive** with the onset of Rabi season to take advantage of favourable weather conditions for timely sowing of the crop and increase the final yield.

- There is a need to strengthen the **Lab to Land connect** for ensuring maximum benefit to farmers.
For that purpose, the State Agriculture Departments have been asked to provide support for strengthening **the seed hubs**.

Kisan Credit Card (KCC)

- The Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme was **introduced in 1998** for providing adequate and timely credit support to the farmers for the cultivation and other needs like the purchase of agriculture inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, etc.
- The scheme was further extended for the investment credit requirement of farmers for the allied and non-farm activities, in the year 2004.

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)

- PMFBY was launched in the year 2016.
- The scheme is being administered by **the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.
- It **replaced the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS)** and the Modified National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (MNAIS).
- PMFBY fixes a uniform premium of 2% of the value of sum insured to be paid by farmers for all Kharif crops, 1.5% for all rabi crops, and 5% for annual commercial and horticultural crops or actuarial rate, whichever is less.

Source: PIB