

CII and SIAM launches, Sukh Da Saah, a joint initiative on zero crop residue burning

Patiala, 17 October 2018: Industry bodies Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Society for Indian Automobile Association organised a Project Launch Event on 17 Oct at village Jasso Majra, Patiala to mark the beginning of a project both organisation have initiated to mitigate crop residue burning, which is a major cause of air pollution and degradation of soil quality. With the efforts of CII and SIAM, 1500 farmers belonging to three Cooperative Societies, namely, Jasso Majra, Bhorey and Mallewar Farmer Multipurpose Cooperative Societies have come together and have pledged to make the entire village cluster, of 7000 acres of farmland to go stubble burning free.

The project is supporting farmers in building awareness; procure Happy Seeder, Mulcher & other required farm machines and; providing on field monitoring and support. Industry members such as Cummins, SIAM members, Birlasoft etc. have provided financial support, and CII Foundation with support from SIAM are implementing the on-ground activities.

Shri Showkat Ahmad Parray, ADC, Patiala said "During green revolution days, initially farmers faced a lot of challenges. But eventually the Green revolution was beneficial and, as we all know, it raised the economic status of farmers. Today, farmers in Punjab face a similar challenge. As we resolve the challenges of widespread crop residue burning and water availability, we are moving towards creating ecological solutions of the future."

Charanjit Singh, Director, Punjab Pollution Control Board congratulated the CII-SIAM initiative and said that mulching of crop-residues can lead to the dual benefit on soil health and reduction in air pollution.

Sarvjit Singh Samra, Chairman, CII Punjab State Council & Managing Director, Capital Small Finance Bank Limited said "CII has been extensively working with various stakeholders to understand the complex problem of air pollution and implement pilot projects by adopting relevant technology and delivery models. Post evaluating and learning from work in Ludhiana and Patiala, CII will further scale-up the initiative next year."

Kala Ram Kansal, SDM, Nabha said "It is the responsibility of farmers to safeguard the environment and switch to organic solutions to reap the benefits of soil fertility. Burning the crop residues, not just causes air pollution, but also hampers the quality of soil"

Speaking on the occasion, Rashid Hassan, Advisor, SIAM said "We are grateful for the support that we have received from farmers.'Sukh da Saah' is a pilot project that will enable adopting alternative stubble management techniques for improving air quality across the state. We need to understand that crop residue mixed with soil reaps best benefits"

GS Bhuttar, Additional Director of Extension Education, Punjab Agriculture University, congratulated multiple agencies who have come forward to support the farmers in their endeavour and said that PAU will be providing continuous support to farmers undertaking the initiative through its Extension Network. Dr Parminder, Assistant Professor, KVK Patiala said "Stubble burning not only causes breathing disorders but has an adverse effect on agricultural land. We need to ponder on what we are giving back to our lands"

Tanu Kathuria, from Birlasoft, said, "To resolve the issue of air pollution, all stakeholders need to come together to enable zero crop residue burning." Addressing the farmers at the launch Amit Lele, Corporate Responsibility Leader, Cummins said "farmers are our brand ambassadors, anchoring change. Let's join hands to reduce air pollution for the generations to come."

Naman, Cooperative Inspector, Nabha said "Stubble burning cause intense pollution which hurts the farmers themselves. We as part of the Cooperative department are procuring agriculture implements for societies to put the stubble mulch back in the soil."

About CII

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the development of India, partnering industry, Government, and civil society, through advisory and consultative processes. Founded in 1895, India's premier business association has around 9000 members, from the private as well as public sectors, including SMEs and MNCs, and an indirect membership of over 300,000 enterprises from around 265 national and regional sectoral industry bodies.

CII charts change by working closely with Government on policy issues, interfacing with thought leaders, and enhancing efficiency, competitiveness and business opportunities for industry through a range of specialized services and strategic global linkages. It also provides a platform for consensus-building and networking on key issues.

About SIAM

The Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) is a not-for-profit apex national body representing all major vehicle and vehicular engine manufacturers in India. SIAM works towards supporting sustainable development of the Indian Automobile Industry with the vision that India emerges as the destination of choice in the world for design and manufacture of automobiles. It also works towards facilitating enhancement of the competitiveness of the Indian Automobile Industry, reducing cost of vehicles, increasing productivity and achieving global standards of quality.