

PRESS RELEASE

**APRAAVA ENERGY & CONFEDERATION OF INDIAN INDUSTRY (CII) HOLD FARMER
OUTREACH EVENTS AT MAGHAWALI, FATEHABAD & NAIWALA, SIRSA**

Maghawali, Fatehabad 20 March & Naiwala, Sirsa 21 March 2023 – Apraava Energy, in partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the District Administrations of Fatehabad & Sirsa, held farmer outreach events in village Maghawali, Fatehabad & village Naiwala of Sirsa to accelerate the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices and reduce the practice of stubble burning in the villages. The Maghawali event was graced by DDA, Dr Rajesh Sihag, Fatehabad, Sandeep Kumar, BO Agriculture, Fatehabad, Dr Pawan Jayani, AAE, Fatehabad and Bheem Kulahdiya, SDO, Ratia Block. At the Naiwala, Sirsa event, Gaurav Bhardwaj, XEN Panchayati Raj Department, Ankur Garg, SDO, Panchayati Raj Department, Sirsa, Harish Chandar, Tehsildar, Rania Block, Satveer Ranga, SDO Agriculture and Mahendar Kumar, Forest Department were present. A large number of farmers, about 300, were present at both events.

Stubble burning is common in the winter months in parts of Northern India and is a leading cause of rising pollution levels during the season. It is also an aggravating factor for respiratory ailments. More importantly, it damages the soil and over a period of time, farm yield diminishes, resulting in decreased farmer earnings.

To address the issue of stubble burning, Apraava Energy and the CII launched a crop residue management initiative in 2019 covering 6 villages which expanded to 34 villages (45,891 acres) in 4 Districts of Haryana, namely, Rohtak, Fatehabad, Sirsa and Jhajjar. The goal of the project is to encourage farmers to stop burning stubble by creating a widespread movement through various awareness campaigns and other interventions. The project supports farmers, especially small and marginal farmers, with appropriate machinery to manage crop stubble and facilitates the adoption of machinery through training sessions. The project has already made significant progress in reducing stubble burning, with 98% of the land saved from burning.

The events provided a platform for the participants, especially farmers, to share their own experiences and discover new ideas and technologies.

With the efforts of the CII Foundation and Apraava Energy, the burning incidents have been reduced by half in the block which has resulted in better air and water conservation said Harish Chandar, Tehsildar, Rania Block.

We know small and marginal farmers used to burn stubble because of the unaffordability of the machinery and we are thankful to CII Foundation and Apraava for the support, said Gaurav Bhardwaj - XEN, Panchayati Raj Department, Sirsa.

Sharing his views, Dr Rajesh Sihag, DDA, Fatehabad, said we are happy to work with the CII Foundation and Apraava for the noble cause of the small farmers as they are the ones who needed the most help.

Chindarpal, a farmer from Rampur Thedi, shared his experience about he benefited from the program through technical trainings, field visit to NRFMTI etc and awareness sessions attended by him. Sukhwinder Singh of Sultanpuria village shared his experience of how he used to burn stubble as the village did not have enough machinery for managing the stubble but after the project intervention, the village has enough machinery and farmers are more aware of how to use the machinery. He spoke of how new machinery such as Smart Seeder has been used by farmers also.

Additionally, Kuldeep Sengar, Program Manager, CII Foundation, shared insights into the organization's longstanding commitment to promoting environment-friendly agricultural practices. He also appreciated the participation of women in the event.

Apraava Energy and CII remain committed to promoting sustainable agricultural practices and eliminating stubble burning in the region and are actively working towards making this a reality.

Through a concerted multi-stakeholder approach, CII's multistakeholder crop residue management initiative has reduced stubble burning by 83% in the 3,00,000 acres of farmland across 300 villages of Punjab and Haryana, benefiting 50,000 farmers covered under the project during the last season (2022).