

PRESS RELEASE

CII Foundation and HDFC Bank Organise District-Level Crop Residue Management Dialogue and Awareness Program in Sangrur

Sangrur, Punjab | 16 October 2026: At the onset of the paddy stubble-burning season in Punjab, CII Foundation, in collaboration with HDFC Bank under its Parivartan programme, organised a district-level dialogue and awareness programme on Crop Residue Management in Sangrur, Punjab. The event brought together government officials, agricultural experts, farmers, farm machinery manufacturers, industry representatives, and other stakeholders. The primary objective was to promote sustainable agriculture and strengthen collective efforts to address the problem of stubble burning.

The inaugural session was attended by Ms. Narinder Kaur Bharaj, MLA, Sangrur; Mr. Rachpal Singh, Chairman, District Council; Mr. Harbans Singh Sidhu, Chief Agriculture Officer, Sangrur; Dr. Maan Singh Bagri, Agricultural Engineer, Northern Region Farm Machinery Training and Testing Institute (NRFMTTI); Dr. Mandeep Singh, Director, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Sangrur; Mr. Likham Singh, Assistant Registrar and representatives from the Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB), agricultural institutions, CII and various industries.

The programme highlighted the importance of collaboration among government institutions, agricultural experts, industry partners and farming communities to develop practical and sustainable solutions for crop residue management. CII Foundation is working on crop residue management across Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh in collaboration with various partners. These initiatives focus on facilitating farmers' access to suitable agricultural machinery, spreading awareness and encouraging the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices.

CII Foundation has been working in Sangrur district since 2024. Under this initiative, machinery support is being provided across more than 250 villages, while farmers are being sensitised through training programmes and Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities. Implemented with the support of HDFC Parivartan, the initiative aims to strengthen village-level capacity, improve farmers' access to crop residue management technologies and reduce the practice of stubble burning.

Technical Deliberations on Sustainable Crop Residue Management

A technical session was organised to discuss improved crop residue management practices and the challenges faced at the field level. Representatives from the Northern Region Farm Machinery Training and Testing Institute (NRFMTTI), Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Sangrur, and manufacturers of machinery used for in-situ crop residue management participated in the session.

Dr. Mandeep Singh, Director, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Sangrur, emphasised the importance of institutional collaboration in promoting crop residue management. He appreciated the role of CII Foundation and HDFC Bank in providing machinery support to farmers and stated that adopting alternatives to stubble burning is essential for protecting the environment and maintaining soil fertility.

Mr. Harbans Singh Sidhu, Chief Agriculture Officer, Sangrur, said, “With the support of the Punjab Government, CII Foundation and HDFC Bank, machinery is being made available to farmers for crop residue management. These machines are proving highly beneficial in the fields and encouraging farmers to adopt better residue management practices. The Punjab Government is also providing subsidies to farmers to encourage the adoption of suitable agricultural machinery.”

Dr. Maan Singh Bagri, Agricultural Engineer, NRFMTTI, shared information about the collaboration between the institute and CII Foundation to promote crop residue management in Punjab and Haryana. He explained that NRFMTTI conducts farmer training through its offices and field-level programmes. These training sessions familiarise farmers with the use of appropriate machinery, crop residue management techniques and the harmful effects of stubble burning.

A special session was also organised on the industrial utilisation of paddy straw. Representatives of machinery manufacturers and industries involved in the ex-situ utilisation of agricultural residues in Sangrur district shared their experiences and perspectives. The session explored opportunities for converting paddy straw into useful products, including biomass fuel pellets, thereby promoting the productive utilisation of agricultural residues.

Farmers also shared their experiences of adopting both in-situ crop residue management, in which residue is managed within the field, and ex-situ utilisation, in which residue is collected and transported outside the field for productive use.

Mr. Paramjit Singh, a farmer from Ubhaawal village, highlighted the wider impact of stubble burning on farming communities and villages. He said, “When a farmer burns stubble, the damage is not limited to that farmer alone. It affects the farmer’s family, neighbouring households and the entire village. We must all work together to stop stubble burning and adopt sustainable alternatives.”

Distribution of Agricultural Machinery and Launch of Awareness Campaign

During the programme, Ms. Narinder Kaur Bharaj, MLA, Sangrur, handed over agricultural machinery provided with the support of CII Foundation and HDFC Bank to farmer cooperative societies. The initiative aims to improve access to suitable machinery through cooperative societies and encourage the adoption of sustainable crop residue management practices. It is expected to particularly benefit small and marginal farmers.

It is noteworthy that approximately 40 machines, including Super Seeders, Mitra Seeders and balers, are being provided to farmers in Sangrur district this year, while around 250 machines have already been provided in previous phases.

The MLA also flagged off an awareness van that will travel to different villages across Sangrur district to educate farmers about the harmful effects of stubble burning and promote sustainable alternatives.

Mr. Rachpal Singh, Chairman, District Council, appreciated the efforts of CII Foundation and HDFC Bank in providing machinery support to cooperative societies for crop residue management. He said, “The government is continuously working to address the challenges associated with crop residue management. At the same time, the machinery support provided to cooperative societies by CII Foundation and HDFC

Bank is proving highly beneficial. Access to shared machinery particularly benefits small and marginal farmers. We are ready to extend all possible support to the CII Foundation team to strengthen crop residue management in villages.”

Recognition of Farmers and Strengthening Community Participation

Ms. Narinder Kaur Bharaj, MLA, Sangrur, felicitated exemplary farmers and villages that have made efforts to improve crop residue management. The recognition aimed to inspire other farmers to adopt sustainable alternatives to stubble burning.

During the programme, Ms. Bharaj appreciated the contributions of agricultural institutions, development partners and farming communities in promoting crop residue management. She said, “When Punjab Agricultural University develops new technologies, it is equally important to ensure that their benefits reach farmers at the grassroots level. CII Foundation and HDFC Bank are promoting crop residue management by facilitating access to machinery, which particularly benefits small farmers. Such initiatives can also encourage young people to return to agriculture and adopt it as a sustainable livelihood.”

About CII Foundation

CII Foundation works to promote inclusive and sustainable development in collaboration with government institutions, industries, communities and development partners. Its crop residue management initiatives aim to promote sustainable agriculture, improve farmers’ access to suitable machinery, raise awareness among farming communities and encourage alternatives to stubble burning across Punjab and Haryana. The project was launched in Uttar Pradesh this year.

For media queries, please contact:

Hitesh Goyal, Project Coordinator – hitesh.goyal@cii.in

Priya Shirali, Communication Head - priya.shirali@cii.in