



प्रधान मंत्री
Prime Minister

MESSAGE

It is a pleasure to learn about the XVI Agricultural Science Congress 2023 organised by National Academy of Agricultural Sciences in collaboration with **ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Kochi**. The topic of deliberations at the Congress which is related to transformation of agri-food systems for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is relevant to our times.

Agriculture is the heart of every civilisation, nation and economy. For centuries, agriculture has been an integral part of our economy and culture. Living in harmony with nature is an integral part of our value system.

With such illustrious traditions, today, the nation is increasingly looking at natural farming as a way to make agriculture sustainable and farmers self-reliant. The adoption of traditional practices in agriculture is making a key contribution to further sustainable agriculture.

Additionally, the need of the hour is to rescue agriculture from monoculture and cultivate diverse crops such as millets. At India's initiative, the whole world is celebrating the International Year of Millets. This encourages a form of agriculture that is not resource-intensive, is resilient and also guarantees nutrition security. The popularisation of millets also increases incomes for our small farmers.

Water access and management is another crucial aspect. Through sustained efforts, a positive transformation has been injected into the agriculture ecosystem. The "Per Drop More Crop" initiative heralded the beginning of a concerted effort to expand micro-irrigation methods. Micro-irrigation is playing a vital role in preserving our precious water resources.

The SDGs reflect humanity's commitment to collectively address various challenges facing humanity, from eliminating poverty, reducing inequalities, increasing agricultural productivity, to ending hunger by providing food security and furthering access to nutritious food. With India's voice gaining respect at the global level, conventions such as these help in bringing together various experts who can enrich the global discourse and direction.

I am sure that the deliberations at the Congress will help prepare a futuristic blueprint to further sustainable development in the agriculture sector and attain SDGs. May the discussions be fruitful, making XVI Agriculture Science Congress 2023 be a huge success.

New Delhi
आश्विन 17, शक संवत् 1945
09th October, 2023

(Narendra Modi)