



Stubble Burning

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Why is in news? The Centre asks State Governments of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi to strive for achieving Zero Stubble Burning in very near future

- Stubble burning is a **process of setting on fire the straw stubble, left after the harvesting of grains**, like paddy, wheat, etc. It is usually required in areas that use the combined harvesting method which leaves crop residue behind.
- For **effective control of paddy stubble burning** during the ensuing season, lay out a comprehensive action plan at micro level, establish a mechanism to ensure effective utilization of machines, promote use of bio-decomposer in a complimentary mode with the CRM machines, promote ex-situ utilization of straw and through mass awareness.
- The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare is continuing the implementation of the Central Sector Scheme on '**Promotion of Agricultural Mechanization for In-Situ Management of Crop Residue** in the States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi' during 2022-23 with an outlay of Rs. 700 Crores.
- During the current year, provisions have also been incorporated to **promote the use of bio-decomposer technology on large scale in these States**.
- The scheme was **introduced in 2018-19**, with the aim of **addressing air pollution** in Delhi and National Capital Region **due to stubble burning** in the adjoining States of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh and to **subsidize machinery required for in-situ management of crop residue**.
- Under this scheme **financial assistance for purchase of crop residue management machines** is provided @ 50% of the cost to individual farmers and @ 80% of the project cost to Cooperative Societies of farmers, PFOs and Panchayats for establishment of Custom Hiring Centres of Crop Residue Management Machines.
- Funds are also provided to the States and ICAR for undertaking Information, Education & Communication (IEC) activities for mass awareness of farmers and other stakeholders.
- The Scheme **promote the usage of machines** such as Super Straw Management Systems, Happy Seeder, Super Seeder, zero till seed cum fertilizer drill, Mulcher, Paddy Straw Chopper, hydraulically reversible mould board plough, Crop reapers and Reaper binders for **in-situ management** of crop residue.
- Balers & Rakes which are used for straw collection in the form of bales for other **ex-situ uses of straw**.
- 'Smart Seeder' machine has been newly added for promotion under the scheme.
- **Pusa Decomposer** - a **microbial consortium of fungal species** (both in liquid and capsule forms) developed by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has been found effective for **rapid in-situ decomposition of paddy straw**
- During the year 2021, decomposer has been used in the States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi in an around 5.7 lakh hectare area which is equivalent to about 3.5 million tonnes of straw managed.
- Through satellite imaging and monitoring, it was observed that the 92% area of the decomposer sprayed plots has been managed through decomposition and only 8% area in these plots was burned