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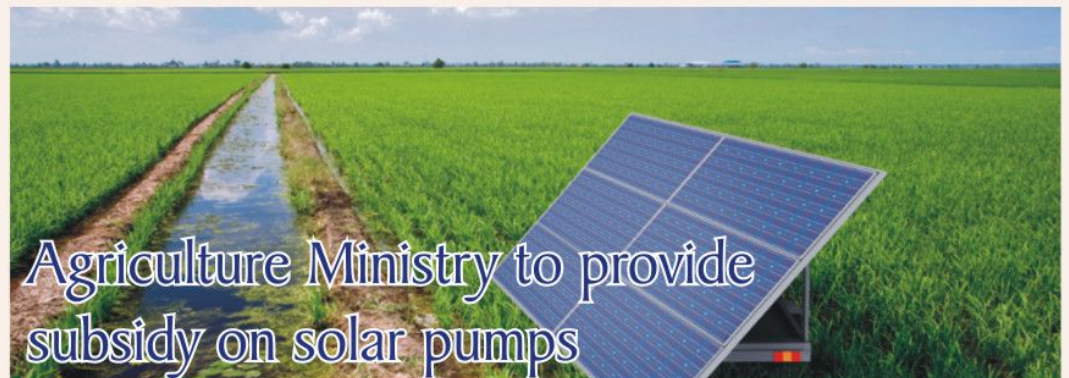
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Agriculture Ministry has decided to provide financial assistance of up to Rs 57,600 on purchase of solar energy pumps used for irrigation by farmers. Solar energy-driven pumping set is a viable alternative for electrical and diesel pumping systems in farm irrigation. Therefore, it has been included in the list of farm equipment that get assistance under central scheme, the ministry said in a statement.

Financial assistance for DC Pumps having capacity of up to 2 HP (horse power) is Rs 57,600 and Rs 54,000 is given for pumps with capacity of more than 2 HP and up to 5 HP. In case of AC pumps, the government will give subsidy of Rs 50,400 for pumps with power of up to 2 HP and Rs 43,200 on pumps with power between 2 HP to 5 HP.

"Agriculture Ministry, with consensus of the New and Renewable Energy Ministry, has introduced solar energy pumping systems under the 'Sub Mission on Agriculture Mechanization' implemented through state governments...". This mission is being implemented by Agriculture Ministry from April 2014. Under this mission the ministry provides financial assistance through respective state governments on purchase of different types of farm machinery and equipment.

Financial assistance is provided to both individual ownership as well as establishing farm machinery banks to provide custom hiring services to farmers. The pattern of financial assistance for such pumping system is in line with the financial assistance pattern of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.

<http://pib.nirvachin.com>

NDDDB launches 'Pashu Poshan' mobile app for dairy farmers



National Dairy Development Board (NDDDB) launched a mobile application that will recommend a balanced diet for cows and buffaloes to help boost dairy farmers' income by raising milk yield and cutting feed cost. The mobile application, named 'Pashu Poshan', was launched by the Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh. The application, which will be available on both web and android platforms, can be accessed by registering on the INAPH portal (inaph.nddb.coop).

To use this application, the farmer needs to provide complete animal profile, including breed, age, milk production, fat content in milk apart from food items being currently fed to the animal along with the cost in order to formulate the balanced ration formula.

"We have already collected profiles of 6 lakh milch animals in 40,000 villages and recommended farmers about the balanced feed and fodder for their cattle. "This resulted in reducing the feed cost by Rs 515 per day per animal and an average increase in milk production by an average 300 ml per animal per day. Now, we will provide this facility across the country through this mobile app," NDDDB Chairman T Nanda Kumar told reporters.

<http://www.theeconomictimes.com/>

Government allocates Rs 200 crore for national online agriculture market

Government has allocated Rs 200 crore for three years to set up an online national agriculture market by integrating 585 wholesale markets across India a move that would help farmers realise better prices. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs had approved a Central Sector Scheme for Promotion of National Agricultural Market through AgriTech Infrastructure Fund.

The Department of Agriculture will set it up by creation of a common electronic platform deployable in selected regulated markets across the country. Under the scheme, 585 selected regulated markets would be covered. The plan is to cover 250 mandis in 2015-16, 200 mandis in 2016-17 and 135 mandis in 2017-18. Agriculture Secretary Siraj Hussain informed that Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Orisha, Jharkhand and Gujarat have already agreed to join the Scheme, while Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh are "very keen" to participate. Unifying the markets both at state and the national level would provide better price to farmers, improve supply chain, reduce wastages and create a unified national market through provision of the common e-platform.



<http://www.thehindu.com/news/>

Mobile-based services to help farmers



Mobile based services for farmers and other stakeholders being delivered through organisations, departments and offices of Central and State Governments down to the block level (including State Agriculture Universities, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Agro-Meteorological Field Units) have been brought together under a single umbrella, namely, mKisan portal of the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India. The URL is www.mkisan.gov.in.

mKisan portal subsumed all mobile-based initiatives in the field of agriculture and allied sectors, according to Department of Agriculture Co-operation. It brings together SMS (both push and pull), interactive voice response system, unstructured supplementary services of data or USSD (which is essentially an interactive SMS and can facilitate data entry and query on web portals without Internet), mobile apps and services.

<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/agriculture>

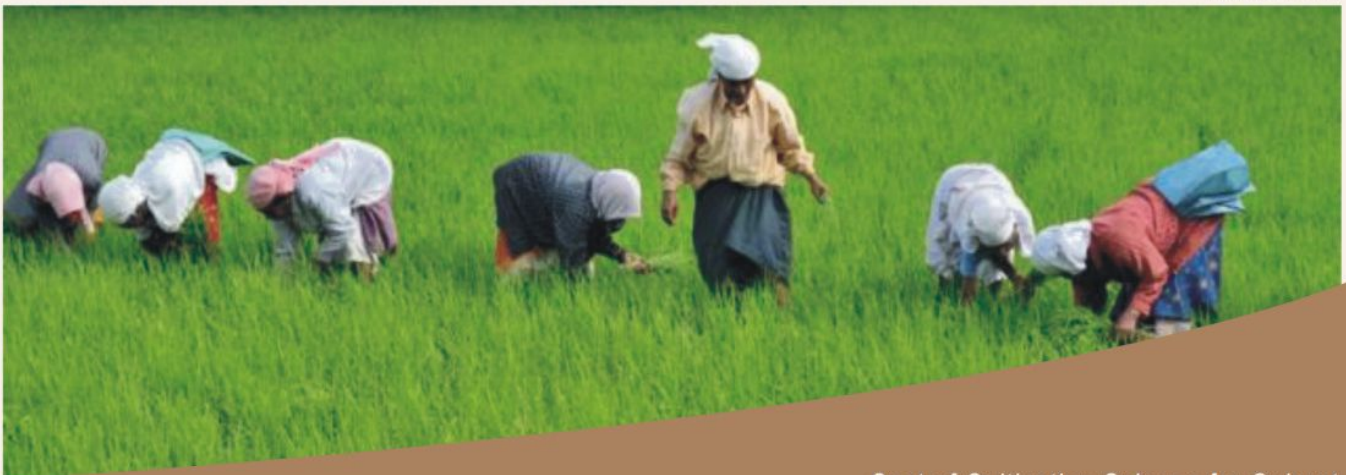
Government rolls out 3 agri-portals to improve transparency

The government launched three agri-portals to make the process of organic farming certification, fertilisers' quality checking and issuance of soil health cards, more transparent and accountable. These portals, launched only in English, will be made available in regional languages also in the next phase for the benefit of farmers. To improve soil health of farm land, the portal 'www.soilhealth.dac.gov.in' has been developed for registration of soil samples, recording test results of samples and generation of soil health card along with fertiliser recommendations. The portal has sample tracking feature and will provide alerts to farmers about sample registration and generation of soil health cards through SMS and emails .

To ensure that quality fertilisers are sold to farmers, the portal 'www.fqcs.dac.gov.in' has been developed for processing of fertiliser samples, testing and generation of reports. To develop domestic organic market, the portal 'www.pgsindia-ncof.gov.in' will enable small and marginal farmers to have easy access to organic certification and promote transparency in certification process. The portal has online facility for registration, approval, documentation and certification of organic products. This will help in creating database of organic producers and area under the government's certification called Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) with due traceability.

These portals, developed by National Informatics Centre, are part of the existing schemes.

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite>



Cost of Cultivation Scheme for Gujarat



Centre to release Rs 400 crore crop insurance for Gujarat farmers

The Centre is going to release Rs 400 crore towards crop insurance for farmers of Gujarat that will benefit around 2.5 lakh farmers of the state," Gujarat Minister of State for Agriculture, Mohan Kundariya said. "Those farmers, who paid premium for their crop in the year 2014 and whose crops were damaged or faced total crop failure, will be given the benefit. The farmers have been facing a tough situation due to the recent flash flood in Saurashtra region and our aim is to take them out of this condition by providing them insurance," Kundariya said. The minister claimed that the Centre has also made arrangements to release separate funds for insurance of cotton crop failure insurance by the end of September.

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