

Test Before You Invest: ICAR-MGIFRI and KVK Madhopur Lead Soil Health Awareness Drive under Khet Bachao Abhiyan in West Champaran, Bihar

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As part of the nationwide “Khet Bachao Abhiyan-2026”, ICAR–Mahatma Gandhi Integrated Farming Research Institute (MGIFRI), Motihari, in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Madhopur, West Champaran, organized a “Kisan Chaupal” and awareness-cum-training programme on soil health and balanced fertilizer use for farmers from different villages of West Champaran district. The programme was coordinated and facilitated by KVK Madhopur through extensive local outreach and farmer mobilization.

The central message of the programme was “Test Before You Invest”, emphasizing that soil testing should be the first step before purchasing fertilizers and other agricultural inputs. Scientists highlighted that informed nutrient management based on soil test recommendations can improve productivity, reduce input costs, and safeguard long-term soil health. During the interactive session, farmers openly discussed prevailing agricultural practices and challenges.



Addressing the gathering, Dr. Vijay Singh Meena, Senior Scientist (Soil Science), ICAR–MGIFRI, stressed the need for judicious fertilizer use and emphasized that fertilizer dealers and farmers must work together to achieve the objectives of the “Khet Bachao Abhiyan”. He highlighted that balanced fertilization, guided by soil testing, is essential for maintaining soil fertility and improving nutrient-use efficiency. Dr. Subham Mukherjee reinforced the campaign theme of “Test Before You Invest”, urging farmers to undertake soil testing before investing in fertilizers and other agricultural inputs. He explained how soil-test-based nutrient management can reduce unnecessary expenditure while enhancing crop performance.

Dr. Saurabh Dubey highlighted the role of biofertilizers and eco-friendly nutrient management practices in reducing dependence on chemical fertilizers and improving soil biological health. Er. Vikas Paradkar emphasized the importance of laser land

levelling and efficient water management, promoting the principle of “Khet ka Pani Khet Mein” for conserving water and improving farm productivity. Dr. Chelpuri Ramulu sensitized farmers about the adverse effects of crop residue burning and demonstrated sustainable residue management options along with the principles of natural farming.



The programme also promoted the “4Rs of Nutrient Stewardship” – Right Source, Right Rate, Right Time, and Right Method of fertilizer application. Scientists encouraged farmers to adopt integrated nutrient management practices combining chemical fertilizers with biofertilizers, organic manures, green manuring, and crop residue recycling to enhance soil health and nutrient-use efficiency.

Farmers were made aware of the harmful consequences of excessive fertilizer use, including declining soil quality, nutrient imbalances, and increasing production costs. The programme reaffirmed the commitment of ICAR-MGIFRI and KVK Madhopur towards promoting sustainable agriculture through scientific nutrient management and enhanced farmer awareness.

A total of 52 participants, including 45 male and 7 female farmers, along with officials from ATMA, ATMs, and BTMs, participated in the programme.