ICAR-MGIFRI Integrates SCSP Support with Khet Bachao Abhiyan to Promote Soil Health in Bihar

As part of the nationwide Khet Bachao Abhiyan–2026, ICAR–Mahatma Gandhi Integrated Farming Research Institute (MGIFRI), Motihari organized a farmer awareness and input distribution programme at Karariya village of Kotwa Block, East Champaran district, Bihar. The programme integrated soil health awareness activities with input support under the Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP) to promote sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture.

A total of 60 farmers, including 40 women and 20 men, participated in the programme. The major themes discussed were green manuring through Sesbania (Dhaincha), crop diversification, balanced fertilizer use, soil-test-based nutrient management, and integrated farming systems for improving soil health and farm productivity. During the technical session, scientists explained the role of green manuring in enhancing soil organic matter, improving soil biological activity, and reducing dependence on chemical fertilizers. Farmers were encouraged to cultivate Dhaincha before rice transplantation and incorporate the biomass into the soil to improve nutrient availability and soil fertility.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. S. K. Purbey, Principal Scientist, highlighted the objectives of the Khet Bachao Abhiyan and emphasized the importance of biofertilizers,

biopesticides, organic manures, and integrated farming system approaches for restoring soil health and reducing excessive dependence on agrochemicals. He stressed that healthy food originates from healthy soils and urged farmers to adopt sustainable agricultural practices for long-term productivity and profitability.

Scientists also discussed the importance of crop diversification and balanced nutrient management in addressing climate-related challenges and improving farm resilience. Farmers were advised to adopt soil-test-based fertilizer recommendations and follow proper nutrient application schedules to enhance fertilizer-use efficiency and crop yields.

Dr. Amol K. Jadhav highlighted the importance of utilizing summer-grown biomass crops such as Sesbania as green manure for succeeding rice crops. He explained that green manuring improves nutrient recycling, enhances soil organic carbon, stimulates beneficial microbial activity, and helps reduce fertilizer requirements in subsequent crops.

An input distribution programme was conducted under the SCSP component, during which participating farmers received 5 kg paddy seed (Rajendra Masuri/MTU-7029) along with essential farm tools including a spade, khurpi, and hansiya to support improved crop management practices.

Farmers appreciated the scientific guidance on green manuring, soil testing, crop diversification, and balanced fertilizer use. Many participants acknowledged the

adverse effects of imbalanced fertilizer application on soil health and pledged to adopt the recommended practices during the upcoming cropping season.

The programme concluded with a strong message that healthy soils are the foundation of sustainable agriculture, nutritional security, and prosperous farming communities, reinforcing the objectives of both the Khet Bachao Abhiyan–2026 and the SCSP initiative.

The event demonstrated how combining input support with scientific awareness can accelerate the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices and strengthen farmers' capacity to manage soil health effectively.