Nutrient management and irrigation along with partnering farmers have been the buzz word around. The CII sponsored 4-day event at Chandigarh seeks to attain the level of productivity in the farm sector

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n order to enhance food productivity in the country by mechanisation in agriculture sector, adopting new technology innovative risk management in farming, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) organised its Biennial Agro Technology & Business Fair in Chandigarh during 1 to 4th December, 2012.

In the fair, hundreds of leading agri companies participated. The domestic and international companies ranging from tractors, heavy agri implements, small agri equipments, seeds, fertilisers, agriculture universities, food processing, horticulture and others participated in the grand fair.

During the fair, a one day international

conference was held at the regional headquarters of CII in Chandigarh speakers from across the world aired their views on the agricultural issues.

PARTENERING FARM

On the occasion, Jang Bahadur Sangha, Managing Director of Sangha Seeds stressed on the farmers involvement in the all kinds of developments take place in the agricultural operations from warehousing to marketing.

He said. "We need to treat farmers as a partner in growth in the whole operation of warehousing, marketing and other activities. All kinds of trading, market rates should be online, so that they can be empowered. The agricultural universities should recommend



for right volume of usage of pesticides and fertilisers."

Dr. Puneet Pachauri, Manager- agri services, farm solution business, DSCL focused on the need of integrated nutrient management with respect to the diversified crops. On the special attention to the micro irrigation he said, "There is a drastic need of special attention into the micro irrigation, involving all the stakeholders, university scientists, farmers and others."

Roshan Lal, financial commissioner cum principal secretary, Department of Agriculture, Government of Haryana replied to the queries on shortage of agricultural labours from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in Panjab and Haryana, said, "The migrating labours from UP and Bihar have stopped coming to Punjab and Haryana after launching of MNREGA. This is a welcome sign that they are getting sufficient job opportunities in their respective states. Why should they come to Haryana and Punjab just to be a second class citizen?"

He further stressed on the need of contract farming in the country and also emphasised to adopt the successful models of Netherlands on harvesting, warehousing and technology.

BB Singh, Assistant Vice President, Tata Chemicals focused on the need of conserving soil nutrients and saving soil from degradation and mechanised delivery system.

He also described the efforts of Tata Chemicals on engaging youth in agriculture and said, "We pick-up high school drop outs and engage them in one year course on agriculture and train them how to grow crops, how to operate tractors and other agri implements. We provide two months classroom training and eight months field experience. After completing the course they are given a certificate. These kinds of skill building activities are very much important for Indian agriculture."

MECHANISED FARMING

Vikram Ahuja, Director of Zamidara Farm Solutions Pvt. Ltd tried to attract the attention



of policy makers into the rising cost of agri inputs and said, "The farming cost has increased drastically in few years, 900 per cent in fuel, 300 per cent in tractors, including manpower. While the return has increased very low, therefore, farmers are leaving agriculture. So policies need to be made

farmers' friendly and the industry need to come into the fore."

He further illustrated the meaning of mechanisation in agriculture and said, "Mechanisation does not mean to only sale of machines. The focus should be on farming on mechanised way. In fertilisers, the government is providing subsidy only in Urea and other fertilisers are getting ignored, thus, the farmers prefer to go with Urea and neglect using of other fertilisers which affect the nutrition of soil. The fertilisers should be used as

per the need of the soil in appropriate manner."

Vaishali Chopra, senior analyst, Farm Inputs, Rabobank India reverberated with Ahuja and stressed on the usage of fertilisers and chemicals on right quantity and said that Indian farmers were using chemicals in very low extent.



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ROSHAN LAL Principal Secretary, Dept. of Agriculture, Haryana

Srikant Chundi, Vice President, DSCL tried to attract attention of policy makers and farm equipments companies manufacturing said, "The rural people have better source of income than agriculture. So they are turning towards nonfarming related business. We need to bring things farmer friendly to engage them in farm sector."

Dr. J. N. Raina, Head -Department of Soil Sciences & Water Management, Dr. Y.S. Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry emphasised on water conservation and soil nutrition "Water and said, management



management is a critical issue in India as the country utilises it only two per cent of rain water. We need to take water conservation projects especially in the northern states of the country. In Punjab and Haryana, the farmers have exploited groundwater on large scale and the water level has gone down very deeply. We need to take it seriously otherwise; there will be no more water in the future."

PROVIDING FINANCE

Gokul Patnaik, Chairman, Global Agri System Pvt. Ltd focused on the risk management in agriculture and said, "If the farmers produce high yield, the prices go down and if they produce low, the prices shoot up. In this scenario, there is an insurance policy needs to be put in place. There is a very urgent need of insurance policies for farmers. That can give them surety of their products."

On the role of banks and providing finance to the urban people and ignoring farmers, he further added, "Banks are ready to finance those who do not need it but those who are in need, there are many excuses."

An agricultural consultant from Netherlands, Francois De Putter, Agriplan Consultants, thrown light on the agricultural scenario in his country and said, "The farming practice in Europe is very capital extensive. Five million euro is not enough to start farming in 100 acres of land. If you go to the banks, they are not ready to finance it. The per hectare output is very low so it's very tough to continue farming practices there."

He shared his personal experience in very light manner and said that his grandfather was a farmer, due to rising agri input cost, now we are not able to continue our old business, but running an agri consultant agency.

On the farming model and usage of heavy agri machineries, he further added, "One farmer in the Netherlands holds 100 acres of land, who uses lot of tractors, agri machineries and storage facilities. Just two or three people running the entire farming operation and produce five million tonnes of commodities."