



Cow-Based Natural Farming in UP

Why in News?

Recently, the **Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister** stated that **cow-based natural farming** can boost **farmers' incomes** by saving Rs 10,000 to Rs 12,000 per acre.

- He highlighted the **substantial collective savings** possible if most farmers in the state adopt this practice.

Key Points

- **Benefits of Cow-Based Farming:**
 - **Reduces agricultural costs** while **conserving cattle**.
 - **Enhances soil, water, and human health** over the long term.
- **Current Dependency on Inputs:**
 - **Seeds:**
 - Uttar Pradesh produces only half of its seed requirement, importing the rest from other states, especially southern India, at high costs.
 - **Fertilisers:**
 - India relies heavily on imports for **fertilisers**, particularly **urea, phosphates, and potash**.
 - Urea imports alone cost Rs 2,127 crore in 2023–2024.
 - Exporting nations often **hike prices due to India's high demand**.
- **Potential of Cow-Based Natural Farming:**
 - Experts highlight its potential to save **foreign currency** spent on fertiliser imports.
 - **Uttar Pradesh** has 2.78 crore farmers and approximately 2 crore cattle, **providing a strong foundation** for cow-based farming.
 - A single cow's dung and urine can support farming on nearly four acres of land.
- **Government Initiatives:**
 - **Self-Sustaining Shelters:** **Cow shelters** are being developed as **training hubs** for cow-based natural farming.
 - **Dedicated Universities:** Plans to establish **natural farming universities** to integrate traditional methods with modern technology.
 - **Financial Assistance:** Farmers receive **financial support over three years**, Rs 4,800 in the first year, Rs 4,000 in the second, and Rs 3,600 in the third.
 - Grants are also available for cattle sheds and **biogas plants**.
 - **Product Marketing:** Dedicated **outlets have been established** at divisional headquarters to **promote natural farming products**.
 - The government is prioritizing **product certification to enhance consumer trust and market credibility**.
- **Rising Demand for Organic Products:**
 - **Post-Covid**, there is **greater demand for organic**, regionally sourced products.
 - Research institutions highlight a growing preference for healthier food options with regional flavors.

Natural Farming

- It is a method of agriculture that seeks to **create a balanced and self-sustaining ecosystem** in which crops can grow without the use of synthetic chemicals or genetically modified organisms.
 - Instead of relying on artificial inputs like synthetic fertilisers and pesticides, natural farmers rely on techniques **like crop rotation, intercropping, and composting** to enhance soil health and support crop growth.
- Natural farming methods are **often based on traditional knowledge and practices and may be adapted to local conditions** and resources.
 - The goal of natural farming is to **produce healthy, nutritious food** in a way that is sustainable and environmentally friendly.

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