



Natural Farming : A Key to Uplift Rural India

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With a view to uplift rural India, the concepts of natural farming is gaining ground in our country. Natural farming includes the use of available natural farm resources/products in agriculture and mushrooming biodiversity. Many organizations are trying hard to convince farmers to adopt natural farming for long term sustainability and fertility preservation. Farmers are becoming aware of the negative effects of current farm practices and excessive use of chemicals fertilizer and pesticides.

Natural farming eliminates energy/ production costs, fertilizer and other input costs, improves underground water level without any contamination, helps in conserving moisture and prevent crop from effect of climate change. Above all, it reduces global warming by reducing the greenhouse gases considerably and helps in sustainable development. It cannot be an exaggeration, if we say that cattle based natural farming has the answer for the problem of farmer suicides, mitigation of economic recession, empowerment of the farmer and improvement of the rural economy.

The cattle and natural farming are inseparable entities in Indian farming. Now the whole world is turning to organic foods. The concept of organic food is catching up fast all over the globe. In a cattle based economy, dung and urine are the major natural resources of the cattle economy, next only to bullock energy. A simple resource like cow urine has many benefits and multiple uses. The cows used in dairying and bullocks in agricultural purposes such as ploughing, transportation, manure and pest repellents are well-known. Dried cattle dung (*Gobar*) is used prolifically in rural India as fuel for fire and a power resource. Environment friendly Gobar Gas Plants across rural India will help save the ozone layer and prevent global warming. Gobar gas plants are not only cooking gas producing system but also manure producing factory for enhancing the crop productivity.

The most important constraint felt in the progress of this natural/organic farming is the little knowledge of farmers related to sustainable development and making level to take a firm decision to promote organic agriculture. Further, farmers lack knowledge of about the modern techniques of farming and also its application. Attention on the application of composts/organic manure is also lacking. There is problem of marketability of organic produce over the conventional produce. Farmers do not get more price for organic produce than non-organic produce. Hence, there is need to launch this concept on mission mode.

Deteriorating soil health has become a major concern to everyone. The productivity potential of most of the crops has gone down drastically and our national average is much lower compared to many countries, particularly China and USA in most of the field crops, vegetables and fruits. It is mainly attributed to poor soil health. Hence, it is high time to relook at restoring the traditional practice of farming using enough organic/natural amendments. It is the need of the hour that we have to educate our farmers for adopting organic/natural practices owing to its benefits not only for human health but also for environment sustainability. I hope, natural farming coupled with concept of Conservation and Precision Agriculture may help for enhancing productivity and profitability. Further, it will be helpful for quality production and remunerative to farmers and sustainable in nature. I wish through this journal the idea of natural farming should reach to all farmers of our country.

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