



Oil producers' body to establish model groundnut farms in MP, Rajasthan

Model farms to help enhance productivity of major crop groundnut, says Solvent Extractors' Association

The Solvent Extractors' Association (SEA) of India, which has been supporting the establishment of model farms for rape-mustard and castor, now has similar plans for groundnut also. The managing committee of SEA, which met on June 16, has decided to establish 100-150 model groundnut farms in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan during the current season.

In his monthly letter to members, Ajay Jhunjhunwala, President of SEA of India, said groundnut is a major crop and needs more attention for productivity. "Considering our experience for castor and mustard model farm projects, the Managing Committee at the meeting held on June 16, 2023, decided to extend the model farm project for groundnut," he said. Urging stakeholders to support the project financially, he said the contribution qualifies as CSR (corporate social responsibility) activity under Section 135 of the Companies Act 2013.

Stating that SEA and Solidaridad were working on rape-mustard model farms for the last four years, he said the results were quite encouraging with increases in productivity. Referring to the SEA team's meeting with Manoj Ahuja, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare, in New Delhi in June, Jhunjhunwala said he had appreciated SEA's role in promoting mustard model farms.

Ahuja also desired to know the names of companies interested in setting up oil palm plantation in the North-East, and asked the association to prepare a note on the challenges and opportunity in oil palm plantation from industry's point of view. Ahuja also agreed to support the visit of a delegation of interested companies to the North-East to explore the opportunity, he said.

MSP

Welcoming the government's decision to increase the MSP (minimum support price) for kharif crops, he said the government must buy at MSP. Currently, rapeseed is quoted at ₹5,100 a quintal against the MSP of ₹5,450 a quintal. Stating that mustard farmers were totally discouraged, he said it was quoted at ₹7,000-7,500 a quintal at the time of sowing. In Haryana, sunflower seed price has fallen much below the MSP of ₹6,400 a quintal, leading to protests by farmers. This may result in lower acreage under soya in kharif and mustard in rabi and overall production of oilseeds, he said.

Thai palm

Referring to the recent visit of BV Mehta, Executive Director of SEA, Suresh Motwani, General Manager (Oilseeds) of Solidaridad, and Kailash Singh, Managing Director of Tefla, to Thailand to understand its palm oil complex, Jhunjhunwala said Thai CPO (crude palm oil) producers and exporters are keen to develop direct rapport with Indian importers and refiners. SEA is expecting a delegation from Thailand to attend the annual general meeting of SEA and Globoil India during September 28-30.

At the invitation of the Thai government, SEA plans to depute a trade delegation during the last week of August to study Thai palm oil complex and develop direct rapport with producers and exporters, he said.