

Syngenta renews its commitment to farmers' safety, launches I-SAFE 2020-21 in Yavatmal on Maharashtra Krishi Divas

- *Under the annual program, certified professional spray men promote responsible use and curb negligent pesticide exposure incidents in Yavatmal district*
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Yavatmal, July 02, 2020: Absence of appropriate precautions and irresponsible mixing of crop protection chemicals during spraying leads to avoidable loss of lives in Maharashtra. Farmers, especially in the drought-prone and agriculturally stressed Vidarbha region of the state, continue to face such challenges and are, therefore, in constant need of handholding and support to improve their adaptive capabilities. In keeping with its commitment to farmer's health and safety, **Syngenta India's innovative health & safety program, I-SAFE (Inculcating Safety Awareness for Farmer Empowerment) has been playing a critical role in the area.**

Each year, I-SAFE, an initiative designed and conceived by the Syngenta India has been conducting multiple programs to instil awareness among Yavatmal farmer on health & safety and equipping them with tools and techniques. This year too on the occasion of **Maharashtra Krishi Divas (Maharashtra Agriculture Day), Syngenta has launched the 2020-21 edition of I-SAFE** to enable more than 10,000 farmers and spray men competent in the use, spraying and handling of agro-chemicals and to train them to become Spray-men Entrepreneurs.

The Agriculture Department, Maharashtra has appointed Syngenta India as a nodal company to implement Safe Use program in Yavatmal. The program was launched by Syngenta India in association with Department of Agriculture and Yavatmal District Administration at the Zilla Parishad Office, Yavatmal. The program that started with lighting of the lamp by the Chief Guest Mrs Kalindatai Pawar; Zila Parishad; Yavatmal, was later followed by handing over of PPE kits to a few farmers. The Chief Guest also garlanded the statue of Mr Vasantnao Naik, Former Chief Minister of Maharashtra and flagged off the mobile health van and two awareness vans. Spray-men Entrepreneurs were officially recognized and awarded with certificates.

In his message, **Dr K C Ravi, Chief Sustainability Officer, Syngenta India** said, "Syngenta's I-SAFE initiative under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is creating professional certified spray men who would take all the safety measures while spraying. It is a great privilege for us to continue collaborating with the Department of Agriculture, Maharashtra and the Yavatmal District Administration and NGOs, to ensure that healthy agricultural practices are followed in safe manner to avoid any untoward exposure incidents in future."

Dr K C Ravi added, "Since 2017-18, we have been conducting farmer training activities, personal health and hygiene and safe use campaigns, doctor training programs and operating the Syngenta Wockhardt Mobile Health Clinic in Yavatmal District. I-SAFE 2020-21 edition launched amidst COVID-19 pandemic further strengthens our actions, activities and commitment to the farmers of Yavatmal District".

Since the inception of the I-SAFE program we have trained & certified 105 Spraymen Entrepreneurs (SE) and 640 spray men on crop & safe use practices. So far these SE's have provided services to 12600 farmers in and around Yavatmal. Our Mobile Health van is fully equipped with a trained medical practitioner (MBBS Doctor), qualified nurse, and a full-time driver and has provided primary health services to more than 50000 people. Since the launch of this program in October 2017 we have conducted more than 600 trainings on health, safety and safe use practices and have covered about 30,000 farmers in Yavatmal, Amravati and Osmanabad districts. We have counseled farmers on Safe Use Practices and have so far covered 721 spray men under this program in Yavatmal and Osmanabad. We have trained 789 doctors through 9 training programs conducted in Yavatmal, Amravati, Akola and Osmanabad districts. We have distributed 31300 Personal Protective Gear (PPE) kits through the Department of Agriculture in Yavatmal, Osmanabad, Amravati and adjoining districts. We have also done extensive public awareness campaigns and have also created animated audio visuals on safe use practices.

This year we plan to dedicate one Mobile Health Van to public through Wockhardt and under the Spray men Entrepreneurship (SE) Program we will support 100 SEs and 350 spray men. Apart from that, behavioral change counselling will be provided to 50 spray men in the region. We will also carry out printing and display of 100 posters related to Safe Use of pesticides. In next few days, 3 loudspeaker campaign vans will be pressed into action to create awareness among the farmers. The company will also take part in developing the relevant wall paintings at 50 locations.

The launch event was attended by many prominent persons from Yavatmal - Mrs Kalindatai Pawar, President, Zilla Parishad; Mr Balasaheb Kamarkar, Vice President, Zilla Parishad; Mr Vijaybhau Rathod, Member, Zilla Parishad; Mrs Jayashri Pote, Member, Zilla Parishad; Mr Rajesh Kulkarni, Additional Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad; Mr CG Chavhan, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad; Mr Navnath Kolapkar, Superintendent Agriculture Officer (SAO); Mr Pramod Yadgirwar, Associate Director Of Research, KVK; Mr Rajendra Ghongade, Agriculture Development Officer; Mr Pramod Nagar, Extension Officer, Department of Education and Mr Chandrashekhar Khandare, Finance officer, Zilla Parishad.

Proper social distancing norms and other guidelines were strictly adhered to during the programme.

About Syngenta

Syngenta is a leading agriculture company helping to improve global food security by enabling millions of farmers to make better use of available resources. Through world class science and innovative crop solutions, our 28,000 people in over 90 countries are working to transform how crops are grown. We are committed to rescuing land from degradation, enhancing biodiversity and revitalizing rural communities. To learn more, visit us at www.syngenta.com, www.syngenta.co.in, Follow us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/Syngenta

Media Contact:

Javed Rahmatullah

Mobile: 9998922211

E-Mail: javed.rahmatullah@syngenta.com