

Syngenta trains doctors on management of pesticide exposure in Telangana farmers'

** This is done under its flagship I-SAFE program which helps instil awareness about health & safety from chemicals among farmers*

Adilabad, September 24, 2020: Cotton cultivation has witnessed an exponential growth in Telangana which is the third highest in terms of cotton cultivation and production in India, after Gujarat and Maharashtra. However, this like any other cash crop comes at a cost when farmers lack the knowhow on chemical handling. To ensure health and safety of such farmers especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, Syngenta India has initiated a series of awareness programs for doctors under its flagship I-SAFE (Inculcating Safety, Awareness for Farmers Empowerment) initiative, in collaboration with the district authorities. Doctors were given training and awareness by Dr VV Pillay on how to recognise pesticide exposure and ways of recovery, stabilization and essential treatment in case of emergency.

Lauding the initiative, Dr S Kishan, CEO Zilla Parishad, Adilabad, said, "This is a great initiative by Syngenta India which prepares doctors to deal with exposure issues and emergency cases. Such programs must be conducted every year in districts which are impacted the most."

Congratulating Syngenta for the efforts, Dr Narendar Rathod, DMHO, Adilabad, said, "Being ready for handling exposure cases, possible treatment, knowledge about antidotes and giving first aid before reaching to the nearest health centre is key to saving our farmers, at the same time making farmers aware of the health concerns of using crop protection products is integral to responsible agriculture practices and Syngenta is committed to this cause. More such programs in the state should be included in Syngenta's plan every year."

Dr VV Pillay; Head of Poison Control Centre, Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences, Kerala; Sri S Kishan, CEO Zilla Parishad; Sri Narendar Rathod, District Medical & Health Officer and Shri B Venkat, District Agriculture Officer, Adilabad were present during the session along with over 95 doctors and members of Indian Medical Association, Adilabad chapter in large numbers.

Dr KC Ravi, Chief Sustainability Officer, Syngenta India Limited said, "Farmers are at the centre of what we do. As part of our commitment to the agriculture community, our programs are designed to keep farmers safe, healthy and aware of the chemical usage. Apart from making farmers aware on safe use of chemicals, we also train doctors on recognition of pesticide exposure. I-SAFE (Inculcating Safety Awareness for Farmer Empowerment) is our first-of-its kind initiative to instil awareness on health & safety among farmers and equipping them with tools and techniques. I-SAFE is a Syngenta CSR initiative in collaboration with Syngenta Foundation India and is guided by the vision of Agriculture Department, Government of Telangana. It aims to enable thousands of farmers and spray men competent in the use, spraying and handling of agro-chemicals and to train them to become Spray men Entrepreneurs".

"Syngenta India is committed to strengthening safe and responsible use by effective stewardship of its crop protection products. Medical stewardship is a significant component of Syngenta's stewardship programmes. Through our Toxicovigilance Program, we track accidental or intentional exposure related cases across India with support from our Poison Control Centre, Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences (AIMS), provides the medical services. The detailed Adverse Health Incidence (AHI) Database is then updated and uploaded on a Global Online Tool", informed Dr Ravi during the session.

Under I-SAFE, Syngenta India has already trained more than 917 medical practitioners of primary healthcare centres and rural healthcare centres through our medical experts in India in last 24 months.

Syngenta India's field force regularly holds stewardship training & awareness sessions for farmers during all its farmer meetings and field days. In these sessions, farmers are informed and educated about The Five Golden Rules for Safe Use of Crop Protection Products. To read and understand the product label before using; exercise caution at all times when handling a product; maintain application equipment in good working condition; practice good personal hygiene before, during and after using products and use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment every time before spraying.

This is the second such program in the state since the launch of I-SAFE.

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

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