

Yogi assures farmers of right price of their produce

Lucknow, Jun 9 (PTI) Acknowledging farmers' contribution in achieving country's self-sufficiency in food grains, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Sunday sought to assure peasants that they would get the right price for their produce. Addressing the inaugural function of the fourth session of the Million Farmers' School here at Lok Bhawan, the chief minister also assured peasants that his government stands by them and will not let their hard work go in vain. "Life is not about escape or migration, it is about the struggle. The government will not allow your hard work to go in vain," said Adityanath.

"We stand by all of you in every situation. It is our responsibility to give you the right price for your produce. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is also committed to the upliftment of our farmers," he said. Acknowledging peasants' contribution to the country's economy, he added, "The hard work of the farmers leads to the country's self-sufficiency in food-grains." Comparing the farming sector's present situation with that in the past, he said, "Remember five decades ago when our country was dependent on other countries for food grains? Other countries used our food grains to feed their pets and animals." "But it is the hard work of our farmers which has turned our fields into the land of gold," said the chief minister.

The initiative undertaken by Uttar Pradesh Agriculture Department aims to double the income of farmers, increase their awareness on the use of advanced agricultural techniques, the specific use of fertilizers after soil testing and maintenance of soil health to increase the production. On the occasion, the chief minister also inaugurated a Coffee Table Book on 'Krishi Kumbh'. With the inauguration of the fourth session of the Million Farmers' School Sunday, more than 15,000 centres started functioning in 75 districts of the state with an aim to educate farmers on techniques to achieve more production. "By now, more than 10 lakh farmers have been trained in these schools," said the chief minister.

"We believe that by 2022, the agricultural science centres will play an important role in doubling the income of our farmers," he added. "We came to power with agrarian welfare in the state as our priority. By the end of this year, our goal is to provide additional irrigation facilities to more than 20 lakh hectares of the farming land in the state," said Adityanath.

Noting the relief provided by the Centre's Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme to farmers, the chief minister said the scheme "has benefited about 1.03 crore framers". "The first two installments of the fund under this scheme have already been transferred directly into the accounts of farmers and the data for 1.80 crore more farmers is further being prepared," he added. Adityanath also claimed his government made a total payment of Rs 68,500 crore sugar cane dues directly to the farmers' account in the last two years.

"We are setting up new sugar mills in the state and expanding capacities of the existing ones," he said. "Both ethanol and sugar will be produced simultaneously. Ethanol will be helpful in running vehicles and provide an eco-friendly system. This will end our reliance on other countries for fuel," the chief minister added. The chief minister also noted the state's agricultural universities role in spreading awareness among farmers about farming techniques. "Without awareness, people's participation is not possible. We have four agricultural universities in the state (for spreading awareness of farming techniques)," he said. He also promised closer participation of farmers in managing agricultural markets in the coming days. "We have decided that in the coming time, the mandis will be operated by the representatives of farmers, rather than the government," he said. Speaking on the occasion, UP Agriculture Minister Surya Pratap Shahi said farmers' school has contributed a lot in spreading awareness about the farming techniques. "With the efforts of the state government, research on agriculture is going on. The state's agricultural budget has increased from Rs 500 crores to Rs 2,068 crores. The state has risen from 17th position to the 3rd position now in the farming sector," he said. "Production is increasing enormously. Through farmers' school, we are trying to double the income of the farmers," he added. PTI
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