

Agricultural Machinery Custom Hiring Centres (CHC) Model Scheme

February 9, 2021

About Custom Hiring Centers(CHCs)

What is the need for the scheme?

- Indian agriculture is undergoing a gradual shift from dependence on human power and animal power to mechanical power because of increasing cost for upkeep of animals and growing scarcity of human labour.
- Further, use of mechanical power has a direct bearing on the productivity of crops apart from reducing the drudgery and facilitating timeliness of agricultural operations.
- Thus there is a strong need for taking farm mechanization.
- However, the farm power distribution is quite uneven across the States, wherein the highest use of mechanical power is in the order of 3.5 kw/ha in Punjab and less than 1kw/ha in States like Bihar, Orissa, Jharkhand etc
- Mechanical power is largely consumed in big land holdings and is still beyond the reach of small/marginal holdings which constitutes around 80% of the total land holdings.
- This is due to the fact that the small/marginal farmers, by virtue of their economic condition are unable to own farm machinery on their own or through institutional credit.
- Therefore in order to bring farm machinery available within the reach of small/marginal holdings, collective ownership or Custom Hiring Centres needs to be promoted in a big way

Objectives:

- To make available various farm machinery / equipments to small and marginal farmers
- To offset the adverse economies of scale due to high cost of individual ownership
- To improve mechanization in places with low farm power availability
- To provide hiring services for various agricultural machinery/implements applied for different operations.
- To expand mechanized activities during cropping seasons in large areas especially in small and marginal holdings.
- To provide hiring services for various high value crop specific machines applied for different operations.

Potential for Custom Hiring Centres :

The farm power availability for small/marginal land holdings is the lowest. As the small/marginal holdings constitute 80% of total land holdings, the potential for CHC which will cater to the farm machinery requirement of such a vast area, is quite huge.

CHC Unit

- CHCs are basically a unit comprising a set of farm machinery, implements and equipment meant for custom hiring by farmers.
- Though certain implements and equipment are crop specific, the traction units like tractors, power tillers etc., and self-propelled machinery like combine harvesters etc., are used in common.
- Therefore, an ideal model envisaged in this project comprise farm machinery that are commonly used for tillage operations for all crops, multi crop equipment and a minimum of crop specific machinery.

Advantages CHCs

- Provides access to small and marginal farmers to costly farm machinery
- Facilitates timeliness in farm operations and efficient use of inputs
- Promotes adoption of climate resilient practices and technologies by farmers because of availability of appropriate machines at reasonable hiring charges
- Reduces drudgery
- Promotes increase in cropping intensity wherever feasible
- Facilitates crop residue recycling and prevents burning of residues
- Reduction in cost of cultivation
- Provides work opportunities to skilled labour and small artisans