

# Biotech-KISAN Programme

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**In News:** As per the recent information shared by the Union Minister of Science and Technology in Lok Sabha, Biotech-Krishi Innovation Science Application Network (Biotech-KISAN) programme plays an important role in taking innovative biotechnologies to the farmers.

## Biotech-KISAN Programme Key Points

- Biotech-KISAN programme is a farmer-centric scheme for farmers, developed by and with farmers under the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology.
- It is a pan-India program, following a hub-and-spoke model and stimulates entrepreneurship and innovation in farmers and empowers women farmers.
- It has a unique feature to identify and promote local farm leadership in both genders. Such leadership helps to develop science-based farming besides facilitating the transfer of knowledge.
- **Aim:** To understand the problems of water, soil, seed and market faced by the farmers and provide simple solutions to them.
- The programme links available science and technology to the farm by first understanding the problem of the local farmer and then providing scientific solutions to those problems.
- The Biotech-KISAN hubs are expected to fulfil the technology required to generate agriculture and bio-resource related jobs and better livelihood ensuring biotechnological benefits to small and marginal farmers.
- Currently, there are a total of eight Biotech-KISAN Hubs in different Agro-climatic Zones.

## Significance Of Biotech-KISAN Programme

- **For Farmers:** The Biotech-KISAN is a Farmer centric scheme launched by the Department of Biotechnology, where scientists will work in sync with farmers to understand problems and find solutions.
- **By Farmers:** Developed in consultation with the farmers. Soil, Water, Seed and Market are some key points that concern small and marginal farmers. Biotech-KISAN aims to link farmers, scientists and science institutions across the country in a network that identifies and helps solve their problems in a cooperative manner.
- **Empower women:**
  - The woman farmer is often neglected. It is important to empower the women farmer, help her meet her concerns for better seed, storage of seed and protection of the crops from disease and pest.
  - The women farmer is also the prime caretaker of livestock and she is eager to combine traditional wisdom in handling the livestock and with current best practices, especially in the context of emerging livestock disease.
  - The scheme includes the Mahila Biotech- KISAN fellowships, for training and education in farm practices, for women farmers.
  - The Scheme also aims to support the women farmers/ entrepreneurs in their small enterprises, making her a grass root innovator.
- **Connects Globally:** Biotech-KISAN will connect farmers to best global practices; training workshops will be held in India and other countries. Farmers and Scientists will partner across the globe.
- **Impacts Locally:** The scheme is targeted towards the least educated marginalised farmer; Scientists will spend time on farms and link communication tools to soil, water seed and market. The aim is to understand individual problems of the smallholding farmers and provide ready solutions.
- **Across India:** Biotech KISAN will connect farmers with

science in the 15 agro-climatic zones of the country in a manner, which constantly links problems with available solutions.

- **Hubs and Spoke:** In each of these 15 regions, a Farmer organisation will be the hub connected to different science labs, Krishi Vigyan Kendra and State Agriculture Universities co-located in the region. The hub will reach out to the farmers in the region and connect them to scientists and institutions.
- **Farmers as Innovators:** The hub will have a tinkering lab, communication cell and will run year-long training, awareness, workshops and which will act as education demonstration units to encourage grass root innovation in the young as well as women farmers.
- **Communicating Best Practises:** There will be a communication set-up to make radio and TV programmes for local stations, as well as daily connectivity through social media.

### **Agro-Climatic Zone/ regions in India**

- The Planning Commission of India has divided India into fifteen broad agro-climatic zones on the basis of physiography, soils, geological formation, Climate, cropping patterns, and development of irrigation and mineral resources for extensive agricultural planning and developing future strategies.
- The main objective was to integrate plans of the agro-climatic regions with the state and national plans to enable policy development based on techno-agro-climatic considerations.