

Soil Conservation Awareness Campaign

Agriculture with its allied sectors is unquestionably a largest livelihood provider in India, more so in the vast rural areas. It also contributes a significant figure to the Gross Domestic Product. Indian agriculture and allied activities have witnessed different revolutions. Sustainable agriculture, in terms of food security, rural employment, and environmentally sustainable technologies such as soil conservation, sustainable natural resource management and biodiversity protection, are essential for holistic rural development. In India, one of the most important factors responsible for reduced yield and stunted plant growth is the deteriorated soil. In Uttar Pradesh 15.32 m ha land representing 52.12 per cent of the total geographical area is affected by soil degradation. Urgent measures should be taken to arrest the degradation process and to restore fertility and productivity of problematic soils. It is not possible to recover soil fertility and productivity without soil conservation techniques. Soil conservation entails using a variety of methods and techniques to maintain the quality of soil. Soil conservationists work to keep soil rich and productive while also protecting it from erosion and decay. The importance of soil in food production cannot be overstated. Crops require soil to thrive, and farm animals require greenery to survive. Soil conservation can aid in the reduction of food insecurity and the promotion of healthy communities. Soil also contributes to a cleaner environment by absorbing around a third of the carbon dioxide produced by fossil fuels and industrial processes.

By looking into the major problem of deteriorated soils of the nearby villages the Department of Agriculture, Integral Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology (IIAST), Integral University, Lucknow arranged a campaign to create awareness regarding Soil Conservation on 29.10.2021 in Bhakamau and Achramau villages of Lucknow District, Uttar Pradesh.

The objectives of the program were:

- To encourage farmers for adopting soil testing techniques
- To adopt Soil Management strategies
- To create awareness about the importance of Soil Health card
- Benefits of the healthy ecosystem
- To give an insight about the soil health card portal

The second and third year students of B.Sc. (Hons.) Agriculture participated with great zeal and enthusiasm along with the faculty members and explained the soil type of the region and the methods for conserving soil, to the farmers. The students interacted with natives of the village and discussed in detail the necessary reclamation procedures for soil conservation as the soil found in that area was saline. The villagers also discussed their soil related issues with them. The program was coordinated by Dr. Sunil Kumar and Dr. P. Smriti Rao, Assistant Professor, Department of Agriculture.

Many of the farmers were motivated and ready to take initiatives towards the adoption of new

technologies for soil conservation . The Village pradhan also acknowledged this effort of IIAST and encouraged the farmers to provide soil samples from their fields in order to get the soil health card in order to assess the current status of soil health .This in turn will also contain advisory based on the soil nutrient status of the farmer's holding ,along with the fertilizer recommendation for the next crop.

Glimpses of Soil Conservation Awareness Campaign Program

