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■ Delegates during the eighth conference of the International Farm Youth Exchange Association of India at a hotel in Chandigarh on Thursday. GURMINDER SINGH/HT

Experts against excessive use of pesticides, insecticides

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CHANDIGARH: The eighth conference of International Farm Youth Exchange Association of India was inaugurated at a city hotel on Thursday.

The conference has seen participation of farmers (delegates) from USA, Taiwan, Australia, Philippines, Holland, Thailand, South Korea and New Zealand. The issue on agenda includes effects of excessive use of pesticides, insecticides, weedicides on the crops, soil and human health among others.

The conference will go on till November 24.

10 RURAL FARMERS TO GO ABROAD TO LEARN FARMING TECHNIQUES

This year around 10 young rural farmers will be sent to Taiwan and other countries to learn effective ways of farming on small land holdings.

"With an increase in population, land holdings are becoming small. To sustain on small holdings, our effort should be to send the farmers who have small land holdings to coun-

'CONCEPT OF SEED BANKS SHOULD BE POPULARISED'

CHANDIGARH: State governments should promote seed banks as these can act as a safeguard against crop diseases and help in conserving genetic diversity. The information was shared at the International Farm Youth Exchange (IFYE) by Alan Lambert, national programme director of the IFYE, USA.

The conference of International Farm Youth Exchange Association India started on November 18. The theme of the conference is "Glaciers to sea water management in Agriculture".

Talking about the importance of preserving indigenous seeds, Lambert said seed banks provide a foundation for new variety of crops and also comes in use when an entire genetically modified variety of crop is destroyed in a



It is a valid concern in the US as well. They call them heirloom seeds. That is why the government has maintained those original seeds at seed banks.

ALAN LAMBERT, national programme director, IFYE, US

ly destroyed in pest attack. In that case, the old seeds saved in the banks can be used to regenerate new

small land holdings to countries like Taiwan, South Korea and Thailand that are good at intensive farming. So that when they come back, they can do that kind of farming here," said Capt RPS Gill (retd), treasurer-cum-organiser of IFYE India.

Talking about the farming practices in Taiwan, Charlene SL Yen, executive director, National 4-H Club Association, ROC, said, "In Taiwan, people have very small land holdings, like one hectare of land, but the productivity is really good and farmers are earning good."

She said in Taiwan, the government plays an active role in promoting agriculture. "We attract youth to do farming, they are provided extensive training

of crop is destroyed in a pest attack. Usually old seeds are resistant to pest attacks, he added.

"Seed banks help in conserving genetic diversity and can act as a safeguard against crop diseases.

These seed banks provide us generic material for creating new variety of seeds," said Lambert.

"There are times when a variety of crop is complete-

used to generate new variety, which is resistant to pest attacks," he added.

Talking about the threat from business corporates of hijacking indigenous seed business, Lambert said, "It is a valid concern in the US as well, they call them heirloom seeds. That is why the government has maintained those original seeds at seed banks."

and government provides monetary assistance to farmers as well."

She said world class technology is used in agriculture. The government promotes

agricultural products as well.

"In contrast to the government in Taiwan, the Punjab government is hardly doing anything to help farmers," Capt Gill (retd) added.