

PRESS RELEASE

“We can eradicate counterfeit pesticides if National IPMS is fully implemented”: Dr. Subhash Chand, Secretary (CIB&RC), Ministry of Agriculture at CropLife India’s National Conference

“Right Pesticide, Right Time, Right Dose”: CIB&RC Secretary Urges Industry to Collectively Develop AI Tool for Farmers

The secretary was speaking at CropLife India’s National Conference on the theme ‘AI for Agriculture Transformation’ held in New Delhi

18th September 2026, New Delhi: Dr. Subhash Chand, Secretary (CIB&RC), Ministry of Agriculture, said that India can eradicate the menace of counterfeit pesticides sold to farmers if the National Integrated Pest Management System (IPMS) is fully implemented. He made the remarks at the National Conference on ‘AI for Agriculture Transformation’ organised by CropLife India on 17th September 2026 in New Delhi.

The National IPMS database enables track-and-trace ensuring authenticity of the products through established dealer network. **Dr. Chand also urged the industry to collectively come together to develop an AI-based tool or app that can help farmers identify pests and make informed decisions on the right pesticide, at the right time and in the right dose.** He emphasised that harnessing technology in this manner can strengthen scientific and responsible crop protection practices at the farm level.

CropLife India is an industry body that represents 17 R&D driven companies in the crop protection sector.

During the **CEO’s Panel** at the conference, industry leaders shared their outlook for the industry for 2035. **Ankur Aggarwal, Executive Chairman & MD of Crystal Crop Protection** mentioned that the industry will witness more proximate innovations, beyond discovery for each mode of action. He further shared that robotics could also play a major role in the future. **Dr. Gyanendra Shukla, MD & CEO of Rallis India** shared that digital channels would become quite important, impact margins. He further said that AI can define the next phase of growth for the industry.

Mohan Babu, COO, Bayer CropScience shared that the industry would shift to an integrated approach, beyond just chemicals or biologicals solutions, involving technology like AI, enhanced seeds and gene editing. **Giridhar Ranuva, Business Director at BASF Agricultural Solutions** highlighted the role climate change will play, with outcome-based agriculture gaining significance. **Rahul Dhanuka, MD of Dhanuka Agritech** mentioned that solutions that India builds, including AI-based applications, will democratise mechanisation and rest of the world will draw from India’s experiences.

CropLife India also unveiled a report in partnership with Yes Bank at the conference. **The report titled, ‘Innovation in Crop Protection Sector’, highlights that India’s net sown area will shrink by 10% due to conversation of land for urban uses by 2050.** It also estimates that the country today losses ~INR 2 lakh crores worth of crop yield annually due to pests and diseases

and argues that these pressures will further intensify due to climate change. It calls for increasing per hectare yield, which includes arresting such losses.

The report further calls for reforms in the sector, including more digitalisation, enhancing farmer extension services, promoting domestic R&D through incentives like the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, One Nation One Licence that is valid across states, a five-year Regulatory Data Protection (RDP) incentive to encourage entry of newer crop protection solutions in the country.

Leaders from various tech companies also shared how solutions being developed for the farmers using AI and other frontier technologies could be transformative for the agriculture sector.

Amit Singhee, Director at IBM Research India shared how *Privthi*, the company's foundational AI model, is enabling farmers to map crops through satellite imagery, assisting in areas like crop insurance or in estimating yields. **Sapna Nauhria, Director (Public Sector, Asia) at Microsoft** shared that the company is looking to scale its ATD Baramati project to new states, under which AI is assisting farmers, ensuring real-time pest alerts. **Rucha Nanavati, Chief of Advanced Technology at Farm Equipment Business, Mahindra & Mahindra** shared how the company is now building an ecosystem beyond tractors, building AI powered smart advisory solutions for farmers, across the cultivation cycle.

Ashwathi Nambiar, Director AI/ML at Satsure Analytics shared how their sovereign AI model, backed by the government, is learning from satellite data to provide more effective forecasts on risks that farmers face. **Abhishek Burman, Founder & CEO of General Aeronautics** shared how data fusion, using AI and drone imaging, has significantly transformed the quality of inputs in agriculture.

The conference also witnessed participation of speakers from organisations such as **Ernst & Young, Deloitte, Inera Crop Science, Institute of Pesticide Formulation Technology**, among others.

About CropLife India

CropLife India is committed to advancing sustainable agriculture and it is an association of 17 R&D driven member companies in crop protection. We jointly represent ~ 70% of the market and are responsible for 95% of the molecules introduced in the country. Our member companies have annual global R & D spend of 6 billion USD and are firmly committed to engaging with the farming community to enable Safe, Secure Food Supply.

Our Members



Our Associate Members



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