



# **BASAI News Updates**

**Oct. 8, 2022**

# Stubble burning continues, 80 active fire locations spotted

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

KARNAL, OCTOBER 7

The state government and the district authorities have been making efforts to involve farmers in disposing of crop residue by adopting in-situ and ex-situ methods to contain farm fires, but it seems more efforts need to be done as the farmers of the state continue to "violate" the norms by burning stubble.

As per the data of the Haryana Space Application Centre (HARSAC), which has been monitoring stubble-

burning cases since September 15, 80 active fire locations were reported across the state till October 7. These were reported over the past seven days only. The number of cases is higher this year in comparison to last year. The number was 35 till this date in 2021.

After the paddy harvesting picked up pace, reports of stubble burning have also started coming. Most of the cases have been reported from Karnal, Kaithal, Kurukshetra, Ambala, Fatehabad, Sirsa, Yamunanagar and Panipat districts.

## Kurukshetra tops tally, Karnal at second place



FILE PHOTO

Kurukshetra district is leading the tally with 25 cases, while last year till this date it had reported 13 cases.

With 20 cases, Karnal district is at the second place this year in comparison to 11 last year (till October 7).

Ambala district is at the third position where 10 cases have been reported, while the district had witnessed only two cases till this date last year. Kaithal and Jind districts have reported eight cases each, while last year five cases were reported in Kaithal, and none was reported in Jind. Fatehabad has reported three cases in comparison to one last year, while two cases each have been reported in Panipat and Sonapat districts, while last year Sonapat had reported

one case and Panipat had witnessed none. One case each has been reported in Yamunanagar and Palwal districts so far this year.

A senior official of the Agriculture Department said regular monitoring was being done along with adopting a massive awareness drive to make farmers sensitise about in-situ and ex-situ methods for crop residue management. Besides, the government also provides a cash incentive of Rs 1,000 per acre to farmers for not burning crop residue.

## Neither have machines, nor time, CM told; farm fires likely to rage

Union leaders say no choice as they can't afford costly equipment

RUCHIKA M KHANNA  
INDIAN EXPRESS

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 7

Farm fires, to destroy the paddy stubble and prepare the fields quickly for wheat sowing, are unlikely to abate this year. With farm unions in the state refusing to accede to the request of the Punjab Government on the scientific management of crop residue, there are chances of higher instances of farm fire this year.

In three successive meetings with various farm unions held yesterday and today, the leaders told the Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann-led government delegation that they would not be able to control the burning of paddy straw, as they neither had sufficient time to prepare the fields for the next crop nor were there enough machines available for in-situ stubble management.

This in spite of the fact that the CM-led delegation assured the farm leaders that the government does not intend to take any coercive steps such as making red entries in the revenue records of errant farmers or registering cases against them.

The union leaders are learnt to have told the government that though they and their families were the worst-affected by the smog caused by



STIR NEAR CM'S HOUSE TOMORROW

BKU-Ekta Ugrahan leaders met the CM on Friday and refused to cancel the dharna outside his Sangrur house on Sunday, saying though their demands had been accepted, these were seldom implemented. The demands include crop loss relief, amendments to the mining, policy, withdrawal of cases filed against them for taking part in protests and burning stubble, etc.

farm fires, they did not have a choice as the cost of in-situ management equipment and hiring the machines was difficult for the farmers to bear.

Talking to *The Tribune*, Sukhdev Singh Kokrikalan, general secretary, BKU-Ekta Ugrahan, said they had demanded Rs 200 per quintal over and above the MSP of paddy, towards this cost. "Otherwise, farmers are helpless and will have no other choice," he added.

Yesterday, after the meeting with the CM-led delegation,

Jagjit Singh Dallewal, president, BKU-Sidhapur, had said that the government had earlier promised to compensate farmers with Rs 2,500 per acre for the scientific crop residue management, but they refused later. "A poor farmer, whose profit margins are shrinking with rising input costs, can't afford to bear this expense. The government should give farmers some compensation," he had said.

Later, Agriculture Minister Kuldeep Singh Dhaliwal told *The Tribune* that the govern-

### FOCUS STILL ON 'IN-SITU MGMT'

Though the government has come up with an ex-situ stubble management policy, the primary focus is on the in-situ technique. However, the delivery of stubble management machines to farmers is quite slow. Of the total 32,100 machines, only 7,300-odd have been delivered to farmers this season so far. Till last year, 90,422 different machines were delivered to farmers.

### NO LET-UP IN PROTEST AT ZIRA PLANT

Farm unions have refused to lift their dharna outside the Zira distillery. At a meeting on Friday, civil and police officers apprised the CM that the NGT and the HC have given directions in favour of the distillery owner, so the dharna should be lifted. The CM has reportedly asked Zira and Ferozpur MLAs to initiate a dialogue with the protesters and resolve the issue.

ment was clear on not letting the farmers burn stubble. "We will not take any coercive steps, but we are quickly making machines available to farmers, so that they go for in-situ or ex-situ management of stubble. Since many farm leaders told us that they did not have big tractors compatible with the stubble management machines, we have also offered them bigger tractors. But the government, at this point, can't afford to give compensation," Dhaliwal added.



# Lack of adequate mechanisation hurting horticulture

**VIJAY C ROY**  
Tribune News Service

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 7

Despite horticulture output contributing around 30% to the agriculture GDP, one of the biggest deterrents to the growth of horticulture in India is the lack of adequate mechanisation in the crop care stage, which primarily involves weeding and spraying. Currently, there is an intense involvement of manual and animal labour in this segment in the absence of mechanisation solution in this sector.

Mechanisation in horticulture can act as the biggest

asset for farmers as the use of machines not only improves the output and quality but also saves the labour cost during weeding.

According to horticulture experts, there is a tremendous scope for enhancing the productivity of horticulture produce in India which is imperative to cater to the country's estimated demand of 650 MT of fruits and vegetables by the year 2050.

As far as mechanisation in the horticulture sector is concerned, very few players are operating in this segment and mainly concentrating on

Swaraj Tractors has introduced multi-purpose ride-on machine Code.



manual equipment. There are also few players who are manufacturing machines where the operator has to walk behind it.

According to experts, the adoption of walk-behind machines such as power

tiller or power weeder has been low because it isn't very user-friendly, causes operator fatigue and has safety concerns. Also, there is no suitable mechanisation solution which could operate within the narrow row spaces

of horticulture crops.

Realising the opportunity, Mohali-based Swaraj Tractors, a part of the Mahindra Group, has introduced Code, a multi-purpose ride-on machine, to suit the specific needs of horticulture farming.

The company claims that it is the narrowest and the lightest ride-on prime mover ever made, which eliminates the dependency on labour or animal power for carrying out inter-row operations. The farmer can perform crop care operations while enjoying the comfort and safety of a ride-on machine.

"We are trying to bring

new solutions in the area of horticulture where currently there is not much mechanisation. With the help of mechanisation, more land could be cultivated which could lead to increase in farmers' income," said Harish Chavan, CEO-Swaraj Division, M&M Ltd.

The company has witnessed significant demand for its machines in Gujarat, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, where it has launched initially and adopted in various horticulture crops such as areca nut, coconut, mango, pomegranate, dragon fruit and flowers.





Trucks loaded with paddy at the Karnal grain market. TRIBUNE PHOTO

## Paddy glut: Farmers return from grain market with their produce

PARVEEN ARORA  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

KARNAL, OCTOBER 7

With the Karnal grain market witnessing long queues of tractor-trailers at the entry gates, owing to the tardy lifting of paddy for the past four days, the Karnal Arhtiyas Association decided to halt the supply for a day on Friday. Due to this, the farmers had to witness a lot of inconvenience.

After the decision by the association, the market committee officials did not issue gate passes to the farmers as a result of which, they returned to their respective places with tractor-trailers loaded with paddy.

"I came here to sell paddy, but was informed that no farmer would be allowed to take his produce inside the grain market as the arhtiyas have asked the authorities not to issue gate passes," said Joginder, a farmer.

As per the arhtiyas, owing to

### DC REVIEWS PROCUREMENT

Karnal Deputy Commissioner Anish Yadav visited the grain market at Jundla on Friday and reviewed the procurement. He also interacted with farmers and checked the process of issuing of gate passes. He asked the authorities to ensure speedy lifting of paddy.

tardy lifting, the farmers are not getting enough space to unload their paddy. They say jam has become a common sight in the grain market.

"We have been witnessing a chaos in the grain market due to poor lifting. Despite raising the issue on each and every platform, we are left with no option but to put a ban on the arrival of foodgrains for a day," said Rajnish Chaudhary, president Karnal Arhtiyas Association.

He said only the loading work was done today, so that farmers could get space to unload their paddy on Saturday.

As per the official data, around 39 per cent of pro-

cured paddy has been lifted so far, while the remaining is lying in the grain market. The data says, various procurement agencies have procured 5,32,800 quintal in Karnal grain market, of which only 2,09,087 quintal was lifted till October 6 late night.

Pawan Chopra, secretary, market committee, Karnal, said, the decision was taken by the arhtiyas and they have consulted them for it. Since, there is a prediction of rainfall in a couple of days, lifting is necessary in the grain market. "We have asked the transporters to lift the procured paddy," said the Secretary.



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