

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IS GOVT'S TARGET: SARDESSAI

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Agriculture is a time tested occupation and a long term honourable profession. People of Goa should adopt intensive agriculture methods and mechanized farming and should get involved in sustainable development which is a target of Government said, Minister for Agriculture Shri Vijay Sardessai.

Shri Sardessai was speaking at the inauguration function of three days "Goa Krishi Mahotsav" organised by Directorate of Agriculture along with National Horticulture Mission, State Agricultural Management and Extension Training Institute and the Agriculture Technology Management Agency, South Goa at Ravindra Bhavan, Margao today.

Speaking further Shri Sardessai said Government is consistent with ushering in mechanization. Government's aim is to double up the income of farmers by increasing crop through intensive agriculture. Contract farming law will be brought up soon to provide benefit to farmers, he said.

Shri Sardessai also announced Community Farming Scheme on the occasion. This scheme requires minimum 1 hectare land. Farmers can unite and club their land for which Agriculture Department will provide fencing; well; irrigation system like drip irrigation and sprinkler system, water pump etc. 90% of the expenses involved to cultivate this land will be borne by the Department and in case organic farming is being undertaken in this land then more incentives will also be provided, he said.

500 hectares of land will be taken up under this scheme on pilot basis in the beginning. The aim of this scheme is to bring barren land in the State under cultivation and to usher in cooperative atmosphere in farmers. He appealed to the farmers to join hands to make progress for which Government will give all the required support. Government is focussed to attract the interest of the young generation in agriculture.

Twelve tractors were also handed over to the engineering division of Agriculture Department for the use and benefit of farming community.

Director, Directorate of Agriculture, Shri Nelson Figueiredo and Director, Indian Council for Agriculture Research, Dr Chakurkar were among those prominent persons present on the occasion.

The Mahotsav includes exhibition, demonstrations, knowledge session, workshop and display. 60 stalls with 30 private exhibitors along with NGO's and various Government Departments are participating in these 3 days Mahotsav. It also includes sessions on gardening, urban farming, honey bee cultivation,

mushroom cultivation and vegetable cultivation. A special pavilion for various coconut based eatables and products is an added attraction of the mahotsav.