

Atal Bhujal Yojana- "Haryana leading in crop diversification"

Water conservation is an important concern in agriculture, as it plays a vital role in ensuring food security and sustainable agricultural practices. In Haryana, Atal Bhujal Yojana is being implemented in 1647 over-exploited Gram Panchayats. The major concern for this depleting groundwater is paddy which is one of the most water-consuming crops. However, the Atal Bhujal Yojana has proved to be a game changer in Haryana. IEC awareness activities along with capacity building of the community have sought to shift the behaviour of farmers from conventional irrigation to drip irrigation and diversification to alternative crops, especially vegetables like cauliflower, bitter gourd and bottle gourd. This has not only reduced water consumption, but also tried to increase agricultural income. Apart from this, the subsidy benefits provided under micro irrigation systems have also attracted farmers to grow vegetables with drip system, thus reducing water consumption. It is worth noting that paddy crop requires about 60-70 lakh litres of water per acre per crop cycle, however, micro-system grown vegetables consume only 7.5 lakh litres of water, reducing water usage by 90%. This increases the yield by 25-30%, depending on the crop.



One such conscious farmer Sh. Pankaj Singh is a resident of Gram Panchayat Subhari, Block Karnal, who took a commendable step by cultivating vegetables in 8 acres inspired by the Atal Bhujal Yojana.



Shri Pankaj Singh informed that he used to cultivate paddy traditionally in 8 acres of land, but then he interacted with the team of Atal Bhujal Yojana in FY 2021-22, and got detailed information about various demand and supply side activities done through Atal Bhujal Yojana in his gram panchayat. With the help of the team of Atal Bhujal Yojana, he applied for a drip irrigation system on 8 acres. Subsequently, he started cultivating vegetables with a drip system and started earning from the alternative crop. He said that if every farmer cultivates alternate crops with different technology, they can earn maximum profit. Impressed by Shri Pankaj, farmers from nearby villages went to their fields and applied for micro irrigation system under Atal Bhujal Yojana.