

7. Natural Farming – Environment

India will become global hub for natural farming, says PM Modi. India is positioning itself as a global hub for Natural Farming, with the Prime Minister advocating for a science-backed, chemical-free "One Acre, One Season" model to restore soil health. This shift is supported by the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF) and financial incentives like PM-KISAN to ensure sustainable agricultural resilience.

1. Context – South India Natural Farming Summit

The Prime Minister of India recently addressed the South India Natural Farming Summit held in Tamil Nadu.

Global Ambition – The PM declared that India is poised to become a global hub for natural farming.

Core Philosophy – The approach emphasizes the alignment of natural farming with traditional wisdom, scientific innovation, and sustainable development.

A. Key Highlights of the Summit

Indigenous Concept – Natural farming was described as India's indigenous idea, deeply rooted in tradition and specifically suited to the local environment.

Science-Backed Movement – Emphasis was placed on transforming natural farming into a science-backed movement by integrating ancient traditional wisdom with modern scientific research.

'One Acre, One Season' Model – The PM advocated for this model, urging farmers to practice natural farming on one acre of land for one season to personally experience the benefits before scaling up.

B. Major Financial Announcements

PM-KISAN Release – The PM released the 21st instalment of the PM-KISAN scheme.

Amount – ₹18,000 crore transferred.

Beneficiaries – 9 crore farmers across India.

Total Disbursal – To date, ₹4 lakh crore has been directly transferred to small farmers' accounts, aimed at enhancing agricultural resilience and driving financial inclusion.

2. Understanding Natural Farming

A. Definition and Scope

General Definition – It is a chemical-free agricultural method relying entirely on locally available resources (cow dung, cow urine, biomass mulch, indigenous seeds). It strictly avoids synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, focusing on soil regeneration, biodiversity, and ecological balance.

NITI Aayog's View – Considered an agroecology-based diversified farming system that integrates crops, trees, and livestock with functional biodiversity.

National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF) View – An approach integrating livestock, diversified cropping systems, and traditional knowledge to restore soil health and reduce input costs.

B. The Four Pillars of Natural Farming

- Jivamrita & Ghanjivamrita** – Bio-stimulants made from cow dung and urine to enhance soil microbial activity.
- Bijamrita** – A seed treatment method to protect against diseases.
- Mulching** – Covering the soil with biomass/organic material to conserve moisture and suppress weeds.
- Wahpsa** – Promoting soil aeration and water vapor retention (soil moisture).

3. Comparison – Natural Farming vs. Organic Farming

Feature	Natural Farming	Organic Farming
External Inputs	No external inputs allowed. Rely strictly on on-farm resources.	Certified organic inputs permitted. External organic inputs can be purchased.
Fertilizers & Pesticides	Uses cow dung, cow urine, biomass mulch, and botanical extracts.	Uses compost, vermicompost, biofertilizers, and neem-based pesticides.

Soil Amendments	No mined minerals or supplements are used.	Allows use of natural minerals like rock phosphate and gypsum.
Seed Use	Focuses on Indigenous, untreated seeds.	Organic-certified seeds are preferred.

4. Challenges and Concerns

Yield Uncertainty – Studies present mixed results; while some report equal yields, others note initial drops in yield, particularly in high-demand crops during the transition phase.

Lack of Awareness and Training – A significant number of farmers are unfamiliar with the specific techniques of natural farming, necessitating extensive capacity building.

Market Access and Certification – The absence of robust, formal certification systems makes it difficult for farmers to prove the quality of their produce and command premium prices.

Transition Period – The shift from conventional chemical farming to natural farming involves a learning curve and temporary yield fluctuations as the soil recovers.

Need for Scientific Validation – There is a need for more long-term, region-specific studies to scientifically validate the effectiveness of natural farming across India's diverse agro-climatic zones.

5. Key Government Efforts and Initiatives

A. National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF)

Type – A centrally sponsored scheme.

Focus – Promoting chemical-free farming via local livestock, diversified cropping, and traditional knowledge.

Funding – Total outlay of ₹2,481 crore till 2025–26 (₹1,584 crore from Centre; ₹897 crore from States).

B. NITI Aayog's Natural Farming Initiative

Objective – To promote natural farming as a means to double farmers' income and restore soil health.

Strategy – Encourages the reduction of chemical fertilizer use.

Campaigns – Supports community-led campaigns like 'Muktikar Abhiyan' (Liberation Campaign/Freedom from chemicals).

C. State-Level Programs

Andhra Pradesh – Integrating natural farming into its Swarnandhra Vision, emphasizing soil cover, crop diversity, and botanical pest management.

Bharatiya Prakritik Krishi Paddhati (BPKP) – States like Kerala, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Himachal Pradesh have adopted natural farming models under this scheme.

D. Other Supporting Initiatives

Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme – Provided financial assistance exceeding ₹10 lakh crore to farmers in 2025 alone.

GST Reduction – Reduced GST on bio-fertilizers to provide economic relief to cultivators.

Integration of Millets – Promoting millets as a superfood with global potential, which aligns well with natural farming practices.

Multi-Crop Models – Promoting integrated farming (e.g., in Kerala and Karnataka) where farmers cultivate coconut, areca nut, fruits, spices, and black pepper on the same land, embodying the biodiversity philosophy of natural farming.

Source – <https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Coimbatore/pm-narendra-modi-coimbatore-visit-south-india-natural-farming-summit-november-19-2025/article70298336.ece>