



DRONES TO SHGS - AGRICULTURE - GS III MAINS

Q. Centre approved the scheme to provide financial assistance to selected SHGs to purchase drones that would be rented out to farmers. Critically analyse the significance of the scheme in the light of present technological prowess in the agricultural field. (10 marks, 150 words)

News: *Centre to provide 15,000 women self help groups with drones that can be rented out for agricultural purposes*

What's in the news?

- Centre approved the scheme to provide **financial assistance to selected SHGs to purchase drones that would be rented out to farmers.**

Key takeaways:

- The scheme will help in infusing advanced technology in agriculture for improved efficiency, enhance crop yield and reduced cost of operation for the benefit of farmers.

Objective of the Scheme:

- Provide drone to 15,000 progressive women SHGs (Self Help Groups) to be rented out to farmers for agricultural purposes

Financial Outlay: 1,216 Crore

Central Financial Outlay:

- Centre will provide financial assistance at 80% of the cost of drones.
- For example, if the cost of a drone is Rs. 10 lakh and a SHG is purchasing a drone then Centre will give Rs. 8 lakh and then this drone can be rented by the SHGs to farmers and they (SHGs) can earn rental income.

Significance of the Scheme:

1. Women empowerment:

- Women will earn rental income.

2. Way to Precision Farming:

- Drone based precise application of pesticides and insecticides will pave the way for precision farming.

3. Improve Agricultural Mechanisation:

- Currently only 45% of net sown area in India is under mechanized farming.
- This scheme will improve the mechanized farming and improve farm efficiency as well as productivity.



4. Improve the Health of Farmers:

- During manual application of pesticides and herbicides, farmers are exposed to toxic chemicals. This severely impacted farmers' health.
- Drone based application will relieve the farmers from the burden of inhalation of chemicals.

5. Rural Development:

- In the scenario of feminization of agriculture and women economic dependency, the present scheme will improve women economic independency, at the same time improve rural development.

6. Doubling Farmers Income:

- Increased productivity, due to high efficient application of inputs through drones, will improve income of farmers.

7. Safe Food Chain:

- Drone based application of inputs will reduce the pesticides exposure in food products and make our food chain safe and secure.

8. Sustainable Farming:

- Efficient application of inputs will improve soil fertility and pave the way for sustainable farming in the wake of climate change issues.

