

# Uttar Pradesh Government Embraces Agri-Tech Revolution, Plans 'Krishi Bharat' Global Summit



BY JHUMPA LAHIRI

The Uttar Pradesh government is set to revolutionize agriculture in the state by promoting agri startups and integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into farming practices, aiming to elevate the rural economy through 'smart farming'. In a significant move, the Yogi Adityanath government has announced plans to host a global farmers' summit named 'Krishi Bharat' in November 2024, in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

This four-day mega event, to be held in Lucknow, will witness the participation of delegations comprising farmers and agricultural experts from countries such as the US, Germany, Brazil, Italy, Poland, France, Spain, Indonesia, and Kenya. The scale of the summit is expected to match that of the UP Global Investors Summit held in February 2023, which garnered over 19,000 investment proposals worth Rs 40 trillion from both domestic and multinational companies.

Despite being a leading agricultural producer, Uttar Pradesh faces challenges such as lower per hectare yield and sub-optimal food processing, resulting in reduced farm incomes and higher wastage. Tarun Sawhney, Chairman of CII Krishi Bharat 2024, emphasized that the farm summit aims to bring together various agri startups, foreign companies, and global venture capitalists interested in investing in the domestic agricultural value chain.

"Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's strong advocacy for farm issues is enabling the industry to take significant strides towards facilitating the farm economy and agricultural innovations," Sawhney stated.

The state is also planning to send progressive farmers abroad for knowledge sharing in best agricultural practices and will showcase 'agri tourism' by arranging field visits for foreign delegations to familiarize them with local farming practices and allied activities.

With more than 20 million hectares of net cropped area, constituting nearly 85% of the state's total land mass, Uttar Pradesh leads in sugarcane and dairy production. Paddy and rice occupy the largest share (33%) of the cropped area, followed by wheat, pulses, and oilseeds at 33%, sugarcane at 16%, and maize and millets at 14%.

Moreover, Uttar Pradesh boasts 88% of its landmass as irrigated area, with tube wells accounting for 70%, followed by canals at 10%, and wells at 6.5%. Madhav Singhania, Chairman of CII Northern Region & Deputy Managing Director & CEO of JK Cement Ltd, expressed the industry's keenness to address policy issues in consultation with the government and policymakers, while also emphasizing the importance of upgrading technology in agriculture.

The ambitious initiatives taken by the Uttar Pradesh government signify a paradigm shift towards modernizing the agriculture sector, fostering innovation, and enhancing the livelihoods of farmers. By embracing cutting-edge technologies and international collaborations, the state aims to establish itself as a leader in agricultural development and pave the way for a sustainable and prosperous future.