



# Importance of soil health cards in the context of Indian Agriculture

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## Abstract

Soil provides the nutrient medium for the growth of plants on earth including crops that supports human life on this planet, SOIL which is also known as the soul of infinite living supports infinite living things to flourish. Soil holding the prime importance for all living beings had still been neglected for a very long time and has not been looked after in terms of its health. The continuous growth of exhaustive crops

for several years, micronutrient deficiency, lack of knowledge about organic manures has led to a sharp decline in the fertility status of Indian soil. To overcome these problems a soil health card scheme has been launched to provide farmers knowledge about their fields and recommended doses of fertilizers and manures for sustainable agriculture to increase productivity and maintain soil health.

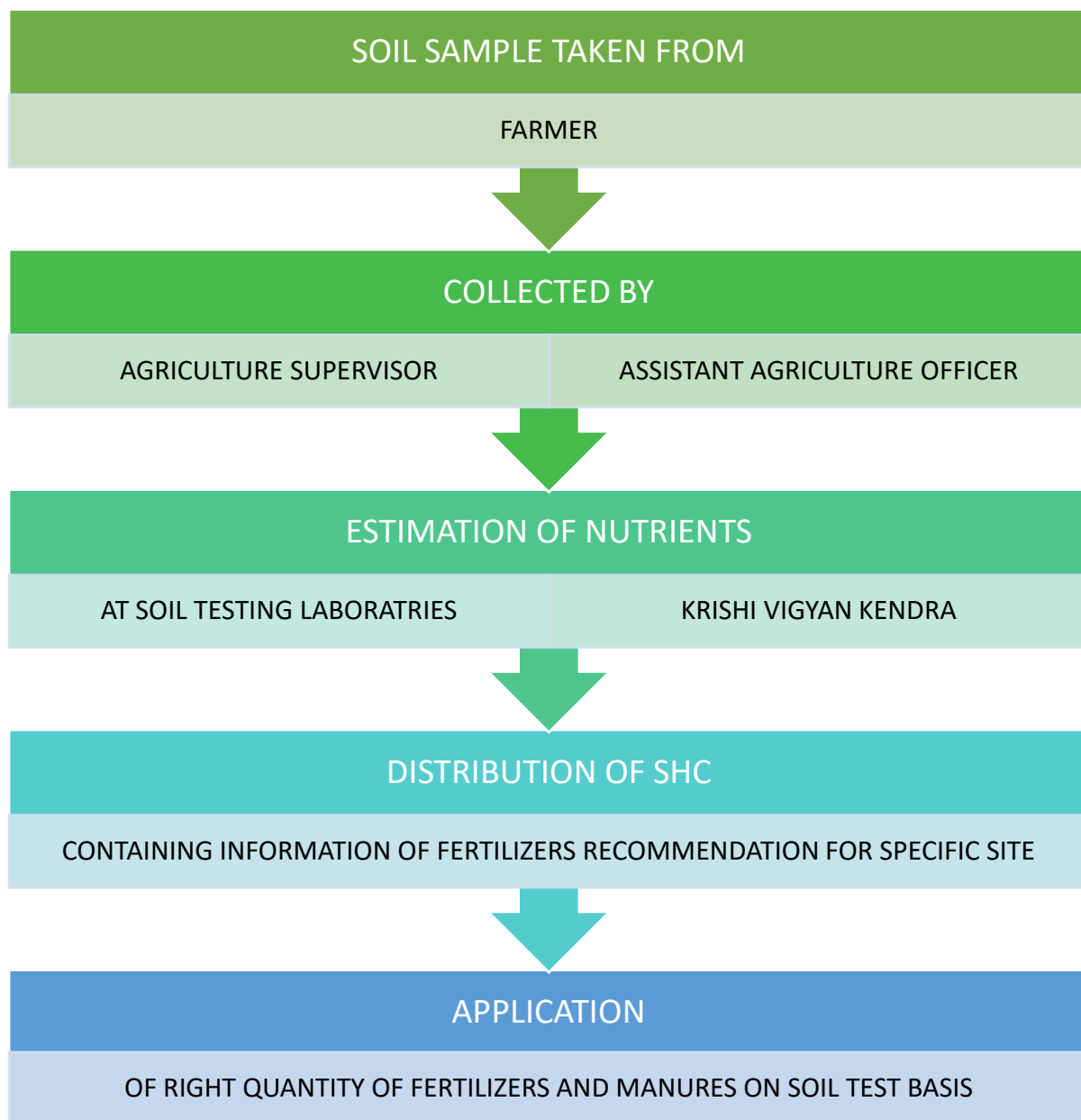


Agriculture is the backbone of our country which provides employment to 60% of our population and has a 16% share of India's Gross domestic product. Ever since independence focus has been only on increasing crop production and productivity, advancement in research and technology has led to the development of high yielding varieties to meet the increasing demand for food supplies due to rapid rise in population, in this process soil health has declined sharply over the years, since high yielding varieties require a huge amount of fertilizer hence farmers have been using chemical fertilizer in a substantial amount without any proper scientific recommendation or knowledge of the fertility status of their soil which has not

only been uneconomical for the farmers but also has caused severe environmental hazard, for example, eutrophication of chemical elements in water bodies adjacent to agricultural fields, the toxicity of certain nutrients, deficiency of other nutrients. keeping in mind all these problems related to depleting soil health government of India has launched a soil health card scheme under National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture in February 2015 from Sriganganagar city of Rajasthan. It aims to provide soil health cards to farmers which contain information regarding the present fertility status of soil and recommended dose of fertilizer for various crops in combination with organic manures and micronutrients. Under this scheme, soil

testing laboratories have been set up in various districts, where farmers can give soil samples of their fields and get their soil health cards which will Help them select crops according to their present fertility status which can not only save money and prove economical in terms of monetary input but can also increase the production

and fetch farmers more money. Apart from these benefits, it will also save the environment from pollution caused by the overuse of chemical fertilizers as this scheme also promotes the use of organic manures in conjunction with chemical fertilizers.



**SOIL HEALTH CARD PROCESS**

## Conclusion

Initially, this scheme aimed to provide soil health cards to all the farmers of the country within three years. A total of 22 crores farmers has been registered in this scheme as beneficiaries since inception and have been provided with their soil health cards from different soil testing laboratories of state agricultural universities and Krishi Vigyan Kendra KVKs. This scheme has made farmers aware of the concept of the

recommended dose of fertilizer in combination with organic manures and micronutrient application to enhance overall soil health and save the environment from the toxicities of various fertilizers. This has resulted in dual monetary benefits in saving excess expenditure previously spent on fertilizers and increased crop production.

