

ASK AGRICULTURE MINISTER TO ENSURE SAFE FOOD FOR ALL INDIANS

In India, our food and natural resources like water are contaminated with pesticides. These pesticides are also causing environmental health problems to farmers, in addition to affecting all of us. The Government operates through a regulatory system that has several problems in the basic approach that it takes as well as in its implementation.

For instance, registration of pesticides is not based on a rational approach that does a need assessment or looks at safer alternatives available. Similarly, pesticides banned in other countries continue to be allowed in India. Most importantly, the government does not create a level playing field between chemical agriculture and alternative agriculture in terms of its investments on research or extension in agriculture.

The investments made on organic agriculture projects in a massive, flagship programme of the Government of India called Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY or National Agriculture Development Program) are as low as 2% of the total investment, for example. A disproportionately high degree of emphasis is laid on chemical agriculture. This has to change, if all Indians have to access safe food.

Ask Sharad Pawar, India's Agriculture Minister, to change this situation so that you have access to safe food.

(Issued by Alliance for Sustainable & Holistic Agriculture – contact nishank.kisanswaraj@gmail.com)



www.indiaforsafefood.in

TAKE ACTION
GIVE A MISSED CALL TO

Z 022 3301 0031

To,
The Union Minister of Agriculture,
Government of India.

Dear Agriculture Minister,

Sub: Ensure Access to Safe Food

We, the citizens of India, have a right to Safe Food and it is the duty of the government to ensure that we have access to safe food.

Today, food in India is contaminated with toxic chemicals at the production stage itself, propelled by a variety of reasons. Meanwhile, it is clearly evident through large-scale experiences on the ground and numerous research studies that farming is productive, economically viable and sustainable without the use of toxic chemicals and dangerous, irreversible technologies like Genetic Modification or Genetic Engineering.

While such farming practices and approaches like organic agriculture and NPM (Non Pesticidal Management of crops) provide vital environmental services, higher net returns to farmers, better health and more valuable produce, they are presently denied even a level playing field, whereas they merit preferential support and incentive, so that progressively more land is converted each year to a safer and more sustainable path.

Therefore, we demand that the government has to ensure our access to safe food by taking up the following measures at the outset:

- Promote and encourage organic/ecological/natural farming with appropriate investments in research, extension and farmers' collectives, incentives to farmers in terms of shift to such farming, and support systems put into place to clean up our food production system of its toxic chemicals and by keeping out the use of Genetically Modified Organisms in Agriculture.
- Ensure access to organic food by establishing/opening of outlets across India (at least one outlet for every 50,000 Indians to begin with), that have a constant, affordable supply of a variety of organic food products (without toxic chemicals or GMOs; the government can use the existing Public Distribution System for the same).
- Provide poison-free food for pregnant women, lactating women, newborns and all children being covered under various food schemes of the government.
- Ban immediately those pesticides that have been banned in other countries and are known to be teratogenic, mutagenic, carcinogenic, endocrine-disrupting, 'extremely hazardous' and with developmental toxicity, as another step in ensuring access to safe food.

Sincerely,

Name: _____ **Email:** _____

Phone: _____ **City:** _____ **State:** _____