**PUNJAB RAJ BHAVAN CHANDIGARH**

*ONE DAY WORKSHOP ON STAKEHOLDER INITIATIVE TO ADDRESS CROP RESIDUE BURNING IN PUNJAB*

**MORE OPTIONS SHOULD BE GIVEN TO FARMERS TO CHECK STUBBLE BURNING IN PUNJAB—V.P.SINGH BADNORE**

  **GOVERNOR WANTS INCENTIVES TO BE GIVEN TO FARMERS FOR NOT BURNING CROP RESIDUES**

  **HORTICULTURE AND FRUIT CULTIVATION SHOULD ALSO BE PROMOTED IN A BIG WAY**

  **NO EXTRA FINANCIAL BURDEN TO BE PUT ON THE FARMERS SAYS SURESH KUMAR**

  **ADVISORY GROUPS AT THE STATE LEVEL TO BE FORMED**

Chandigarh April 27: The Punjab Governor and Administrator U.T. Chandigarh, Sh. V.P. Singh Badnore has firmly said that there was an urgent need to take more suggestive measures if we seriously need to arrest the issues of crop residue burning in Punjab.

            In his key note address delivered today on the occasion of a One day workshop on stakeholder initiative to address crop residue burning in Punjab, held in Chandigarh, the Governor said that there was an urgent need to give options to the farmers to adopt alternative practices thereby ensuring proper disposal of paddy residue instead of burning. He expressed concern over the emerging serious environmental hazards caused by the stubble burning. He said that it has not only damaged the health of the people but has caused extensive loss to the organic component of soil in Punjab. **The Governor also suggested that there was a need to promote horticulture, fruit cultivation and cultivation of Mushrooms in a big way in Punjab to break the usual Paddy Wheat crop cycle in Punjab.**

            Sh. Badnore also laid emphasis on formulating a comprehensive strategy including generating mass level awareness among farmers, providing available technologies at affordable prices. He appreciated the Punjab farmers for having complete knowledge about the latest farming techniques. He especially complimented the Punjab Agriculture University for keeping a close contact with the state farmers and giving them required suggestions time to time. He also laid emphasis on giving incentives to the farmers who have already adopted other alternatives and not burning the straw.

            The Governor has also offered to visit every district of Punjab along with the entire team of officers concerned to educate and motivate the farmers to stop burning the crop residue and go in for sustainable solutions.

            In his closing remarks Chief Principal Secretary to the Punjab Chief Minister Mr. Suresh Kumar disclosed that the Punjab Government would constitute state level advisory group to design some immediate action plan to check stubble burning in Punjab and has urged the Governor Punjab to be the Patron. He also said that there would be smaller groups of technical work force would also be formed in order to carry out the decisions of the State Level Advisory Group in this regard. He also called upon the Agriculture experts attending the workshop to work towards reducing the silica content from the straw and make it fit for animal consumption. He said that states like Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh could be given the fodder at lower prices where there was a shortage of animal fodder. He also asked the Progressive farmers of the state to make the young farmers aware of the new emerging technologies in Paddy Straw Management. Adding further Mr. Suresh Kumar said that there would be no extra financial burden put on the farmers while encouraging them to adopt alternatives including using the machinery on burning of straw in the State.

            Prominent amongst others who attended the workshop included Mr. Ravi Singh, SG and CEO,WWF India, Mr. Arun Pandhi, Programme Director, Tata Trusts, Mr. Ajayvir Jakhar, Chairman, Punjab State Farmers’ Commission, Dr. B.S. Dhillon, Vice Chancellor, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, Mr. K.S. Pannu, Chairman, Punjab Pollution Control Board, Dr. Balwinder Singh Sidhu, Commissioner Agriculture, Government of Punjab and senior bureaucrats from Punjab.**EOM**