



"SRT humming..... Soil enriching, Crops booming and Farmers Empowering"

SRT Shetakari Sanman Sohala 2025: Celebrating Agricultural Innovation and Farmer Success!

Namaskar,

Welcome to the 181st edition of the Saguna Rural Foundation (SRF) Newsletter!

We are delighted to share the success of a landmark event held at **Saguna Baug, Neral, Raigad**, on the special occasion of **Freedom Fighter Harikaka Bhadsavle's birth anniversary**. Organized by the **Saguna Rural Foundation**.

Event Highlights

The **SRT Shetakari Sanman Sohala 2025 (Farmers Felicitation Ceremony 2025)** was a resounding success, held on May 22, 2025, at Saguna Baug, Neral. The event buzzed with inspiration and enthusiasm, bringing together more than **500** farmers from **30** districts across Maharashtra, alongside prominent dignitaries from the state's cultural, media, and agricultural sectors Mr Suraj Mandhare (IAS), Agri Commissioner of MH, Mr. Makarand Anaspure, (Renowned actor & NAAM Foundation), and Mr Mandar Phanase (Editor, News 18 Lokmat).

A total of **40 awards** were proudly distributed during the ceremony. While the majority recognized outstanding farmers from **26 districts** of Maharashtra, two special awards were also presented to farmers from Gujarat and Karnataka, highlighting the growing reach and impact of sustainable farming practices.

A standout moment was the special award presented to **Mr. Umesh Pohadare from Yavatmal** for his exceptional cotton production (18 quintal per acre while reducing cost of production by 40%). Mr. Pohadare is a true champion of "Adopt SRT for Sustainable Farming," actively organizing farmer gatherings and guiding thousands towards more sustainable methods.



Panel Discussion

Farmers Share Their Transformative Journeys with SRT

The main attraction of the event was a powerful panel discussion featuring 9 dedicated SRT farmers from across Maharashtra. Moderated by Mr. Sandip Ramdasi, Sub-editor of ABP Maza (Marathi) News channel, the session saw farmers share their deeply personal and inspirational stories of transformation through SRT. Their heartfelt accounts moved and inspired the entire audience.

Farmers recounted their struggles with traditional agricultural methods, which often involved heavy dependence on labor, high input costs, and ultimately, low yields. These challenges frequently led to mounting debt and, tragically, even thoughts of suicide.



However, their transition to SRT brought about significant and positive changes:

- **Reduced Labor and Costs:** Farmers highlighted a remarkable decrease in labor requirements and overall input costs.
- **Increased Yields:** They reported impressive increases in crop yields, particularly for cotton and maize.
- **Enhanced Soil Health:** A key benefit observed was the doubling or even tripling of soil organic carbon content, leading to healthier, more fertile land.
- **New Revenue Streams:** The improved soil health and sustainable practices even made them eligible for carbon credits, opening new avenues for income.

Beyond the financial and agricultural gains, farmers shared how SRT brought them increased self-respect, greater financial independence, and valuable time to spend with their families.

Voices of Support and Vision

The event featured inspiring addresses from several esteemed guests:

- **Mr. Suraj Mandhare, IAS, Agriculture Commissioner of Maharashtra,** shared his satisfaction after hearing the numerous success stories from SRT farmers. He highlighted that training is being provided to farmers and officers through Saguna Rural Foundation under the POCRA project. He also announced that the government is planning policy initiatives to scale SRT farming, recognizing its sustainability and farmer-centric approach.
- Renowned actor **Mr. Makrand Anaspure** praised farmers who embrace new technologies, emphasizing that such nature-friendly practices pave the way for prosperity.
- **Mr. Mandar Phanse, Editor of News 18,** commended the dedication of farmers and stressed the dual benefits of SRT for both agriculture and the environment, encouraging continued innovation.



From Left to Right - Mr Makarand Anaspure, Mr Suraj Mandhare, Mr Mandar Phanase and Mr Chandrashekhhar Bhadsavle

Global Recognition for Indian Farmers

A truly special moment was the online interaction with Ms. Mary Boote, CEO of the Global Farmer Network (Iowa, USA). She extended her congratulations to the SRT farmers for adopting the zero-till method, calling the gathering of farmers, officials, and experts an inspiration globally. Ms. Boote referenced the Farmers Declaration on Regenerative Agriculture, urging all participants to sign and unite their voices for a greater global impact. She strongly affirmed that SRT adoption would elevate the farmers' status in society, and that collective mindset and action will strengthen the future of agriculture and farmers.

The SRT Shetakari Sanman Sohala 2025 underscored the vital role of sustainable farming practices and the immense potential of Indian farmers. It was a day of recognition, learning, and looking forward to a greener, more prosperous agricultural future.



Stay tuned for more updates as we continue our journey towards a greener and more sustainable future.

Thank you!



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