Skill India
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ASCI
Agriculture Skill Council of India

CEASI
CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE FOR AGRICULTURE SKILLS IN INDIA

COHARVEST

27th October 2025

CEDSI
CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR DAIRY SKILLS IN INDIA

CEFMI
Centre of Excellence for Farm Mechanization Skills in India

CEHSI
Centre of Excellence for Horticulture Skills in India

www.ceasi.in

LEADERSHIP INSIGHTS

Dear Readers,

It is a privilege to reach you through our weekly newsletter, which reflects the pulse of CEASI working under the aegis of ASCI, our collective journey toward skill development and sustainable agriculture. Every story we share here is a testament to the dedication of our teams, partners, and farming communities.

Our mission remains clear: to empower farmers and agri-professionals with the skills, knowledge, and technology they need to thrive in a changing world. By combining innovation with grassroots engagement, we are laying the foundation for a more productive, resilient, and inclusive agricultural sector.

I invite you to read, learn, and actively participate in the opportunities this newsletter presents. Your involvement is what transforms ideas into impact.

Dr. Satender Singh Arya
Chief Executive Officer

Dear Readers,

CEASI weekly newsletter is not only a summary of activities. Rather it is a platform to exchange ideas, celebrate achievements, and strengthen our shared vision for the future of Indian agriculture and its allied sectors like Dairy, Horticulture, Farm Mechanisation, Climate resilience, to name a few. Each edition carries stories of innovation, collaboration, and progress from across the agriculture domain and across geographies.

As we move forward, our focus will continue to be on sharing knowledge, latest developments, building capacity, and sharing success stories at every level from the farmer's field to the policymaker, ensuring that modern tools, techniques, and best practices reach those who need them most.

I agree that this newsletter is at its nascent stage. I encourage the readers and stakeholders to stay engaged with the initiatives, trainings, and updates featured here, and to share the salient achievements and developments that can be published herein. Your ideas for improvement of coverage, publication frequency, new sections to be included and feedback will be of immense importance to make it a model periodical that will provide opportunities to grow stronger and together.

Jaswant Singh Kalsi
Chief Operating Officer

ABOUT CEASI

Who We Are:

"Centre of Excellence for Agriculture Skills in India (CEASI)" is an autonomous organization working under the aegis of "Agriculture Skill Council of India (ASCI)", which is working under Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) for skilling and capacity building of farmers, wage workers, self-employed professionals, extension workers etc. engaged in organized and unorganized segments of Agriculture & Allied sectors.

CEASI is an apex organization of Centres of Excellence in various sub-sectors of agriculture viz.

- Centre of Excellence for Dairy Skills in India(CEDSI)
- Centre of Excellence for Horticulture Skills in India(CEHSI)
- Centre of Excellence for Farm Mechanization Skills in India(CEFMI)
- Centre of Excellence for Climate Resilient Agriculture(CoECRA)
- Centre of Excellence for Artificial Intelligence in Agriculture(CoE-AI)

What We Do:

Skilling & Capacity Building:
Building capacity based on stakeholder needs in agriculture and allied sectors.

Knowledge Management:
Developing QPs, NOS, skill gap reports, and newsletters to support workforce standards.

Research:
Conducting industry research to identify needs and bridge skill gaps as per industry demands.

Advocacy & Advisory Services:
Creating networks to share innovations and address sectoral challenges.

Our Vision

An autonomous institution of excellence committed to developing a highly skilled workforce in agriculture, driving innovation, technological advancement, and sustainable practices to enhance the prosperity and resilience of Indian agriculture.

Our Mission

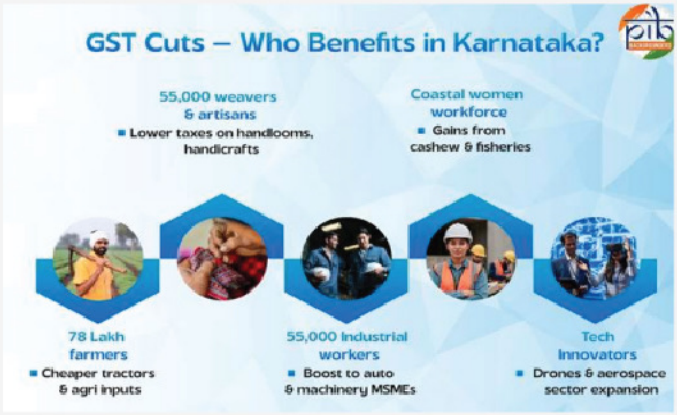
To emerge as the leading organization for skill development in cutting-edge agricultural practices, both nationally and globally, fostering holistic sector growth through sustainability, profitability, capacity building, knowledge dissemination, policy advocacy, and innovative research.

CEASI's Impact:

CEASI is driving transformative change in Indian agriculture by empowering individuals, enhancing skills, and uplifting communities across the country.

- 15+ States
- 15 FPOs Trained & Supported
- 20,000 Agri / Dairy Professionals Upskilled
- 5000+ Entrepreneurs Skilled
- 3000+ Women Empowered
- 30,000+ Lives Impacted

GST Cuts to Boost Farm Mechanisation and Rural Productivity in Karnataka



The recent GST rationalisation is expected to make farm mechanisation more affordable and accessible for Karnataka's farming community. The GST on tractors and agricultural machinery has been reduced from 12% to 5%, and on tractor parts from 18% to 5%, lowering purchase and repair costs. This is likely to benefit small and marginal farmers who often face financial barriers in adopting machinery for land preparation, harvesting, and post-harvest operations. With reduced tax rates, more farmers, Farmer Producer Organisations and Custom Hiring Centres are expected to invest in or rent equipment, helping reduce labour dependency and improve operational efficiency.

The reform will also support Karnataka's agri-machinery manufacturing clusters in Hubli-Dharwad, Belagavi and Bengaluru by improving demand and easing working capital pressures. Increased mechanisation can enhance productivity, crop quality and timely farm operations—key elements for climate-smart agriculture. The GST cuts are anticipated to strengthen rural livelihoods and accelerate the state's transition towards modern, technology-driven farming.

Odisha Prioritises Mechanisation and Productivity for a Strong Rabi Season

Odisha has announced a focused plan to boost agricultural productivity in the upcoming Rabi season, emphasising mechanisation, timely input delivery and climate-resilient practices. The state aims to achieve 23.26 lakh metric tonnes of foodgrain production by 2026, supported by coordinated efforts to ensure the availability of seeds, fertilisers and field-level guidance. Around 29.30 lakh hectares will be cultivated, with pulses, oilseeds, vegetables and condiments identified as priority crops. A key goal is to expand irrigation coverage and optimise land use, enabling farmers to adopt modern practices for higher yields.

Mechanisation is a core pillar of the campaign, promoted through programmes such as the Farm Mechanisation Programme, PM Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana and missions under pulses, oilseeds and horticulture. The focus is on expanding the use of equipment for sowing, plant protection, post-harvest processing and value addition to improve efficiency. Complementary initiatives like Rice Fallow Management, Shree Anna Abhiyan, watershed development and horticulture missions aim to support diversification, sustainability and stronger farmer incomes.

FAO Recognises Innovation in Sustainable and Mechanised Farming Practices

At the 2025 World Food Forum in Rome, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) recognised notable advancements in sustainable plant production and protection, highlighting innovations transforming global agriculture. Among the initiatives acknowledged was a smart farming approach that integrates robotics, automation and digital tools to support efficient and climate-aware food production.

The recognition showcased how technologies such as agricultural drones, autonomous field rovers, precision spraying systems and digital monitoring platforms are improving crop management, lowering labour needs and optimising resource use. These tools support key farming operations including seeding, crop protection, irrigation planning and data-based decision-making, making precision agriculture more accessible for both small and large farmers. By reducing direct exposure to agrochemicals, they also promote safer working conditions.

Examples from multiple countries demonstrated the impact on productivity and resilience. Capacity-building initiatives—particularly for rural youth and women—are helping develop skills in mechanised and digital farming. FAO noted that such efforts contribute to sustainable food systems, climate action and inclusive rural development.

Drone Technology Introduced in Tripura Paddy Fields for Smarter Pest Management

To strengthen modern agricultural practices, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Sepahijala, CAU (I), in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Government of Tripura, has introduced drone-based pest and disease management in paddy fields across the Bishalgarh subdivision. A demonstration held on 23rd October 2025 at Chandan Nagar Gram Panchayat showcased the efficiency of drones for pesticide spraying, with nearly 50 farmers attending.The programme highlighted how drones can provide targeted and timely spraying, reduce chemical usage, save labour, and minimise farmers' exposure to agrochemicals.

This is particularly relevant for paddy fields affected by drought-like conditions, where pest control needs faster response.The event was attended by local representatives and agriculture officials, including Sushanta Deb, MLA, and senior officers from the Agriculture Department and KVK Sepahijala. The initiative also includes awareness, training, and licensing support to enable farmers to adopt and use drones responsibly. The programme was conducted under the guidance of senior officials from CAU and ICAR-ATARI Zone VII.

Horticulture to Every Doorstep' Initiative to Be Launched in Telangana

Telangana: A new initiative titled 'Horticulture to Every Doorstep' is set to be launched in Telangana to promote wider adoption and accessibility of horticultural crops and products across the State. The programme aims to bring fresh produce and value-added horticultural goods closer to households, strengthening the link between farmers and consumers while enhancing nutritional diversity and urban green spaces.

As part of the initiative, awareness and capacity-building activities will be undertaken to encourage traditional farmers to diversify into horticulture, highlighting its economic and environmental advantages. Simultaneously, urban residents will be sensitised about the potential of rooftop and kitchen gardening to promote self-sufficiency and sustainability. The initiative reflects the State's commitment to expanding horticulture as a key driver of income generation, climate resilience, and improved food security.

Next Phase of Dutch–Indian Collaboration to Boost Sustainable Food Production

The Dutch horticultural cluster HortiRoad2India is set to embark on a new mission from 27 October to 2 November, marking a significant step in strengthening Dutch–Indian cooperation for sustainable and high-quality food production. After three years of joint research, design, and pilot initiatives, the partnership is now moving from planning to implementation, introducing a tailor-made blueprint aimed at transforming India's horticulture sector into a future-ready and resilient food system.

The upcoming mission will cover New Delhi, Bangalore, and Punjab, focusing on presenting a high-tech greenhouse model and deepening collaborations with local stakeholders. The initiative integrates advanced cultivation technologies with education, financing, and retail linkages to build a complete ecosystem for sustainable production. By 2026, India's first fully operational high-tech greenhouse is expected to begin production, showcasing innovations that enhance yield, reduce water and energy use, and ensure year-round supply of safe, pesticide-free, and nutritious produce.

Gujarat's Flower Cultivation Triples, Boosting Rural Incomes

Vadodara: Floriculture in Gujarat has witnessed remarkable growth over the past two decades, with the area under flower cultivation rising to 21,229 hectares in 2024–25 from almost negligible levels in the mid-1990s. According to data from the State Horticulture Department, improved seed quality and better farming practices have led to a 4.6-fold increase in overall flower production, making floriculture an emerging source of income for thousands of farmers across the state.

The growing demand during festivals such as Dussehra, Diwali, and the Gujarati New Year has significantly expanded the market for marigold, roses, and gaillardia. Villages in regions like Halol taluka of Panchmahal district have become key flower-producing hubs, with both small and medium farmers adopting floriculture due to its profitability and steady market demand. The flourishing sector reflects how diversification into horticulture is driving economic growth and creating new livelihood opportunities in rural Gujarat.

Himachal Showcases Horticultural Strength at World Food India 2025

Himachal Pradesh made a strong impression at World Food India 2025, the country's premier global exhibition for the food processing sector, held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. With support from APEDA, the state delegation engaged with international buyers from multiple countries to promote Himachal's premium horticultural produce. An exclusive pavilion by the Department of Horticulture highlighted the state's rich diversity — from apples, kiwi, persimmons, and dragon fruit to honey, juices, red rice, and exotic vegetables — positioning Himachal as a hub of high-value horticulture.

The pavilion attracted global attention for its innovative, value-added products and sustainable models. Start-ups and entrepreneurs showcased unique offerings such as fruit-based beverages, specialty teas, bee products, and essential oils, along with emerging ventures like cordyceps mushroom cultivation. The participation reflected Himachal's growing focus on integrating innovation, value addition, and export readiness to strengthen farmer incomes and expand global market linkages for its horticultural produce.

Dhagwar Milk Plant Set to Become Himachal's Most Advanced Dairy Facility

Himachal Pradesh is poised for a major boost in its dairy infrastructure with the construction of the Dhagwar Milk Plant in Kangra district. Valued at ₹225 crore, the facility will be the state's most advanced dairy processing unit, equipped to handle nearly 100,000 litres of milk per day. Developed under the National Programme for Dairy Development, the plant aims to empower local dairy farmers through better procurement systems, chilling facilities, and modern processing technology. It will also generate direct and indirect employment for local youth, strengthening the rural economy. Once operational, the plant is expected to produce a wide range of milk products, including butter, ghee, curd, and paneer, meeting both domestic and regional market demands. The Dhagwar plant exemplifies how sustainable technology and farmer-centric models can uplift India's dairy landscape.

Punjab Launches Block-Level Milking Competition to Boost Dairy Standards

Punjab has launched a Block-Level Milking Competition 2025–26 across 154 blocks to encourage excellence in dairy farming.

The initiative, introduced by the Animal Husbandry Department, aims to recognise farmers achieving high milk yields through good animal care and feeding practices.

Each block will hold monthly contests where farmers' cattle are evaluated on hygiene, productivity, and nutrition management.

Winners will receive recognition and training support, creating motivation for quality enhancement in milk production.

Officials say the initiative will improve local incomes while promoting scientific dairy management.

The programme also complements Punjab's wider efforts to strengthen cooperative dairies and boost rural entrepreneurship.

₹1,166 Crore Dairy and Livestock Projects Inaugurated to Spur Rural Growth

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated dairy and livestock projects worth ₹1,166 crore, marking a major step in rural development.

The projects include new UHT milk, milk powder, and cattle feed plants, designed to modernise dairy infrastructure across multiple states.

They will benefit over 12 lakh farmers by improving milk procurement, cold storage, and processing capacities.

The initiative is part of the government's focus on building sustainable dairy value chains and improving farmer profitability.

It also emphasises the integration of women's self-help groups in dairy cooperatives, enhancing rural livelihoods.

Officials say these projects will advance India's goal of becoming a global dairy innovation hub while promoting inclusivity.

India must launch a "Green Fodder Revolution

India's dairy sector, the world's largest, is confronting a severe shortage of green fodder that could impact milk production and rural livelihoods. Despite contributing nearly a quarter of global milk output, the country faces an estimated deficit of 11–32% in green fodder, 23% in dry fodder, and over 40% in concentrate feed. Climate change has further worsened yields of traditional crops like berseem and maize.

The shortage is driving lower milk yields, delayed calving, and higher feed costs, eroding farmer income and weakening the dairy supply chain.

Industry stakeholders are calling for a national fodder mission focusing on high-yield varieties, fodder banks, and community silage initiatives. Strengthening feed security, they say, is essential to sustain India's dairy-led rural growth.

Google Expands India-Built Agri AI Tools to Asia-Pacific Region

India's leadership in agri-innovation gained new ground as Google expanded its AI-based agriculture tools, ALU and AMED, to several Asia-Pacific nations.

Developed and tested in India, the tools help farmers forecast weather, optimise irrigation, and detect crop diseases early.

The expansion highlights India's role as a global hub for technology-driven farming solutions.

Experts believe these tools will empower millions of smallholders with data-based decision-making support.

The initiative also aligns with India's digital agriculture mission, promoting sustainability through smart technology adoption.

It marks a milestone in bridging tech innovation and farm productivity for developing economies.

Union Minister Visits ICAR-KVK Vellore to Engage with Farmers

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan visited ICAR–KVK Vellore, Tamil Nadu, to interact with farmers and researchers.

The visit focused on flagship schemes including PM-Daksh, pulses productivity, and natural farming initiatives.

Farmers shared success stories on soil health, crop diversification, and millet cultivation.

The Minister appreciated KVK's role in transferring research to field practice, especially among women farmers.

He reiterated the government's support for integrated farming systems and sustainable agriculture practices.

The interaction reaffirmed the central commitment to rural innovation and farmer empowerment across southern India.

Kerala Launches Pilot to Identify Sustainable Cashew Farming Model

The Plantation Corporation of Kerala (PCK), Kasaragod, has launched an experimental project to identify the most productive and climate-resilient cashew farming model for small and marginal farmers in south India. Initiated in June under the Frontline Technology Demonstration Programme funded by the Directorate of Cashew and Cocoa Development, the initiative is testing three planting patterns to assess yield, sustainability, and profitability. The three one-hectare trial plots compare: close spacing with drip irrigation, standard spacing with irrigation, and standard spacing without irrigation.

Six high-yielding cashew varieties—Dhana, Dharashri, Sulabha, Madakkathara 1 and 2, and Priyanka—have been planted to analyse how spacing and water management influence growth, pest tolerance, and returns. Close spacing allows up to 400 saplings per hectare, potentially doubling yields, while traditional spacing accommodates about 200 saplings. PCK aims to equip farmers with adaptable models to overcome challenges such as erratic rainfall and pest outbreaks. Farmers from multiple states are visiting the site for exposure, and grafted saplings priced at ₹40–₹60 are available directly from the estate.

Interface Workshop in Ludhiana Focuses on Sustainable Alternatives to Paddy Stubble Burning

Ludhiana– Reaffirming efforts to curb paddy residue burning, the Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, in collaboration with the Punjab Agriculture Department, organised an Interface Workshop on Crop Residue Management at Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana. The workshop brought together officials from Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh, along with farmers, scientists, and industry representatives, to discuss scalable and eco-friendly solutions for managing paddy straw. The deliberations focused on promoting sustainable practices that enhance soil health, conserve water, and generate additional income opportunities for farmers.

Experts from PAU and ICAR institutes presented innovations in residue decomposition, cost–benefit analyses, and region-specific technologies. Farmers shared field experiences and emphasized the need for quality machinery and financial access under crop residue management schemes. The event concluded with a joint resolve to strengthen inter-agency coordination, policy support, and farmer participation to achieve sustainable, zero-burning agricultural practices across northern India.

Centre of Excellence for Horticulture Skills in India Implements 3-Day Training Programs Under MIDH

The Centre of Excellence for Horticulture Skills in India (CEHSI) is successfully implementing a series of 3-day field-based training programs under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), with the support of the Haryana State Horticulture Development Agency (HSHDA). This initiative aims to strengthen the horticulture ecosystem by enhancing the practical skills and technical expertise of farmers, rural youth, and budding agri-entrepreneurs.

The training programs are designed to cover a wide range of horticulture-related job roles, including Vegetable Grower, Organic Grower, Mushroom Grower, Protected Cultivation Grower, Post-Harvest Loss Management Technician, Master Gardener, Beekeeper, Tropical and Subtropical Fruit Grower, and Floriculturist, among others. Each session integrates classroom-based learning with on-field demonstrations to ensure participants gain both theoretical understanding and hands-on experience.

These training programs are being conducted across multiple districts of Haryana—Jhajjar, Kurukshetra, Karnal, and Panchkula—focusing on region-specific horticultural practices. The curriculum emphasizes modern cultivation techniques, resource-efficient production systems, post-harvest management, and sustainable farming methods aligned with MIDH's objectives of increasing productivity and profitability in the horticulture sector.

So far, around 160 participants have successfully completed the training across different districts. The initiative has received overwhelming participation and positive feedback from farmers, rural youth, and community members. The ongoing sessions continue to create significant impact by building local capacity, promoting sustainable livelihoods, and equipping participants with skills relevant to emerging opportunities in the horticultural value chain.

Through these programs, CEHSI continues to play a pivotal role in fostering skill-based education and driving innovation in India's horticulture sector, contributing to the vision of a more productive, sustainable, and resilient agricultural ecosystem.

CEHSI Currently Conducting 5-Day Residential Training cum Exposure Visit for Women Farmers from Himachal Pradesh

The Centre of Excellence for Horticulture Skills in India (CEHSI), in collaboration with the Department of Horticulture, Himachal Pradesh, and under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), is currently conducting a five-day residential Training cum Exposure Visit for 31 women farmers from Himachal Pradesh in Karnal, Haryana. The program is ongoing and actively engaging participants through a mix of classroom learning and hands-on field demonstrations to strengthen practical skills and technical knowledge.

Key training modules include Post-Harvest Loss Management, Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), and Cluster-Based Farming, with sessions designed to be immediately applicable and scalable at the participants' home locations. Classroom discussions provide conceptual clarity on quality management and value-chain linkages, while field demonstrations translate theory into practice, helping participants adopt resource-efficient and sustainable horticulture techniques.

As part of the exposure component, participants are visiting leading horticultural institutions across Haryana, including the Integrated Beekeeping Development Centre (IBDC), Ramnagar; Centre of Excellence for Vegetables (CEV), Gharaunda; Centre for Subtropical Fruits (CSTF), Ladwa; Maharana Pratap Horticultural University (MHU); and the Horticulture Training Institute (HTI). These visits are showcasing modern cultivation technologies, post-harvest handling systems, integrated pest and pollinator management, and successful cluster-farming models in practice.

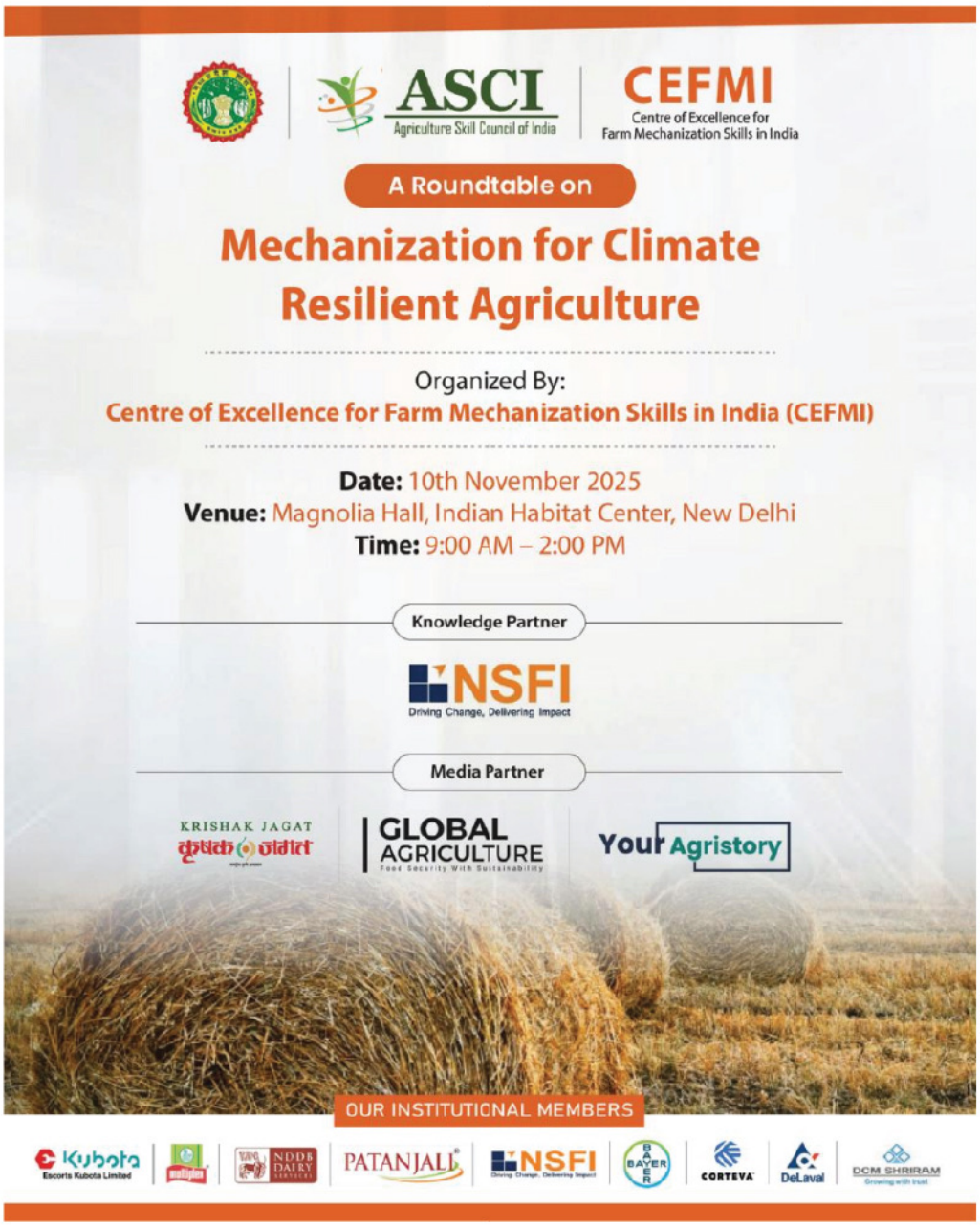
The ongoing program emphasizes peer learning, confidence building, and direct interactions with subject-matter experts and extension professionals, enabling participants to discuss local challenges and practical solutions. Early feedback from attendees has been positive, with many expressing readiness to replicate learned practices in their villages.

By combining residential training with institutional exposure, CEHSI aims to expand livelihood opportunities and promote gender-inclusive growth in the horticulture sector. The initiative, now underway, reaffirms CEHSI's commitment to empowering women farmers as change agents for a more productive, resilient, and sustainable horticultural landscape.

The Centre of Excellence for Farm Mechanization Skills in India (CEFMI) invites you to a **One-Day Roundtable on "Mechanization for Climate Resilient Agriculture"**. Bringing together CSR leaders, agri-innovators, and development partners to explore sustainable mechanization solutions.

- **10th November 2025**
- **9:00 AM – 2:00 PM**
- **Magnolia Hall, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi**

Let's collaborate to build a climate-smart future for Indian agriculture!



SCAN TO REGISTER

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