

Eco-Friendly Farming: Less Chemical, More Health (Success Story of a Farmer)

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Many farmers in Punjab focus on producing high yield despite maximum use of pesticides and fungicides which degrades health of consumers along with themselves. Meanwhile, 72-years old Mahindra Singh from Dholan Majra is against the utilization of chemical pesticides and fungicides. With 50 years of experience in farming, he has never sprayed chemicals in his 5.67 hectares farm land where he grows different cereal crops, pulse crops, vegetables, oilseed crop and horticulture crops. He said, "I am growing vegetables and dal on my own and feed my family healthy food." Mahindra Singh's journey began with a simple but powerful goal to feed his family healthy, chemical-free food. He believed that true prosperity lies not just in high productivity, but in the quality of food and the health of soil and people. His farm, spread across fertile land in Dholan Majra, is a model of biodiversity and balance. Mahindra Singh grows a variety of crops, including:



Cereal crops: Rice, Wheat, and Maize

Pulse crops: Moong and Arhar

Oilseed crop: Mustard

Vegetables: Seasonal vegetables such as okra, chili, spinach, cabbage, tomatoes, onion, garlic, etc

Horticulture crops: Mango and Guava orchards

Fodder crops: Sorghum and Berseem

Table: Crops, variety, area(ha), seed rate(kg/acre)

Crops	Variety	Area (ha)	Seed rate(kg/acre)
Rice	PR 126	3.23	12
Wheat	DBW 327	1.21	40
Wheat	PBW 826	2.83	45
Maize	PMH-8	0.80	10
Mustard	GSC 6	0.40	2
Berseem	local	0.40	10
Sorghum	local	0.40	20
Pulse (moong, arhar)	Shikha, Pusa Arhar 16	0.40	12, 8

Alongside farming, Mahindra Singh also practices animal husbandry. He owns 5 buffaloes, which not only provide nutritious milk for his family but also serve as an additional source of income. He sells milk to the Verka Dairy Plant, a trusted name in Punjab,

ensuring that others too benefit from his farm's purity. As the Plant gives price according to the fat content in milk, he mixes mustard oil cakes with the feed of buffalo.

The buffalo dung and urine are also vital components of his natural farming system, closing the loop on sustainability. FYM is the main source of nutrition for his farming. Besides, he uses natural methods like neem extract, cow dung-based fertilizers, intercropping, crop rotation and maintain sanitation in field to manage pests and diseases and produce yield as much as people using pesticides and fungicides.

Beside these methods he uses resistant plant varieties purchased from PAU, Ludhiana to ensure less pest and disease infestation. These traditional methods keep his crops safe and chemical-free while improving soil health year after year.

This integrated approach has helped Mr. Singh to have annual income of nearly 15 lakhs excluding cost of cultivation. He owns all kinds of machinery used in field except combine harvester which has increased his work efficiency. He is against the use of chemicals but not against adopting modern machineries and technologies. His future plan for integrated farming system (IFS), adopting bee keeping and vermicomposting is going to add fragrance to tune.

Mr. Singh has inspired many farmers in his village and stands as a proud example of how one farmer's commitment to health and sustainability can bring positive change from his home to the dairy plant, and from his village to the wider community.

Message from Mr. Singh

"I never had health problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure due to regular physical work in my farm. If you want to be healthy, grow healthy."