



## Manav Vikas Sansthan Showcases Project PRANA at the 5th Largest Mela of North India, Bhucho Mandi, Bathinda

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The vibrant fields of Punjab witnessed yet another moment of pride as Manav Vikas Sansthan (MVS) actively participated in the 5th largest Mela of North India, held at Bhucho Mandi in Bathinda. The event, a hub for farmers, researchers, and agricultural institutions, provided an excellent platform for MVS to represent Project PRANA (Promoting Regenerative and No-Burn Agriculture) and demonstrate its ongoing work in advancing sustainable agriculture across the state.

### Key Highlights of the Stall

The MVS stall drew significant attention due to its unique and practical displays designed specifically for farmers:

- **Alternate Wetting and Drying (AWD) Pipe Demonstration:** Using a specially designed glass model, the team explained how AWD technology in rice cultivation conserves water without compromising yield. The demonstration allowed farmers to visualize the process clearly and ask practical questions about adoption.
- **Trichogramma (Tricho) Cards in Pest Management:** A live paddy plant with Tricho cards clipped on it became one of the main attractions of the stall. Farmers were curious about the use of these cards for biological control of stem borers and other pests, highlighting the growing interest in eco-friendly pest management.
- **Awareness Material Distribution:** Informative pamphlets and calendars were distributed among farmers to ensure that the learning extended beyond the mela. These materials covered sustainable farming practices, benefits of AWD, integrated pest management, and the vision of Project PRANA.
- **Digital Farmer Engagement:** The stall also incorporated a modern touch through QR codes that linked directly to WhatsApp groups. Farmers enrolled instantly, ensuring continued engagement and knowledge sharing even after the event.

### Farmer Participation and Response

The response from the farming community exceeded expectations. On the first day, over 300 farmers visited the stall, engaging in detailed discussions with the MVS team. Many appreciated the clear and practical demonstrations, which connected research-based knowledge to field-level application.

The enthusiasm only grew on the second day, with more than 350 farmers visiting the stall. Farmers expressed particular appreciation for the fact that MVS was one of only two NGOs in the entire mela to set up a farmer-focused stall. This recognition underscored the trust MVS has been able to build among farmers by working directly with them rather than only through institutions.

### Recognition and Future Direction

The successful participation of MVS at the Bhucho Mandi Mela not only created visibility for Project PRANA but also reaffirmed the importance of farmer-led awareness in Punjab's

agricultural transformation. The recognition from farmers serves as both validation and motivation for the organization's continued efforts.

As agriculture in Punjab faces pressing challenges of depleting groundwater, declining soil health, and rising input costs, initiatives like AWD and integrated pest management represent practical solutions that can empower farmers to adopt sustainable and climate-resilient practices. By combining on-ground demonstrations with digital outreach, MVS has shown how traditional methods of farmer engagement can be effectively integrated with modern tools to ensure long-lasting impact.

The MVS team, inspired by the overwhelming farmer participation at the mela, remains committed to its mission of spreading awareness, building farmer capacity, and promoting regenerative agriculture practices that can safeguard the environment while ensuring profitability for farmers.

The Bhucho Mandi Mela was not just a fair but a reminder of how much farmers value direct, practical knowledge-sharing initiatives. For MVS, the event marked another milestone in its journey of working alongside Punjab's farming communities to create a future where agriculture is sustainable, resilient, and farmer-driven.

