



Smart Agriculture: A Sustainable Path Towards Climate-Resilient Farming

*Anjum Fakirmahmad Shaikh

Assistant Professor and Fruit Crop Researcher, College of Agriculture, Bhanashiwara, Affiliated to Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth (MPKV), Rahuri, Maharashtra, India

*Corresponding Author's email: anjumfshaikh123@gmail.com

Climate change, irregular rainfall, rising temperatures, declining groundwater levels, soil degradation and increasing pest and disease pressure are transforming the challenges faced by farmers. In this changing scenario, agriculture must move from conventional decision-making towards data-driven, resource-efficient and climate-smart farming systems. Smart agriculture combines soil science, meteorological information, precision farming, remote sensing, artificial intelligence, irrigation technology and integrated crop management to improve productivity while conserving natural resources.

Soil Testing: The Foundation of Precision Nutrition

Healthy soil is the foundation of sustainable crop production. Soil testing provides information about pH, electrical conductivity, organic carbon and available macronutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, along with important micronutrients. Based on soil-test results and crop requirements, fertilizers can be applied in the right dose, time, method and location. This improves nutrient-use efficiency, reduces unnecessary fertilizer application and supports long-term soil health.

Technical Focus

Soil testing → Nutrient diagnosis → Crop requirement → Site-specific fertilizer recommendation → Higher nutrient-use efficiency

Every Drop Counts: Efficient Irrigation

Water scarcity is becoming one of the major constraints to agricultural productivity. Drip and sprinkler irrigation can improve water-use efficiency by delivering water closer to the crop root zone and reducing losses through evaporation and runoff. Combining irrigation systems with soil-moisture sensors, weather information and crop growth stages can further improve irrigation scheduling.

Smart Irrigation Principle

Right quantity + Right time + Right location = Efficient water management

Weather Forecasting: From Prediction to Action

Weather information can transform farm-level decision-making. Forecast-based planning can help farmers determine the appropriate time for sowing, irrigation, fertilizer application, spraying and harvesting. Early warnings for heavy rainfall, heat waves, strong winds and other extreme events can help farmers take preventive measures and reduce crop losses. Weather-based agro-advisories should become an essential component of climate-resilient agriculture.

Drone Technology and Remote Sensing: Eyes Above the Crop

Agricultural drones are emerging as valuable tools for crop monitoring, plant health assessment, pest and disease detection and precision spraying. Multispectral and other remote-sensing technologies can provide information about crop stress that may not be easily visible

to the human eye. When combined with GIS, GPS and satellite imagery, these technologies support site-specific crop management.

Observe → Analyse → Identify Stress → Target Intervention → Monitor Response
Artificial Intelligence: Agriculture Becomes Data-Driven

Artificial Intelligence and machine-learning tools are creating new possibilities in agriculture. Data from weather stations, soil sensors, satellite imagery, drones and farm records can be analysed to support decisions related to crop health, irrigation, pest management and yield prediction. However, technology should not replace agricultural knowledge. Scientific expertise, field observations and reliable data must work together for better decisions.

Integrated Pest and Disease Management

Climate variability can influence pest populations and disease development. Instead of depending exclusively on chemical pesticides, farmers should adopt Integrated Pest Management (IPM). Important components include:

Regular field scouting

Correct identification of pests and diseases

Economic Threshold Level-based decisions

Biological control agents

Botanical pesticides where appropriate

Pheromone and sticky traps

Resistant varieties

Need-based and recommended pesticide application

This approach protects beneficial organisms, reduces unnecessary pesticide use and supports safer crop production.

Sustainable Farming: Productivity with Responsibility

Smart agriculture must not focus only on higher yields. Long-term agricultural sustainability depends on maintaining soil health, water security, biodiversity and ecological balance. Practices such as crop rotation, intercropping, conservation agriculture, organic matter management, mulching, rainwater harvesting and integrated nutrient management can strengthen the resilience of farming systems.

Climate-Smart Agriculture

Higher productivity + Greater resilience + Lower environmental impact

SMART FARMING – 7 KEY STEPS

1. **Test the Soil:** Know the soil before feeding the crop.
2. **Use Water Precisely:** Adopt drip/sprinkler irrigation and scientific scheduling.
3. **Follow Weather-Based Decisions:** Plan farm operations according to reliable weather information.
4. **Monitor Crops Regularly:** Use field scouting, sensors, drones and remote sensing.
5. **Manage Pests Scientifically:** Adopt IPM and use pesticides only when technically justified.
6. **Use Data and Digital Technology:** Combine GIS, GPS, AI and digital advisory platforms.
7. **Build Soil and Climate Resilience:** Adopt crop diversification, organic matter management and conservation practices.

The Way Forward

The future of agriculture will not be defined by technology alone, but by how intelligently technology is combined with scientific agricultural knowledge and farmers' practical experience. A climate-resilient farm is one where every input is used efficiently, every decision is supported by evidence and every natural resource is treated as valuable. Smart agriculture is not simply about producing more. It is about producing efficiently, conserving resources, protecting the environment and securing the livelihood of future generations.

“The future of farming belongs to those who combine scientific knowledge with technology, sustainability and the wisdom of the field.”