

## Tobacco farmers urged to go for farm mechanisation

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Adapting to the new normal during the COVID-19 times, the farmers should go in for farm mechanisation in a big way as part of cost cutting and adopt best agronomic practices to stay afloat, according to Tobacco Board chairman Y. Raghunatha Babu.

Taking part in 'Eruvaka Pournami' festival organised by the growers coming under the Ongole II auction platform, he exhorted the progressive farmers to take the lead in adopting innovative farm techniques and spreading them among fellow farmers.

He exhorted the farmers to go for FCR 15, a high-yielding (2,400 kg/ha) tobacco variety developed the Central Tobacco Research Institute and suitable for cultivation in the Southern Light Soil (SLS) region.

He symbolically tilled a piece of land and patted, among others, farmer leaders V.V. Prasad, Pothula Narasimha Rao and P. Bhadri Reddy for organising the traditional cultural practice to mark the commencement of kharif cultivation.

Tobacco Board Executive Director A. Sridhar Babu noted that the market prices for the bright and medium grade varieties were up to the mark, and promised to take up with the traders the growers' demand for better price for the low-grade varieties.

Tobacco Board Vice-Chairman G. Konda Reddy said it was the right time to grow green manure crops.

Southern Black Soil regional manager B. Manjunath observed that overnight rains augured well for the farmers to start cultivation. SLS regional manager D. Venugopal briefed about the Board's efforts to ensure better prices for the farmers during the tough times.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/tobacco-farmers-urged-to-go-for-farm-mechanisation/article34957638.ece>