BACKGROUNDERS
Press Information Bureau
Government of India

SOIL HEALTH CARD

"Swasth Dharaa, Khet Haraa"

Over 25 Crore Soil Health Cards Distributed Across the Country

August 16, 2025

Key Takeaways

- As of July 2025, over **25 crore Soil Health Cards** have been distributed to farmers.
- *As of February 2025: -*
  - **₹1706.18 crore** released to States and UTs for the scheme.
  - **8,272 soil testing labs** set up across the country. This includes **1,068 static labs**, **163 mobile labs**, **6,376 mini labs**, and **665 village-level labs.**
  - Soil mapping completed on **290 lakh** hectares in **40** aspirational districts.
  - **1,987** village-level fertility maps prepared for **21** States and UTs.

Introduction

In the quiet village of Manpur in Nalanda district, Bihar, lives Mr. Mahendra Kumar Singh. With 25 acres of land and a family of eleven to support, agriculture is not just his occupation — it is his way of life. For years, he followed the same rice-wheat cropping cycle, relying heavily on chemical fertilisers to chase higher yields. But beneath the surface, his soil was weakening, and so was his peace of mind. Rising input costs, declining productivity and concerns about soil health began to weigh on him.

"I was always concerned about the rising cost of farming, the increasing use of inputs, and the gradual harm being done to my soil." *Mr Mahendra recalls.*

His turning point came when he met Mr. Amit Ranjan Patel, an Agriculture Coordinator posted in Amawan Panchayat. After listening to his concerns about crop residue burning and rising costs, Mr Patel suggested something simple but powerful — to get his soil tested under the Soil Health Card Scheme.

AD Chemistry Visiting the Plot and giving instructions

Mr. Mahendra agreed, though unsure of what to expect. A demonstration was set up on one hectare of his land. When the test results arrived, they revealed that the soil had high electrical conductivity and lacked essential nutrients like organic carbon, nitrogen, phosphate and boron. The recommended solution included applying 1750 kilograms of compost and cow dung manure per acre, along with specific doses of DAP and urea to improve fertility.

"I was hesitant at first," he admits. "Using so much organic input felt like a risk."

But he trusted the science and followed the recommendations. When harvest time came, he was surprised. The demonstration plot yielded ***32 quintals*** *per hectare —* ***over 16% more*** *than his usual field, which produced just* ***27.5 quintals*** *per hectare.*

Today, Mr Mahendra is a proud advocate of soil testing.

"Every farmer should get their soil tested, and maintain soil health for our generations to come."he says with conviction.

His story is one among many — showing how the Soil Health Card Scheme is transforming Indian agriculture, one farm at a time.

Crop Cutting at Mr. Mahendra's field

The year **2015** was marked as the **International Year of Soils**.It was also when India launched its landmark **Soil Health Card Scheme** on **19 February**, aiming to assess the nutrient condition of every farm across the country. The scheme was officially launched **by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in Suratgarh, Rajasthan.** It supports State Governments in providing farmers with detailed reports on soil health. These cards offer recommendations on how to **improve soil fertility** and guide farmers to adopt **sustainable practices**. From the year 2022–23, the scheme has been included as a component under the **Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, and is now known as 'Soil Health and Fertility'**.

As of July 2025, over **25 crore Soil Health Cards** have been distributed to farmers to promote the balanced use of fertilisers and support better soil management across the country. By February 2025, A total of **₹1706.18 crore** has been provided to States and Union Territories to support the Soil Health Card scheme. Further advancing its impact, the Soil and Land Use Survey of India has also carried out soil mapping on a large scale. Mapping has been completed at a **1:10,000 scale** across nearly **290 lakh**

hectares, including land in **40 aspirational districts**. To guide farmers in using fertilisers wisely, **1,987 village-level** soil fertility maps have been created for **21 States and Union Territories**. These maps help farmers make better choices for their soil and crops.

25 crore Soil Health Cards (SHCs) distributed to farmers, promoting better soil management and fertilizer use.

Source: Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare

UNDERSTANDING SOIL HEALTH CARD

A Soil Health Card is a printed report given to farmers for each of their land holdings. It shows the condition of the soil by testing **12 key parameters**, namely **Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Potassium, Sulphur (Macro-nutrients); Zinc, Iron, Copper, Manganese, Boron (Micro - nutrients); and pH (Acidity or Basicity), EC (Electrical Conductivity) and OC (Organic Carbon).** The scheme helps farmers understand what their soil needs through regular testing and provides guidance every **2 years**. Each card gives farmers a clear picture of the nutrient status of their land. It also suggests the right amount of fertilisers, bio-fertilisers, organic inputs, and soil treatments to help them take better care of their soil over time.

SOIL SAMPLING AND TESTING PROCESS

- Soil samples are taken from a depth of **15–20 cm using a V-shaped cut**, collected from four corners and the centre of the field.
- Samples are collected in a grid of **2.5 hectares in irrigated areas** and **10 hectares** in **rain-fed areas** using **GPS tools and revenue maps.**
- Sampling is done **after harvest of Rabi and Kharif crops**, or when there is no standing crop in the field.

- **Trained personnel, agriculture department staff, or students from agricultural colleges** collect the samples.

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND COSTS

- **1% of the samples** are cross-checked in referral laboratories for quality assurance.
- The central government provides **₹190 per sample** to cover costs for collection, testing, soil health card generation, and distribution.

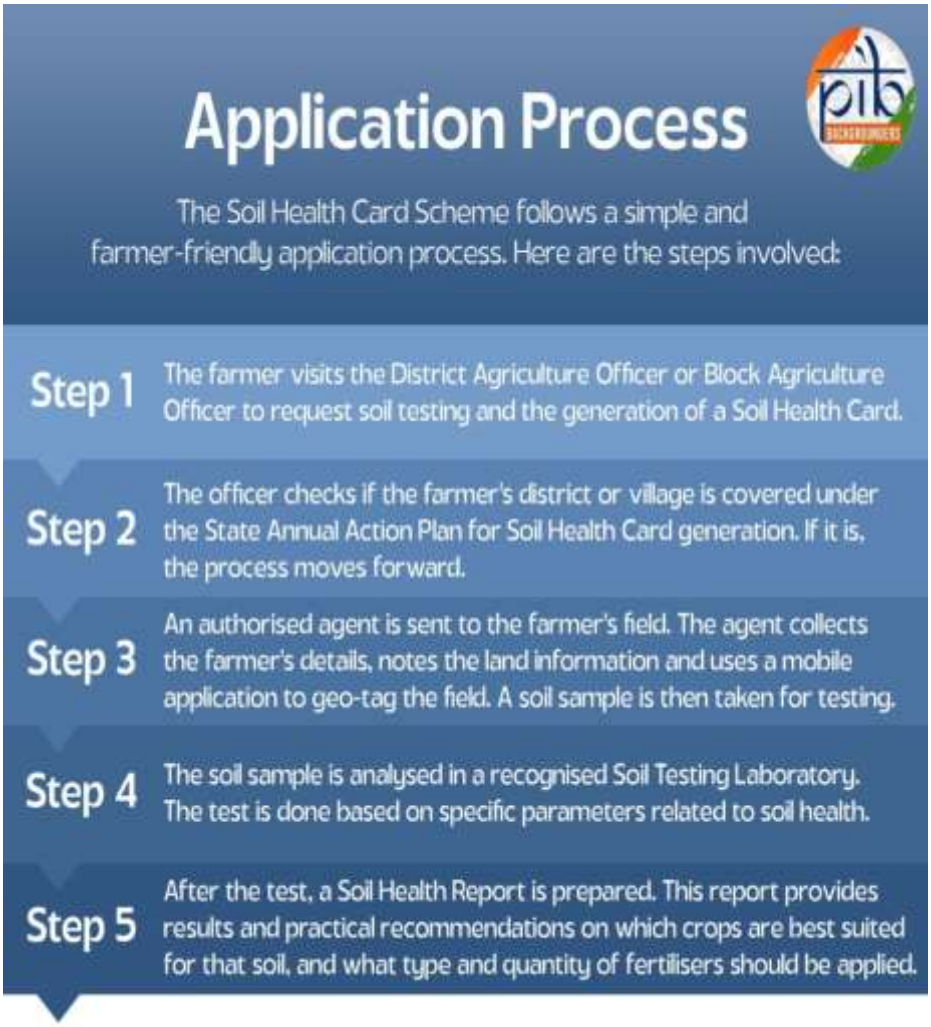
CARD VALIDITY

- A Soil Health Card is issued **once every 3 years**.
- The next card in the following cycle captures changes in soil health over time.

OBJECTIVES OF SOIL HEALTH CARD SCHEME:

- To provide every farmer with a **Soil Health Card once every two years**. This helps identify nutrient gaps in the soil and improves fertiliser practices.
- **To strengthen the functioning of Soil Testing Laboratories** by building capacity, engaging agricultural students, and linking with institutions like the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and State Agricultural Universities.
- **To identify soil fertility issues** by following uniform sampling methods across states. This also includes designing fertiliser recommendations at the taluka or block level in selected districts.
- **To encourage the use of nutrient management practices** that are based on soil test results. This helps improve how efficiently nutrients are used by crops.
- **To offer financial support to farmers** so they can correct nutrient deficiencies and adopt balanced and integrated nutrient management suited to their cropping patterns.
- **To train district and state-level officers, along with progressive farmers**, so that they can promote the proper use of nutrients at the grassroots level.

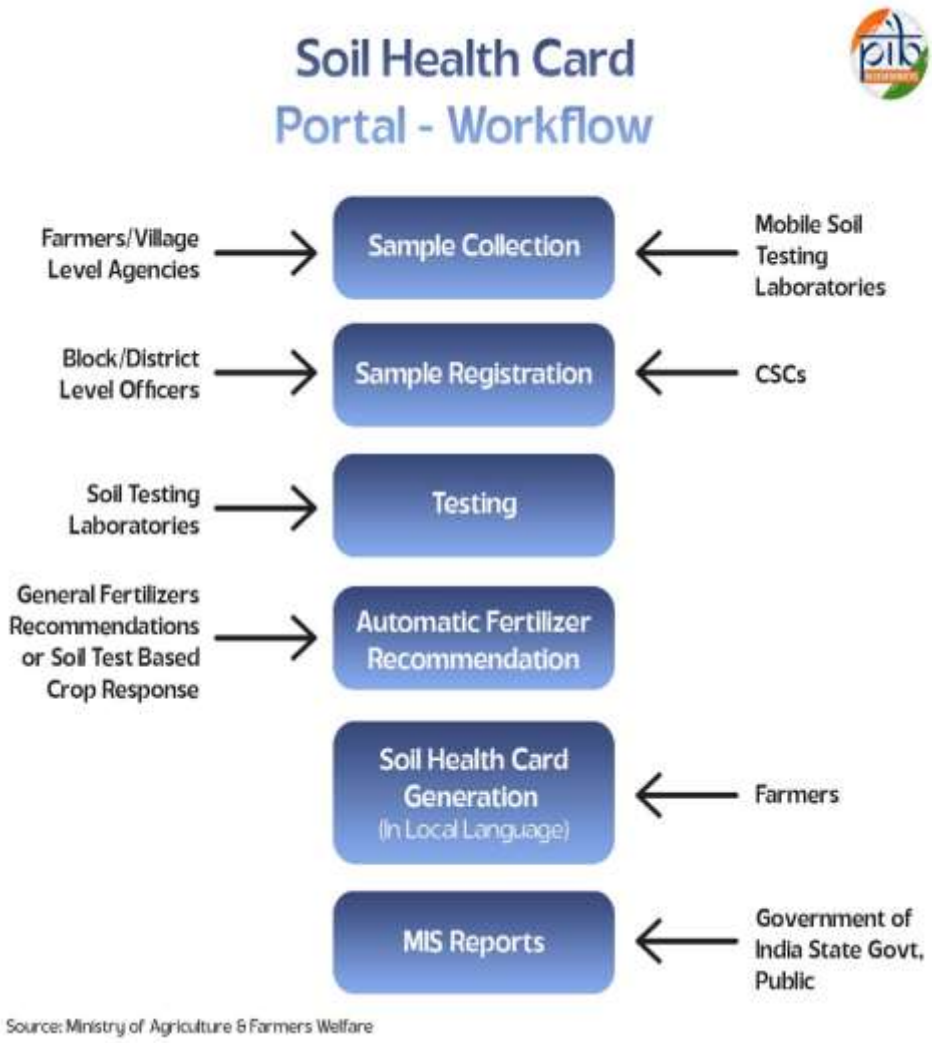
APPLICATION PROCESS



Source : Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare

SOIL HEALTH CARD PORTAL

The Soil Health Card Portal is an online and mobile-based platform created for the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India.** It helps generate Soil Health Cards in a standard format that can be used across the country. The cards are available in **22 languages, 5 dialects, and in local units to make them easy for farmers to understand.**



SOIL TESTING LABORATORIES

As part of the scheme, soil samples are collected from various farms and tested in approved **Soil Testing Laboratories (SLT).** These tests follow the guidelines set under the scheme. The results are then uploaded to the **National Soil Health Card portal**. This portal is used to register samples, store test reports and create Soil Health Cards. **It also provides fertiliser recommendations and helps track the overall progress of the programme.**

As of February 2025, **8,272 Soil Testing Laboratories** have been set up across the country. These include **1,068 static labs**, **163 mobile units**, **6,376 mini labs** and **665 labs at the village level.**

The guidelines for setting up Village Level Soil Testing Labs (VLSTLs) were released on 22.06.2023.

- These labs can be established by **rural youth or community-based groups such as Self Help Groups (SHGs), schools, and agricultural universities.**
- Individuals applying **must be between 18 and 27 years of age.**
- **Self Help Groups and Farmer Producer Organisations (FPO) are also eligible to apply.**
- Applications are reviewed and approved by the **District Level Executive Committee.**
- As of **February 2025**, a total of **665 village-level soil testing labs** has been set up across **17 states in India.**

*Soil Health Card Scheme has been merged in **Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) scheme** as its one component under name **'Soil Health & Fertility' from the year 2022 – 23.***

SCHOOL SOIL HEALTH PROGRAMME

The Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare set up **soil health labs in 20 schools**in rural areas as part of a pilot programme. Learning modules were prepared for students from **Classes 6 to 12**, as well as for **teachers**. The aim is to make students aware about soil health for sustainable agriculture practices. These were shared with schools to support the training process.

Both students and teachers were **trained to collect soil samples, carry out tests, and generate Soil Health Cards using a mobile app developed specially for this programme.** School students collected the soil, tested it in the lab, and created the health cards. **They also played a key role in sharing the recommendations of these cards with farmers, helping them understand how to use fertilisers wisely and choose the right crops.**

***As of 24th July 2025, 1,021 schools** implementing the **School Soil Health Programme**, with **1,000 soil testing labs** set up and **132,525 students enrolled**.*

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS

- The Soil Health Card portal has been upgraded and now includes a **Geographic Information System.** This allows all soil test results to be viewed on an **interactive map**.
- **A mobile application (SHC Mobile App)** has been introduced to make the process easier for both farmers and officials involved in implementation and monitoring.
- The app **restricts soil sample collection** to the designated area of the village-level operator. **This ensures accuracy and accountability**.
- It automatically captures the **exact location using latitude and longitude**, removing the need for manual entry.
- Each sample is assigned a **unique QR code**. This links the sample directly to its test results on the portal.
- Test results from geo-tagged laboratories are uploaded automatically to the central system, making the process transparent and tamper-proof.
- The upgraded system has been in use since April 2023. All soil samples are now collected through the mobile app and Soil Health Cards are generated on the new digital portal.

The entire system has been developed by the **National Informatics Centre (NIC)** as a web-based workflow application, designed to digitise and **streamline the generation of Soil Health Cards across the country.**

Soil Health Card Scheme is applicable for all farmers in India.

CONCLUSION

The Soil Health Card Scheme has transformed how farmers think about their land. It has brought scientific understanding into hands of millions of farmers, helping them make better decisions and improve their livelihoods. The data-driven approach of the scheme has reduced input costs, boosted productivity, and promoted long-term soil care. By connecting testing labs, digital tools, schools, and communities, the scheme has created a robust system that puts the farmer at the centre. As India moves towards climate-resilient and sustainable agriculture, the Soil Health Card Scheme remainsa model of how data, awareness, and grassroots support can together lead to real change. Continued investment and innovation under the scheme will be key to building a future where Indian soils stay fertile, healthy, and productive for generations to come.

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Soil Health Card Portal

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myscheme Portal

- https://www.myscheme.gov.in/schemes/rkvyshfshc

Soil Health Card App

- https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.kt_goi_shc&hl=en_IN

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