



Solidaridad

SOPA

JUNE 2026

NEWSLETTER

NARVOS
NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR REGENERATIVE VEG OIL SECTOR

Initiated Under
Promotion of Regenerative Agriculture Practices for a Food
Secure & Climate Resilient Future in the EU-India Partnership
Programme



Funded by
the European Union

Solidaridad



Editorial Foreword

Dear Readers,

This edition of the NARVOS Newsletter arrives at the threshold of the Kharif season, a moment that feels particularly charged with possibility. Across Mandsaur, Ratlam, Neemuch, and Jhabua districts, the evidence gathered in these pages tells a consistent story, when regenerative practices are paired with real-time market intelligence, digital infrastructure, and organised farmer collectives, the results go far beyond agronomic improvement. They reshape livelihoods.

Farmers who once spent Rs. 60,000 a season on chemical inputs now spend Rs. 12,000 and harvest more. Women like Shyama Sonarthi of Riyawan village, who began with 4 bighas and a quiet experiment, are now training 75 fellow farmers and charting a path toward annual profits that once seemed unimaginable. Soybean growers in Mandsaur who received timely price advisories at the right moment, capturing the benefit of a market that otherwise would have moved without them. These are not isolated victories. They are proof of concept at scale.

The Sitamau FPO's Farm-to-Kitchen model for regenerative groundnut oil, the AWS-enabled weather advisories reaching the last mile, the soil testing drives aligning fertiliser use with actual crop needs, the Krishi Chaupal sessions bringing knowledge to farmers' phones each of these initiatives reflects a programme that understands agriculture as a system, not a set of isolated interventions. Soil health, market access, digital tools, and community capacity must move together. When they do, the multiplier effect is profound.

As our Expert Perspective reminds us, this transformation cannot be delivered by policy alone. It must be cultivated season after season, farmer by farmer, field by field. The role of programmes like NARVOS and of the partnerships between Solidaridad, AWL Agri Business, ATMA, KVK, and farmer collectives is to ensure that the knowledge, the infrastructure, and the markets are in place when each farmer is ready to take the next step.

India has the land. It has the farmers. And, as the stories in this newsletter demonstrate, it is rapidly building the knowledge and the networks to put both to transformative use. The question of edible oil security of food sovereignty itself will be answered not in ministerial corridors alone, but in the fields of India, one regenerated bigha at a time.

Happy Reading!

Dr. Suresh Motwani
Programme Lead

Expert Perspective



Atul Chaturvedi
Adviser, AWL Agri Business Ltd.
Chairman, Asian Palm Oil Alliance (APOA)

India imports nearly 60 percent of its edible oil requirements, and that figure represents far more than a trade statistic. It reflects a structural vulnerability in our food system that we can no longer afford to ignore. Every year, the country spends over Rs. 1.5 lakh crore on edible oil imports, making it the third-largest import category after crude oil and gold.

This dependence exposes millions of consumers to global price volatility while limiting the income potential of our oilseed farmers. The answer is not simply to bring more land under cultivation. It lies in producing more from existing land through healthier soils, better farming practices, and stronger value chains. Soil degradation leads to declining productivity, and declining productivity deepens import dependence.

Regenerative agriculture offers a pathway to reverse this cycle by restoring soil health, improving resilience, and enhancing long-term farm profitability.

When regenerative practices are combined with organised farmer collectives, efficient market linkages, and real-time intelligence platforms such as NARVOS, the impact goes beyond yield improvement. It creates a more resilient agricultural ecosystem capable of strengthening India's edible oil security from the ground up.

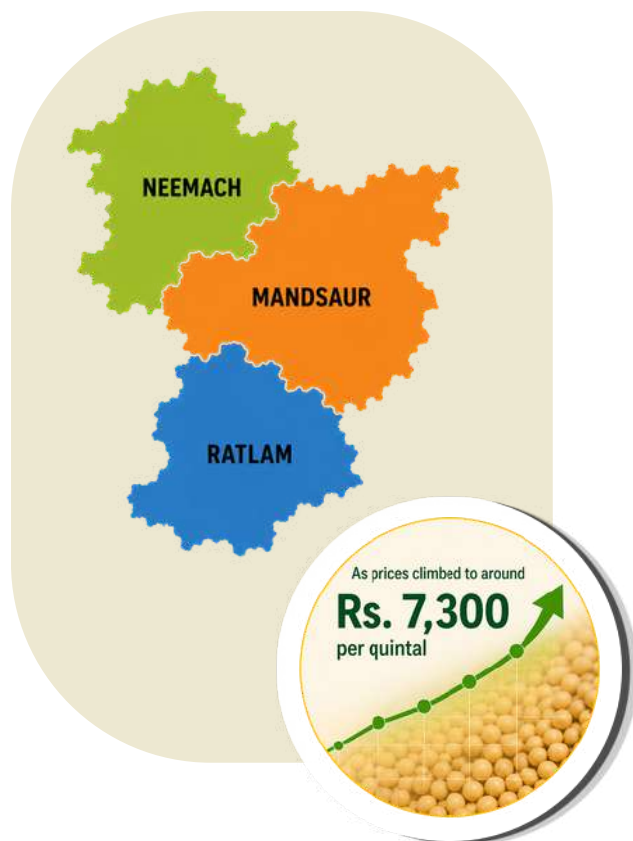
The edible oil industry has as much at stake in this transformation as farmers themselves. A productive, sustainable, and reliable domestic supply base benefits processors, retailers, consumers, and the broader economy. It reduces pressure on foreign exchange reserves, strengthens supply-chain resilience, and advances India's journey towards greater food and nutritional security. This is not a transformation that policy alone can deliver. It must be cultivated season after season, farmer by farmer, and field by field.

MARKET SUCCESS: Soybean Prices Bring Cheer to Regenerative Farmers

Mandsaur, Ratlam & Neemuch District

Rising soybean prices delivered tangible rewards to regenerative farmers across Mandsaur, Ratlam, and Neemuch districts this season a result made possible through strategic market intelligence support from the NARVOS programme.

The project's Commodity Expert continuously tracked soybean market trends, sharing timely price forecasts, demand outlooks, and market advisories through regular meetings, field visits, and farmer group interactions. As prices climbed to around Rs. 7,300 per quintal, farmers who had received these advisories were well positioned to time their sales and maximise returns.



Why It Matters



Regenerative farming is about more than soil health it is about farmer prosperity. By combining regenerative practices with market-led advisory services, NARVOS empowers farmers to make informed decisions that translate directly into better livelihoods.

FROM FARM TO KITCHEN: Regenerative Groundnut Oil Strengthens Local Food Systems

Sitamau FPO, Mandsaur Region



A promising Farm-to-Kitchen model is taking shape in the Mandsaur region through the Sitamau Farmer Producer Organization (FPO), working in collaboration with NEOM, under the NARVOS initiative. The FPO is transforming locally grown regenerative groundnuts into high-quality edible oil creating a direct, traceable link between producer and consumer.

Rather than selling raw produce alone, farmers now participate in value addition activities that generate higher returns and create local employment. Locally processed groundnut oil shortens supply chains, reduces dependence on external markets, and ensures consumers access fresh, nutritious produce from nearby farms directly aligned with the Atmanirbhar Bharat vision.



Key Highlights



Value addition through local processing



Higher farmer incomes



Reduced supply chain dependence



strengthened local food systems



Supports Atmanirbhar Bharat goals

TRANSFORMING AGRICULTURE THROUGH DIGITAL INNOVATION

Automated Weather Stations & AI-Powered Advisory Services



Solidaridad has deployed Automated Weather Stations (AWS) across Ratlam, Mandsaur, Neemuch, and Jhabua districts to provide farmers with real-time, location-specific weather intelligence. The AWS units monitor temperature, humidity, rainfall, wind speed, and other climatic factors data that feeds into timely advisories on crop management, irrigation scheduling, pest prevention, and harvesting operations.

Complementing this network, the Government of India's push for Artificial Intelligence (AI) in agriculture is opening new frontiers. AI-powered analytics can integrate weather data, satellite imagery, soil information, and market trends to deliver personalised recommendations to farmers supporting precision agriculture, yield forecasting, and pest surveillance.

SOIL TESTING & CROP DIVERSIFICATION

Soil Testing Drive – Towards Healthy Soils, Prosperous Farmers

The Solidaridad–Mandsaur team collected soil samples from farmers' fields and submitted them to the Agriculture Department for scientific analysis. Results and recommendations help farmers adopt balanced fertiliser applications aligned with actual crop requirements reducing input costs, improving soil health, and enhancing farm profitability.

High-Value Crop Diversification – Ashwagandha & Turmeric



With support from Solidaridad and KVK Mandsaur, associate farmers are successfully cultivating high-value medicinal and spice crops including Ashwagandha and Turmeric. Through training, technical guidance, and field-level support, farmers are diversifying beyond traditional cropping systems and accessing new market opportunities strengthening resilience and income generation.

FIELD SPOTLIGHT

Women Farmer Training – Sunera Village, 22 May 2026

In collaboration with the ATMA (Agricultural Technology Management Agency) Project team, NARVOS organised a training programme in Sunera village, Shajapur block. A total of 25 women farmers and Krishi Sakhis participated, receiving hands-on guidance on:

- Regenerative and natural farming practices
- Preparation and application of bio-inputs: Jeevamrut, vermicompost, and Neem Astra
- Low-cost, eco-friendly farming techniques to share with family members at home
- Resource person Sh. Mangilal Sisodiya from ATMA further oriented participants on natural farming activities and organic home management (Jeevika Ghar).

Outcome

All 25 participating women expressed keen interest in advancing regenerative and natural farming. They committed to discussing low-cost agricultural practices with their families and encouraging adoption at the household level a promising multiplier effect for programme reaches.



VOICES FROM THE STAKEHOLDERS

“

In a nation where vegetarians form the majority, pulses and oilseeds are nutritional cornerstones and their cultivation carries equal economic importance. For the poor and marginalised, oilseeds are a primary energy source. Regenerative agriculture principles offer a pathway to quality, health-enhancing production that can make Indian farmers truly self-reliant.

Regenerative Agriculture is protecting farming like a shield for the Atmanirbhar Indian farmer.

Ravindra Modi
Deputy Director Agriculture,
Department of Farmers Welfare
and Agriculture Development
District Mandsaur (M.P)



I dedicated 10 bigha of my farm entirely to regenerative methods, and the results have been beyond what I imagined. The training and exposure I received through the programme deepened my understanding, and I soon began experimenting with making bio-inputs right at home. The change in numbers tells its own story, I used to spend around Rs. 60,000 every season on DAP, Urea, and pesticides. Today, that cost has come down to just Rs. 12,000 a saving of Rs. 48,000 while my yield has gone up and the quality of my grain has visibly improved. Regeneration isn't just a method. For me, it has become a new way of farming.

”

Prakash Khawar Village Phulpura,
Neemuch

Unlocking India's Soybean Potential Through Regenerative Agriculture

Soybean sits at the heart of India's edible oil challenge. It is simultaneously a critical source of vegetable oil and protein-rich meal and a crop whose full potential remains largely untapped. With the country's edible oil import bill running into tens of thousands of crores annually, raising soybean productivity is not merely an agronomic goal, it is a strategic economic imperative.

India is among the world's largest soybean-growing nations, yet average yields remain well below global benchmarks. That gap is not a limitation it is an opportunity. Closing it through the right policy architecture could meaningfully reduce import dependency, strengthen food security, and improve incomes for millions of smallholder farmers across Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan.

The pathway forward lies in mainstreaming regenerative approaches crop diversification, balanced nutrient management, conservation agriculture, and efficient water use. These are not alternatives to productivity, they are enablers of it. Farmers who have adopted these practices report not only improved yields and grain quality, but also dramatic reductions in input costs, sometimes by as much as 80%. Scaling such outcomes requires deliberate policy support, quality seed access, soil health missions, real-time digital advisories, and extension services that reach the last mile.

Equally critical is building the market architecture that allows farmers to capture fair value. Strengthening Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), improving value-chain infrastructure, and deepening public-private partnerships in research and innovation are essential complements to on-farm improvements.

As the kharif season opens, the window for decisive action is now. A coordinated policy framework one that aligns productivity targets with sustainability outcomes and farmer prosperity can transform soybean from an underleveraged crop into the cornerstone of a self-reliant, future-ready edible oil sector.

India has the land, the farmers, and the knowledge. What is needed is the policy will to bring them together.

Story from the Ground

From 4 Bighas to a Movement

How one woman's quiet experiment with regenerative farming rewrote what's possible in rural India.

When agriculture is discussed, the image that often comes to mind is that of male farmers working in the fields. However, women across rural India are increasingly breaking this stereotype and leading agricultural transformation. One such inspiring example is Shyama Sonarhi, a farmer from Riyawan village in Ratlam district, Madhya Pradesh, who has successfully embraced regenerative agriculture and emerged as a role model for her community.

Shyama manages her family's 4 bighas of agricultural land while her husband is occupied with running a bank kiosk business. Determined to improve both productivity and profitability, she began adopting regenerative agricultural practices two years ago in her wheat crop. Her journey started with seed treatment and the application of Jeevamrit during land preparation. Gradually, she reduced her dependence on chemical inputs by nearly 50 percent.

Encouraged by the positive results, Shyama dedicated 1.5 bighas of land this year to complete regenerative cultivation. The outcomes exceeded her expectations. Along with improved soil health and reduced production costs, she achieved a wheat yield of approximately 8 quintals per bigha and harvested nearly 200 bags of produce from her regenerative farming efforts.



One of the most significant impacts of regenerative agriculture has been the reduction in cultivation expenses. Earlier, Shyama spent nearly Rs. 40,000 annually on farming inputs. By adopting regenerative practices, she has brought this cost down to approximately Rs. 20,000, effectively cutting her expenses in half while maintaining strong productivity.

Beyond her own farm, Shyama has taken on the role of a Krishi Sakhi, earning an honorarium of Rs. 5,000 and serving as a local agricultural resource person. She is currently mentoring and training 75 farmers in regenerative farming practices, helping them understand the benefits of sustainable agriculture. Looking ahead, she plans to expand vermicompost production and aims to generate an annual profit of Rs. 4-5 lakh through this enterprise.

"Without the Solidaridad team support, I would have continued the same old ways. Now I'm not just farming differently I'm showing others that it works." Says Shyama Sonarathi, Krishi Sakhi, Riyawan

Reflecting on her journey, Shyama shares that without the guidance and support she received from the Solidaridad team, she would have continued conventional farming methods. Today, she is not only cultivating healthier crops but also nurturing a more sustainable future for her community.



NARVOS Secretariat

Solidaridad Regional Expertise Centre

Shreenath Kripa Apartment (GF), D-26, Kohefiza
Bhopal - 462001 (M.P.)

Contact - 0755 2548160, +91 8827770797 (WhatsApp)

Website: - <https://narvos.nicoregenagri.org/>

Email – suresh.motwani@solidaridadnetwork.org

Connect with us.....

