

17th Workshop of AICRP on Ergonomics and Safety in Agriculture and Allied Sector (AICRP on ESAAS) Organized at OUAT, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

The XVII Annual Workshop of the All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on Ergonomics and Safety in Agriculture and Allied Sector (ESAAS) was successfully organized at OUAT, Bhubaneswar, Odisha during February 19-20, 2026. The Inaugural Session on February 19, 2026, was chaired by Dr. S. N. Jha, Hon'ble Deputy Director General (Agril. Engineering), ICAR, and Co-Chaired by Dr. K. P. Singh, Assistant Director General (Farm Engineering), and Dr. C. R. Mehta, Director, ICAR-CIAE, Bhopal. Dr. P. K. Nag, Former Director, National Institute of Occupational Health, Ahmedabad and Dr. S. K. Mohanty, Former Research Engineer of OUAT, Bhubaneswar were the distinguished expert to review the progress of the cooperating centers. Senior officials, Research Engineers/PIs and associated scientists from cooperating centers of AICRP on ESAAS and officials of OUAT, Bhubaneswar, participated in this workshop. Dr. Niranjan Panda, Dean of Research, OUAT, Bhubaneswar, delivered the welcome address, highlighted the university's contributions to research, innovation, and sustainable agricultural practices.

Dr. Mrinalini Darwal, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Odisha was the Chief Guest, commended AICRP on ESAAS for innovations like women friendly ergonomic tools, emphasizing their role in reducing occupational hazards and drudgery. She urged continued research-driven advancements to enhance comfort and productivity to empower women farmers.

Prof. Pravat Kumar Roul, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, OUAT, Bhubaneswar emphasized on the University dedication to advancing mechanized and safe agricultural practices. He highlighted the role of mechanization in timely completion of farm operations with optimized inputs. He also highlighted the role of ergonomic interventions and gender-inclusive tools developed by AICRP on ESAAS to empower farmers.

During inaugural session Dr. Sukhbir Singh, Project Coordinator, AICRP on ESAAS, ICAR-CIAE, Bhopal, presented the PC's Report, highlighted advancements in agricultural ergonomics, safety, and efficiency. He showcased key achievements, publications, and extension activities, emphasizing the project's objectives and its impact on farm workers' productivity and well-being.

The Chairman of the session, Dr. S. N. Jha, urged centres to focus on outcome oriented research, documentation of measurable impact and wider dissemination of validated technologies. He also highlighted the need of ergonomics and safety interventions to make farm mechanization technologies safer and comfortable for user point of view.

Dr. K. P. Singh, highlighted the strategic role of ergonomics and safety research in National agricultural transformation and called for stronger field validation and impact documentation. He emphasized the growing role of women in agriculture, and the need for safety standards and ergonomic interventions. Dr. Mehta highlighted the need for focused ergonomic interventions on bigger machinery also for their wider acceptability. He also pointed out the importance of AI, robotics, sensors, and data-driven analytics as transformative tools for modernizing agriculture and enhancing farmer well-being. Coordinating and cooperating centres' publications *viz.* Research Highlights 2025-26, Technical Bulletin on Technologies/Interventions developed under AICRP on ESAAS (1996-2026), leaflets and success stories were released in the Inaugural session.

During the two-day deliberations, technical sessions, business session, and plenary session were held. The achievements and progress of cooperating centres for 2025–26 were reviewed following the XVI workshop held on March 4-5, 2025. During this period, three technologies were commercialized; one patent and one design registration was granted by cooperating centres of AICRP on ESAAS. The research engineers of different centres presented the future programmes for the years 2026-27. The workshop ended with the formal vote of thanks by Dr. Sukhbir Singh, PC, AICRP on ESAAS.





