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Bayer's Directacres Program Scales to over 200,000 Acres, Advancing Resource-Efficient Rice Cultivation in India

Mumbai, 14 Oct 2026: Bayer has expanded its DirectAcres initiative to over 81,000 hectares (more than 200,000 acres) in 2026, marking a significant milestone in its efforts to advance resource-efficient rice cultiva tion in India. The initiative reflects Bayer's commitment to helping farmers adapt to evolving agricultural challenges through solutions that balance productivity, farm economics and the efficient use of natural resources.

Rice cultivation in India is at an inflection point. Increasing pressure on water resources, rising cultivation costs and persistent labour shortages are challeng ing the viability of conventional transplan ting methods. Direct Seeded Rice (DSR), which involves sowing seeds directly into the field, offers an alter native with the potential to reduce water use by up to 30- 40%, greenhouse gas emissions by up to 45% and reliance on manual labour by up to 50%, compared with conven tional transplanted rice. Actual outcomes can vary by geography, cultivation practice and farm conditions. Along side these resource benefits, DSR can help lower cultivation costs, reduce drudgery and improve operational efficiency, strengthen ing the value proposi tion for farmers.

Direct Acres addresses these challenges through a cropping-system approach rather than treating DSR as a standalone technology. Bayer brings together its capabilities in Seeds & Traits, Crop Protec tion, Digital Farming Solutions and agronomy with tailored mechanization and digital advisory to support farmers through the transition. The model connects farmers and local agri-entrepreneurs with mechanization part ners, digital advisory and public- and private-sector stake holders, helping create the enabling ecosystem needed for adoption at scale.

By addressing challenges such as weed management, machinery access and crop establishment, the initiative aims to make DSR more accessible and economically viable for smallholder farmers, while encoura ging more efficient and resilient farming prac tices across the broader cropping system.