THANKING THE FARMER –
THE INVISIBLE HERO

Inspirational speaker Arvind Sawhney once said, “My grandfather used to say that since in your life you need a doctor, a lawyer, a policeman, and a preacher, but every day, three times a day, you need a farmer.” In an attempt to make people understand the life of a farmer, Tractors and Farm Equipment Limited (TAFE), the world’s third largest tractor manufacturer, has launched the “Be a FarmDost” initiative.

ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

The initiative aims to raise empathy for the farmer by encouraging people to stop in their shoes, even for a small while. The idea stems from the thought that if people realize the effort it takes to cultivate a single crop, in a square foot of land, they would truly realize what the average farmer has to go through day in and day out. The initiative is reaching out to the urban and semi-urban children through exciting videos. “We want children to feel the kiss of harvesting a crop — however small it may be. We want them to understand the effort that goes into farming, empathize with the farmer and recognize their contribution in feeding the economy and the world at large,” says Arvind Sawhney, CEO & Managing Director, TAFE.

The initiative is being spearheaded by the corporate communications team of TAFE and has reached out to 50,000 children in Chennai, Coimbatore, Trichy and Madurai with the hope to bring back the farmer into our social consciousness. The Be a FarmDost initiative is primarily an online viral campaign that will interact with its community of FarmDosts across media and platforms. The aim is to communicate and bring like-minded people together who relate to the cause and keep them engaged through insightful farming-related activities. Students can’t contain their joy after having received the FarmDost kit.

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The initiative will be engaging with the society on various levels. The campaign was launched in April 2015 at Chennai and Coimbatore. In June 2015 the school interaction commenced and by the end of 2015 an app innovation challenge will be thrown open to college students. The activities are developed such that they lead back to the FarmDost movement.

Kshetra, a leading newspaper in the state, has authored an article on the FarmDost movement.

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IN VOLVING SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Shedding light on the initiative and the contest called #ThankYouFarmers, Shubhdeep Kaur, senior DGM, Corporate Communications, TAFE said, “Every student is given a packet when they confirm their participation in the campaign. The packet contains two seed packets, a friendship agreement, a sticker, a pack of coconuts, and an instruction manual. Every participant must use the seeds provided in the packet to grow plants and also share pictures of all six stages of the plant’s growth on FarmDost.com. The six stages include planting/soiling, germinating, 1st day, 14th day, 21st day and 28th day. The participant whose pictures get the highest number of Facebook ‘Likes’ and ‘Shares’ (for all the six pictures put together) on the FarmDost Facebook page will win the BestFarmDost Student Award for the city. The top three entries will be selected for the BestFarmDost Student Award. For the #ThankYouFarmers contest, the participants must submit at least three farmers to understand their life and farming. At the end of the interaction they will deliver a message to the farmers and write about their experience and how they thanked the farmer. These entries should be uploaded on the website, which will be judged and the top three entries from each city will be awarded. Some of the participating students have made greeting cards for the farmers to thank them. When the farmers received this lovely gesture, they were overwhelmed. It was such a heart-warming experience,” says Shubhdeep Kaur.

The school awards also include Champions of Champions Award for overall participation and the BestFarmDost School Award. The #ThankYouFarmers School Award for the top three schools per city respectively. The top three schools for the contest will be awarded on the basis of highest participation. A school will be awarded the Best FarmDost School Award for its overall performance.

For any queries, visit: Website: FarmDost.com Facebook page: Facebook.com/FarmDost