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XXI Meeting of the ICAR Regional Committee III

Jorhat, 17 April 2013. The Chief Minister of Assam, Shri Tarun Gogoi, inaugurated the XXIst Meeting of the ICAR Regional Committee III at Assam Agricultural University. Shri



Gogoi lauded the immense contribution of the scientific community of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) towards the food security of the north-east hills region of the country. Further, he also impressed upon ICAR and officials of the agriculture and allied departments of the north-east hills region to strive harder to ensure food security a reality rather than a goal and also to raise the standard of agricultural education and research to a world standard. Dr S. Ayyappan (Secretary, DARE and Director General, ICAR) focused on the concept of 'smart farming for smart farmers', 'water harvesting', 'seed chain concept', 'customized farm implements', 'drought-flood contingency plans' etc. He also highlighted the new initiatives of the ICAR during XII Five-Year Plan, such as 'Farmer FIRST', 'ARYA' and 'STUDENT READY'. Shri Nilamoni Sen Deka (Agriculture Minister of Assam), and Shri Yitachu, (Nagaland's Parliamentary Secretary, Veterinary and Animal Husbandry) addressed the august gathering and raised the critical areas for agriculture in the region. Shri Yitachu presented a number of agenda to be deliberated and addressed by the agricultural scientists of the ICAR and the state governments of the north-eastern hills region.

Some important agenda include: assessing and monitoring chemical residuals in meat which is of paramount public health concern; an agenda on the need to circumvent the major constrain in the production of livestock and poultry in the region etc.

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Abiotic and Biotic Stress Management in Vegetable Crops

Varanasi, 12 April 2013. Dr N.K. Krishna Kumar (DDG, Horticulture), inaugurated a three-day National Symposium on 'Abiotic and Biotic Stress Management in Vegetable Crops' at the Indian Institute of Vegetable Research. Dr Krishna Kumar explained issues related to water scarcity, reality of climate change and inflating costs of vegetables, and stressed the need for multidisciplinary research approach to mitigate challenging environmental conditions and devastating pests for enhancing productivity and livelihood security. The DDG (Horticulture) observed that abiotic and biotic stresses cannot be considered separately and there is need to understand basics of their relationships.

Dr G. Kalloo (Ex-Vice Chancellor, JNKVV) stressed upon gene revolution in vegetable crops to improve productivity,

enhance nutritional quality including antioxidant and to develop multiple-resistant cultivars. Dr Kalloo hoped that continuous decline in the availability of pulses will be fulfilled by vegetables for better nutrition.

Prof. R.B. Singh (President, NAAS) emphasized to create new groups of human resources to address challenging environmental conditions, enhance productivity, produce more from less resources and to ensure the nutritional security. For details contact: drpbpbhatt.icar@yahoo.com

Union Minister of Agriculture and Food Processing Industries visits Sea Cage Farm

Karwar, 19 April 2013. The Union Minister for Agriculture and Food Processing Industries, Shri Sharad Pawar, appreciated the cage culture technology developed by Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) at the marine cage farm and assured supports for establishment of brood banks, increase in the number of species cultivated and also utilize the natural seed resources without hampering the environment. An installation of Artificial Reefs from sea cage farm to utilize the natural resources for conservation of biodiversity, habitat protection and increasing production was highly appreciated. Dr S. Ayyappan (Secretary, DARE and DG, ICAR) apprised the Agriculture Minister on the capture fisheries management in India and the way forward for enhancing fish production in the country.

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Introduction of multiple micronutrients fortified milk for consumers

Karnal, 27 April 2013. Shri Shashank Anand (Superintendent of Police, Karnal) was the Chief Guest on an awareness programme on 'Introduction of



multiple micronutrient fortified milk for consumers' that was organized at Milk Parlour, National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI). He appreciated the efforts of NDRI in developing the health associated dairy-based products. Some of the leading medical doctors of Karnal also attended the awareness programme and shared their views on the technology developed. Taking a lead to counter the micronutrient malnutrition, a team of dairy scientists at the NDRI have succeeded in developing a technology for fortifying the milk with multiple micronutrients. Dr A.K. Srivastava (Director, NDRI) said that micronutrient malnutrition is a public health issue and despite spectacular achievements in ensuring food security,

nutritional security remained a daunting task. A significant proportion of population is malnourished and we are facing widespread iron and vitamin A deficiency among school going children and women. Micronutrient deficiencies, such as zinc, folic acid, calcium, and vitamin D are also prevalent in India and have devastating impacts on the health and the productivity of the population.

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The Harvest of Lobsters from sea-cages launched

Somnath Coast, 12 April 2013. Dr S. Ayyappan (Secretary, DARE and Director General, ICAR) launched the harvest of lobsters from commercial sea cage farm, established by Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute for tribals, under ICAR's Tribal Sub-Plan programme off Somanath Coast, Gujarat. He hoped for more initiation in this direction by the ICAR institutes.

The CMFRI's cage culture technology was transferred to tribes, led by Mr Haskin Bahia, while they were working in the farm as partners/owners. Twenty cages of 5 m dia. were installed in the sea at a depth of about 7 m facing Somnath temple. The tribal farmers were trained in collecting/obtaining the seed. As a first step they procured lobster seed that was coming as discard from trawlers operating in Gujarat. If not attended, the seed dies in few hours. These farmers saw that seed is secured live and stored in sea-water pits for further transport to Somnath. Thus, this activity helps to conserve these resources from destruction and at the same time provides livelihood to them with increased food production to the country. At the collection the seed weighed between 50 and 80 g. They were stocked in 17 cages during January 2013 and fed well with trash fish etc. All the day-to-day work like feeding, cleaning net, security etc were attended by the tribal group under the careful supervision of the CMFRI, Veravel personnel. In the process they were trained in the fabrication of cages, mooring, net handling, feeding and all other requirement for the cage farm management. This is India's largest commercial sea cage farm. After about 110 days the crop is ready for sale as an item of high valued live export. The total estimated production is about 2,500 kg which is being sold at a price of ₹ 1,200/kg valued about ₹ 2.6 million. They will have the opportunity of raising one more crop after September 2013 and can get similar production within this year. This intervention has empowered their permanent livelihood by ensuring an income of about ₹ 15,000/ month for 20 families in this phase.



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ASEAN-India Farmers' Feedback Interface

New Delhi, 24 April 2013. The Farmers' Feedback Interface was organized for farmers' delegation that visited Malaysia from 14 to 23 April 2013 under the Farmers Exchange Programme between ASEAN member states and India at NASC Complex. Dr S. Ayyappan (Secretary, DARE and Director General, ICAR) applauded that farmers' visit has led to excitement and confidence building. Further, he appreciated a lot of learning by the farmers from the visit which will be practically used by them and they will share with fellow farmers. This will lead to introduction of new practice in

agriculture in their respective states. He expressed hope that integration of technologies, conducive policies and programmes and quality consciousness will take Indian agriculture to futuristic path.



Farmers shared their feedback in terms of Good Agricultural Practices, Integrated Farming, Marketing linkages including export and Agro-tourism. They also indicated their learning of new technologies like hydroponics for cultivation of vegetables and fruits, cage fish culture, fruits and vegetables processing, coconut jelly, mushroom food parks and agri-tourism, polyhouse etc. The feedback also included approach followed by Malaysian Government in terms of land sharing, infrastructure and training for entrepreneurship development. For details contact: padhiguru@gmail.com

CIFE Common Guest House inaugurated

Kolkata, 14 April 2013. Dr Mangala Rai (Agriculture Advisor to Chief Minister of Bihar) inaugurated a Common Guest House at Central Institute of Fisheries Education Campus, Salt Lake City. He emphasized that in future, this Common Guest House will act as a gateway to facilitate development of science especially for the north-eastern and eastern region of India.

Dr S. Ayyappan (Secretary, DARE and DG, ICAR) appreciated the ambience, tasteful furnishing and the scenic beauty of the guest house. He said that the Guest House will serve the needs of the ICAR staff of the north-eastern states, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and other states of eastern region. Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute, Barrackpore played the lead role in the construction and furnishing of the Guest House. For details contact: bkmahapatra@cife.edu.in

Kisan Mela

Hawalbagh, 13 April 2013. Dr K.M.L. Pathak (DDG, Animal Sciences) inaugurated 'Kisan Mela' at VPKAS Experimental Farm, Hawalbagh. He emphasized that



there is need to integrate the components like animal husbandry, dairy farming, mushroom production, fisheries and poultry with agriculture for sustainable development of the farmers and appealed the farmers to adopt the new technologies developed by the institute for enhancing crop production and their income. Dr J.C. Bhatt (Director, VPKAS) informed about the technologies developed by the institute. A farmer-scientist interaction meet was also organized. Prof. Pathak remarked 'VPKAS as a role model for hill agriculture' and released *Krishi Calendar, 2013-14* and a leaflet based on research activities. About 500 farmers of various districts of Uttarakhand participated in this event.

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