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VII National Conference on Integrating Technologies and Best Practices

Ludhiana, 20 November 2012. To bring all Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) on one platform so that they could be mutually benefited from experience of each other and interact with eminent agriculture scientists, the VII National Conference of 'Krishi Vigyan Kendras-2012' was jointly organized by the ICAR and Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), at Ludhiana and inaugurated by the Union Minister of Agriculture and Food Processing, Shri Sharad Pawar.



He urged Krishi Vigyan Kendras to adopt demand driven approach rather than supply driven approach for economic and social upliftment of rural areas of the country. He also inaugurated the exhibition for showcasing various farm technologies. The Krishi Vigyan Kendras were awarded for exceptional work carried out in research and extension activities. More than 1,200 delegates from 630 KVKs across the country participated in the conference based on the theme for 'Integrating Technologies and Best Practices'.



Union Minister for Agriculture and Food Processing Industries (State), Dr Charan Das Mahant, admired the role played by KVKs in effective transfer of technologies from lab to farm. "We should reach the unreachable," he remarked.

Dr S. Ayyappan (Secretary, DARE and Director General, ICAR) said that a plan has been chalked out to introduce curriculum of agriculture at school level so that interest of young generation in rural areas could be retained in agriculture. "We are also giving special emphasis on secondary agriculture in the XII Five-Year Plan", he added.

III International Conference on Agriculture diversification, climate change management and livelihoods

New Delhi, 30 November 2012. With the primary objective to take stock of technology capital available to address the issue of agriculture diversification, climate change management and livelihoods and draw future research strategies to address the emerging matrix of agriculture problems in holistic manner a five – day International Agronomy Congress on 'Agriculture Diversification, Climate Change Management and Livelihoods',

jointly organized by the Indian Society of Agronomy and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research with collaboration of IARI, NAAS, ASA and TAAS, was inaugurated by the Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Food Processing Industries, Dr Charan Das Mahant at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute on 26 November 2012. He emphasized on the importance of processing of agricultural products to enhance profitability in agriculture. To encourage and promote food processing industries in India, Government has prepared "Vision-2015" with the objective to increase food processing by 20%, he added. Food processing and secondary agriculture are the areas in which greater investment is required to create rural assets and increase employment opportunities. He lauded that Third International Agronomy Congress would deliberate on the challenges faced by Indian and global agriculture and will also devise a roadmap to tackle these; and assured that the recommendations and suggestions of the Congress will be taken up for the betterment of farming communities. The Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Food Processing Industries, Shri Tariq Anwar, chaired the inaugural session and expressed concern over continuous shrinking of landholdings and impending danger of climate change. He said that pressure on agriculture land is increasing due to land utilization for non-agricultural purposes, which needs logical redressal.

Dr S. Ayyappan (Secretary, DARE and DG, ICAR) elaborated the impressive role of agriculture in the Indian Economy and emphasized that agriculture is the key to create employment in the country. However, attainment of nutritional security is still a challenge in view of prevalent child malnutrition. Calling this Congress as *Krishi Kumbh*, he said that agronomy is a science that acts beyond the borders. Precision farming, nano-technology, Information Communication Technology and other cutting-edge technologies are being embraced to break the yield barriers of crops. Around 1,000 delegates from 24 countries participated in the Congress.

Important Events

- Goa, 9 November, 2012. His Excellency Shri Bharat Vir Wanchoo, Governor of Goa inaugurated the XXII Meeting of ICAR Regional Committee VII, hosted by ICAR Research Complex for Goa at International Centre Goa.
- Kohima, 17 November, 2012. The third 'North-East Agri Expo 2012' was held at Dimapur (Nagaland) with theme 'Progressive Agriculture'. While inaugurating the NEA Expo-2012, the Nagaland Governor as well as Chief Guest, Shri Nikhil Kumar, said, "Jhoom cultivation is widely prevalent among majority of farmers in Nagaland (70%) and it is time to utilize new technologies and information for modernising state agriculture.
- Jodhpur, 16 November 2012. Dr S. Ayyappan (Secretary, DARE and Director General, ICAR) chaired a two-day XXII ICAR Regional Committee No. VI Meeting covering Rajasthan, Gujarat, Dadra Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu at Central Arid Zone Research Institute (CAZRI), Jodhpur from 16 to 17 November 2012.

Milestone achievements of Agriculture

New Delhi, 19 November 2012. Dr S. Ayyappan (Secretary, DARE and Director General, ICAR) delivered a public lecture on 'Indian Agriculture: Feeding Crores Forever' at Indian National Science Academy (INSA). He traced development of Indian agriculture since independence and highlighted the milestone achievements. Despite limited resources and emerging challenges, agriculture is supporting and nourishing the ever increasing population of the country with pride and dignity. However, he expressed concern over prevalent hunger and malnutrition which need immediate attention.



Besides he presented futuristic scenarios of land, water and energy vis-à-vis demand of food and other agricultural commodities. He hoped that with the current level of research preparedness the country will remain food secure in the coming years as well.

He focused on cutting-edge technologies such as nano-technology and biotechnology to enhance productivity of farms and farming systems which include animal husbandry and fisheries. He elaborated various initiatives to mitigate the impact of climate change such as National Initiative on 'Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) and development of abiotic stress tolerant crops'. He added that to enhance the profitability in agriculture around 130 models have been developed as remunerative intercropping systems. He elaborated upon various initiatives of the ICAR to retain and attract youth in agriculture and make agricultural research more farmer friendly with focus on women in agriculture.

ICT mediated Aquaculture extension

Bhubaneswar, 26 November 2012. Dr B Bhaskar Reddy (International Institute of Information Technology, Hyderabad) inaugurated the training programme on 'ICT mediated Aquaculture extension', jointly organized by Central Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture and National Fisheries Development Board, Hyderabad, and said that it is aimed at providing an exposure to the officials of fisheries department about the information communication technologies (ICT) initiatives in



Aquaculture Extension. It would cover fundamentals of ICT; Fisheries extension in digital era; e- Aqua Sagu; Aqua *chaupal*; Kisan mobile advisory services; revamped Kisan Call Centre; Aquaculture Field School as a new tool for extension; Multimedia; e-resources for extension etc. The training is to be imparted through a suitable combination of lectures, hands on session, practical, group exercise and field visits. The Institute has roped in experts from renowned institutions e.g. International Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Hyderabad; Central Institute of

Brackishwater Aquaculture (CIBA), Chennai; Division of Agriculture Extension, ICAR, New Delhi; SAARC Agricultural Information Centre, Dhaka etc. There would be opportunities for the participants to interact with Corporate/ Private Sectors engaged in providing extension service. He added that in the field of Aquaculture extension, information technologies in various forms are being used. These initiatives have improved the extension services both in terms of cost efficiency and timely provision of information to the clientele.

Dr P. Jayasankar (Director, CIFA) said that use the power of information communication technologies (ICT) for accelerating the pace of aquaculture development. Information and communication technology has penetrated to every walk of life. As many as 14 line department officials belonging to Andhra Pradesh, Mizoram, Jammu & Kashmir, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Bihar participated in this programme. For detail e mail: hkde@sify.com

Agriculture Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh visits



Cuttack, 9 November, 2012. A four-member delegation from Bangladesh headed by the Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture, Begum Matia Chowdhury visited Central Rice Research Institute, and discussed areas of mutual interest.

Makhana cultivation

Darbhanga, 6 November, 2012. The Union Minister (State) Agriculture and Food Processing Industries, Shri Tariq Anwar, visited ICAR Research Complex for Eastern Region, Makhana Research Centre, Darbhanga. He applauded the work done by the Centre in spite of limited manpower and resources and emphasized the need for expansion of area under *makhana* cultivation to save this highly remunerative crop which is also deep-rooted with the custom and rituals of the Mithlanchal region. He assured that all possible initiatives shall be taken to strengthen the centre.



At the outset, Dr B.P. Bhatt (Director, ICAR Research Complex for Eastern Region, Patna) appraised the Union Minister of Agriculture and Food Processing Industries (State) that the centre has developed a variety that has potential of 1.5 tonne/ha to 3.0 tonne/ ha. Farmers also shared their views and explained the difficulties being faced by them especially in popping, grading and harvesting of *makhana* and also the lower price obtained by the real farmers due to middle men.

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