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किसानों का हमसफर  
भारतीय कृषि अनुसंधान परिषद

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### From hot and close to cool and open

Pacchamuthu, a marginal farmer in the village of Calicut near Port Blair, while striding across his one hectare land reflects over the days when he was eking out a meager living. One sultry day, he was as usual brooding over his ill-fate and surfing channels on TV, heard the presenter talking about the Integrated Farming System. As a sheer coincidence, scientists from the Central Agricultural Research Institute, Port Blair, visited his village just the next week to educate farmers about the very same programme. Pacchamuthu adopted the combination of crop + cattle + goat + poultry + fish system on his farm, funded initially by a Government scheme relating to Integrated Farming in Humid Tropics of Bay Islands. He planted crops in the cycle of rice-rice-vegetable-sugarcane-ginger-leafy vegetables-ginger. He made the best use of his undulating, one hectare plot by allocating 0.036 hectares to a fish pond. He also built a poultry shed and added milch cows and two goats to his cattle. Then, taking his learning further, he set up an innovative self-sustaining feeding cycle. The poultry were fed with grain, broken rice and coconut waste. Poultry litter and cowdung served as fish feed. The cattle were fed crop residue. Cow and bullockdung were used as manure in the field. Fingerlings were released in the fish pond, and ducklings were reared so that their droppings also served as fish feed. Ducks also checked unwanted fish like Tilapia. Guinea fowls were added to control weeds, snakes and pests in the field. And so an interdependent chain of different life-cycles flourished.

Meat, egg and milk paid him rich dividends. The two goats he had started with bred into twenty. He also grew flowers like crossandra, tuberose and marigold with technological back-up and seedlings from



CARI. His income grew at an astonishing rate to about Rs 3 lakh/year. Now experts come to study his success story.

### e-KVK network

Union Minister for Agriculture, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Shri Sharad Pawar inaugurated e-Krishi Vigyan Kendra Network Operation Centre at ICAR headquarters. Minister of State for Agriculture, Prof K V Thomas also graced the occasion.

Dr S Ayyappan, Secretary, Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) and Director-General, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Dr K D Kokate, Deputy Director-General (Agricultural Extension), ICAR briefed about the operation and activities of the facility to the Agriculture Minister. Shri Pawar also inaugurated renovated office and terrace of Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board in the presence of Dr C D Mayee, Chairman.



The e- facility is expected to foster an enabling environment to Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) for developing partnerships and collaborations between scientists and farmers for sharing appropriate technologies, best practices and innovative ideas among all stakeholders. The facility will provide internet access to global e-content on agriculture and development of KVKs web pages with user-friendly information such as FAQs, weather forecasting, calendar of activities etc.

A two-way audio and one-way video multicasting and broadcasting will further facilitate and strengthen communication bond between stakeholders. It will also provide computer-generated agro-advisory alerts to mobile phone holder farmers and other stakeholders in the district. Initially the e-linkage facility has been created at 192 KVKs and all the 8 Zonal Project Directorates located across the country and gradually it will broaden its range of reach.

### KVKs interface 2010

The KVKs interface 2010 was organized by the Division of Agricultural Extension, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). Prof K V Thomas, Minister of State for Agriculture while delivering key note address, stressed that a mechanism should be evolved to encourage the performance of KVKs and provision for special assistance can be made for further enhancement in their capacity.



He further emphasized that KVKs are effectively providing a common platform to the scientists of ICAR, State Agricultural Universities and other stakeholders to deliberate on various issues concerning application of new technologies and market opportunities.

In his inaugural speech, Dr S Ayyappan, Secretary, DARE and Director-General, ICAR called for introspection of KVKs and then reinvent themselves. He emphasized on the need for convergence between KVK-MNREGA and other Government social schemes for socio-economic development of farmers. Dr Ayyappan added that every KVK should try to work as a knowledge-driven centre at district level where farmers can seek solution of their problems.

Sri Rudra Gangadharan, Secretary, Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Fisheries and Shri Rajiv Mehrishi, Secretary, ICAR also graced the occasion. Dr K D Kokate, Deputy Director-General (Agricultural Extension), ICAR elaborated the role of KVKs in technology dissemination at ground level and informed that KVKs are providing a number of innovative services to farmers including agro-advisory through mobile, agro-alert system and special demonstration at farmers' fields.

Country-wide network of 571 KVKs is gearing up to meet new challenges posed by climate change and other stresses. Recently, an initiative has been taken to e-connect 192 KVKs for quick and effective sharing of appropriate technologies and ideas among all stakeholders. During the last three years, the KVKs conducted 2.86 lakh on-farm trials and frontline demonstrations and trained 36.84 lakh farmers and 2.73 lakh extension personnel.

### Consultation meeting on organic farming

A consultation meeting on organic farming was held at National Agricultural Science Complex (NASC), ICAR, New Delhi. In his Presidential remarks Dr S Ayyappan, Secretary, DARE and Director-General, ICAR said that soil health is a

primary concern for scientists. They may come out with innovative techniques on organic farming but these techniques should give long-term results. He stressed that everyone should know the benefits of organic farming so that they can spread its valuable importance to others. Beside this, areas should be identified where organic farming can be helpful.

### Need to leverage ICT in agriculture production

There is a need to leverage agriculture by ensuring that our premier agricultural institutions take full advantage of advances in Information and Communication Technologies. This was stated by the Minister of State for Communication and Information Technology, Shri Sachin Pilot, while inaugurating the toll-free helpline launched by Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi.

Shri Pilot also underlined the need to boost farm incomes by maximizing farm productivity in an environment-friendly manner. He also announced that the useful information compiled for farmers by IARI would be uploaded to approximately 70,000 common service centres. He said that these centres are already operational in the country under the Department of Information Technology as part of the National e-Governance Programme in different Indian languages to ensure that this information is available to the farming community across India.

To have good and effective linkage the toll free helpline of PUSA AGRICOM (1800-11-8989) will prove quite useful, said Dr HS Gupta, Director, IARI.

### Capacity building – a key challenge for agricultural librarians

A three-day national conference on 'Knowledge management in globalized era' was organized by the Association of Agricultural Librarians and Documentalists of India at NASC, Pusa. In his inaugural speech, Dr S Ayyappan, Secretary, DARE and Director-General, ICAR said that capacity building is a key challenge for agricultural librarians and documentalists. He described librarians as an important source of national agriculture research system and hence should be brought out as knowledge managers for society. Dr Ayyappan said that in present scenario the role of librarians became as information specialists. While delivering his Presidential address Dr Arvind Kumar, Deputy Director-General (Education), ICAR asked the librarians to prepare themselves to compete with other information agencies. He urged that they must put different information and knowledge at the right platform to help common man. Dr M Moni, Deputy Director-General, National Informatics Centre expressed his views on information for agriculture community in fast changing ICT regime.

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