

CROPS

Secretary (A&C), in her opening remarks, emphasized the need for crop diversification from traditional crops to more lucrative and sustainable crop development in the country. She remarked that area under Pulses and Oilseeds has considerably increased, Rice production is expected as high as 92 million tones during 2005-07. It was indicated that in 11th Plan document of the Planning Commission, agriculture sector is expected to be highly projected and a sizeable budget would be earmarked for this sector. She also stated that Wheat production has become a critical issue as on date and Hon,ble Prime Minister has emphasized to increase the Wheat production. Efforts are afoot to prepare a scheme for which presentation has already been made before Prime Minister. Secretary (A&C) stressed to increase per unit yield of Wheat and Paddy to feed the growing population. States need to come forward and make sincere efforts in achieving self sufficiency in foodgrains production in a sustainable manner.

After the opening Session, respective States were invited to make presentations before the august gathering to discuss the agriculture scenario and various strategies/efforts being made to increase production and productivity of foodgrains.

The issues concerning Crops Division for various states have been summed up hereunder:

- 1. Gujarat:** State requires more genetically modified crops but non-availability of Rice hybrids is of great concern. State has an ambitious plan for crop diversification towards high value crops such as oilseeds/pulses/maize. State has projected to bring 5.00 lakh ha area under irrigation.
- 2. West Bengal:** State laid emphasis on supply of short duration wheat varieties. Reacting to this ICAR opined that several such varieties are already available. State Government further reported that shattering in rice varieties is a great problem which needs to be looked into.
- 3. Himachal Pradesh:** State Government indicated that suitable wheat varieties resistant to Karnal bunt need to be made available in the State.
- 4. Haryana:** The State of Haryana indicated that there is no scope for horizontal expansion yet there is a great scope for vertical expansion. Efforts are being made to cultivate low water consuming paddy hybrid, heat and salinity tolerant wheat varieties which may result in a genetic break through. The State has, by and large, replaced Sathi rice variety with less water demanding varieties besides, to reduce area under summer paddy. A target of 96 lakh tones of wheat with productivity of 4100 kg/ha has been proposed for 2006-07.

5. Punjab: State Government, while highlighting the efforts made to increase agriculture production, inter-alia indicated that the State is poised to lay emphasis on use of bio-fertilizers and timely transplantation of paddy besides State would increase area under hybrid Maize. Production of Cotton in the State is good. In case of Wheat, production is constant. State is preparing Block-wise strategy for increasing Wheat production including application of gypsum. Cotton productivity has increased substantially, which was more than world average and cotton crop condition in the state during current year is very good. State requested ICAR to develop early duration varieties of cotton and rice in rice-wheat /cotton-wheat sequence system so that wheat can be sown in time. DDG (CS), ICAR in his reply mentioned that ICAR system is developing early maturing rice and cotton varieties for the above purpose. Area under rice has, considerable, been reduced by 70 thousand ha while as production is expected to be 70 lakh tones.

6. Rajasthan: The representative from Rajasthan pointed out that there is anomaly in the pattern of subsidy being provided by GOI under ISOPOM and ICDP scheme. Assistance should either be 25% or 50% uniformly.

7. Andhra Pradesh: State Government laid emphasis on changing the fertilizer policy. State has already diversified 16.125 lakh acres area towards oilseeds/pulses/maize. Further, State has already increased additional 7.00 lakh acres area under irrigation during current financial year and has planned to increase 65 lakh acres during next three years. The state is doing micro level planning in agriculture. For this they have made action plan for each of 320 farming systems. It has analyzed gaps in the productivity and developed action plan for increasing the productivity in the states through various extension and developmental activities. The state has further given Rs. 100/- qt. for procurement of coarse cereals for the MSP declared by GOI as the coarse cereals have drought proofing effect and reduces the risk under aberrant rainfall.

8. Tamil Nadu: State is popularizing SRI technology for rice and contract farming for maize. State has planned to cultivate an area of 24 lakh ha under rice by October, 2006. State Government requested that use of new technology like drip irrigation in Sugarcane should be approved under SUBACS and may not be taken as new initiative.

9. Uttar Pradesh: Availability of new improved wheat varieties in the State is main constraint. State Government indicated that newly released varieties do not perform well in comparison to older varieties. Reacting to this ICAR indicated that farmers should use new technologies while sowing the new varieties. Sowing new varieties with older technologies can prove counter productive. Ample number of new varieties has performed well. State Government indicated that ceiling limit on seed subsidy should be increased from present level of 25%. The cost of hybrid seeds requires to be subsidized at 50% to make it affordable for small & marginal farmers.

10. Madhya Pradesh: While presenting the agricultural profile, the representative of the State Government indicated that the GOI should support development of alternative agriculture growth model. The state representative mentioned that yield of various crops are stagnant and generally are below national average. The state has declared 2006-07 as 'Kisan Versh'. Various efforts will be made for increasing the productivity.

11. Orissa: State Government pointed out the shortage of TLF/Certified seed of varieties. State Government indicated that there should be market intervention on Cotton and Oilseeds besides keeping provision for R&D facilities for Sugarcane development.

12. Tripura: State Government is giving special thrust for crop diversification towards Pulses and Oilseeds production.

13. Maharashtra: The Commissioner Agriculture, Government of Maharashtra mentioned that they have given much thrust for increasing productivity of sugarcane through various means particularly by micro irrigation. He further mentioned that state will be more thrust for fertilizer consumption in cereals and is focusing more for training of facilitators and farmers' field school in organic farming.

14. Karnataka: The representative from Karnataka indicated that state has constituted Task Force on yield gap which has given its recommendations and accordingly the state is taken strategies and action plan as a follow up action.

15. Chhattisgarh: The state representative mentioned that since the rice yield is low, the state is giving more thrust for increasing area under irrigation so that cropping intensity can be increased. State is also developing areas for organic farming. He further mentioned that besides area under irrigation through pond, lift etc., seed replacement trade will also be increased. The state is suffering from extension service due to lack of staff.

16. Uttaranchal: Vice Chancellor, G. B. Pant University of Agriculture & Technology stressed the need for intercropping Sugarcane and Wheat in the state.

In her concluding remarks, Secretary (A&C) emphasized to concentrate on key issues keeping in view the resource endorsement of small & marginal farmers so as to make their farm holdings a viable and life supporting unit. The areas, where there is scope for increasing productivity through sustainable agricultural development, need to be targeted. She reiterated for sustainable agricultural development through crop diversification while keeping in view the growing food demand and food and nutrition security.
