

Krishi Unnati Mela, 2018

Indian Agricultural Research Institute is the country's premier national institute for agricultural research, education and extension. Being the nursery of green revolution, the growth of India's agriculture for nearly a century is closely linked to the researches done and technologies generated by the Institute. Several innovative technologies and the models of their dissemination and farmers' empowerment has been developed by the Institute. The concepts of National Demonstration, Seed village, Single window delivery system, Krishi Dak etc are some of the notable examples. The Institute is also successfully implementing National Extension Project (NEP) in collaboration with ICAR Institutes/SAUs and IARI-VO partnership programme with voluntary organizations to assess and spread the horizon of IARI technologies across the diverse agro-climatic situations of India, catering to the farmers and entrepreneurs of all sections of the rural society.

IARI has remained instrumental in fulfilling nutritional need of the country and addressing contemporary problems of farmers. Poor price realization, minimum support price, climate change adversely affecting agriculture, exploitation of natural resources and wastage of farm produce are some of the chronic problems impacting the profitability of farming and is driving the new generation away from farming. The Institute with its formidable research infrastructure and manpower has been coming up with solutions to these problems. The Mera Gaon Mera Gaurav programme has increased farm penetration, farmer-scientist interaction manifold as problems are being picked up for on the spot solution. The crop varieties of IARI, especially those of cereal crops and oil seeds have spread far and wide through collaborative extension programmes and have established as popular local varieties in many parts of western and eastern India. The Institute is committed to develop technologies that conserve the natural resources for the benefit of the ecosystem as well as the farmers. Various technologies such as zero tillage technology, bio-fertilizers, microbial consortia to enhance the speed of composting, water technology etc. have been developed and validated in farmers' field for this purpose and suitable technologies and crop varieties are offered to the farmers to conserve resources at one hand and to increase production on the other.

In the present time, Indian Agriculture has witnessed many new turn of events. The farmers are being offered with a unique Crop Insurance scheme, which provides wider risk coverage and is based on latest crop related information collected from remote sensing data bank on real time basis. A 24 x7 TV channel has been dedicated to the farmers and all stakeholders of Indian agriculture giving complete coverage of different aspects of agriculture and marketing. A major initiative to create soil health card for every farmer has been launched to optimize resource usage and healthy crop production. Interlinking of river, pet project of the government is on anvil. The e-NAM, an online marketing platform has been started to facilitate the farmers with better market price realisation.

Every year, IARI organizes farmers fair during the late of rabi season. More than a lakh farmers and entrepreneurs visit the fair to gain first-hand experience of many cutting edge technologies of agriculture and interact with specialists for solving problems related to farm technology. From past two years, the Pusa Krishi Vigyan Mela has been elevated to a National Level Fair “Krishi Unnati Mela”. ICAR institutes, SAUs, Voluntary organizations and other Government and Semi-Government organizations from all over the country participate in the Mela. The Mela provides a platform for addressing the national issues of agriculture.



Fig: Glimpses of Krishi Unnati Mela

This year also, the Krishi Unnati Mela, 2018 will be organised during 16-18 March, 2018. It is going to be organised at a time when our country has been reeling with severe environmental pollution partly contributed by agricultural crop residue burning in northern India. The theme of the Mela could be principally around this problem, whereby huge potential of crop residues could be harnessed by proper handling, thereby reducing the pollution and utilization of waste appropriately. Various technologies developed by the Institute as well as other ICAR Institutes of India could be the central attractions of this Mela.

The central government’s target to double the farmers’ income could not succeed if wastage of food is not stopped. Wastage due to spoilage in handling, less access to market could be hugely reduced by value addition to raw farm produces. The expertise and products of many entrepreneurs and incubatees showcased during the Mela would be focal point as to how Post harvest processing can increase shelf life of raw farm produce and value addition can boost the income of the farmers. The credit of spectacular income from Basmati export from India in recent years could rightly be attributed to Pusa-1121 and PB-1509 varieties of the Institute. The

heart-friendly mustard varieties also have potential to be exported to European countries. The rejection of consignments from India due to the presence of agrochemicals beyond prescribed international standards is a setback to the farmers, private companies as well as the export monitoring agencies of the government. Judicious use of costly agro-inputs reduces cost of cultivation as well as increases the export potential of the crops. Proper management of crop waste, along with judicious use of chemicals in agriculture, both as part of GAP are needed to be promoted in wake of growing demand of organic food. The Mela could be a platform for launching a nationwide programme for implementing integrated nutrient management and pest management both of which reduces cost of cultivation, carbon foot print of food as well as increases safety of food items.

Major Attractions of the Mela

- Live demonstrations on production technologies of crops
- Theme pavilion
- Farmers' visits to experimental fields of IARI
- Technologies for protected cultivation of vegetables and flowers
- Display of Integrated Farming System (IFS) models, dairy, bee keeping, poultry, etc.
- Display of micro irrigation and sensor based irrigation system for water use efficiency
- Treatment of waste water
- Display and sale of farm equipments and machinery by the ICAR institute and private companies
- Sale of seeds of HYVs of crops, saplings and seedlings by IARI and other public and private organizations
- Free soil and water testing
- Display and sale of bio-fertilisers and agro-chemicals by different agencies
- Display and sale of innovative farmers' products
- Kisan Gosthi and technical sessions on different themes
- Free distribution of Mela Souvenir and farm literature
- Innovative farmers' meet and their honor
- Film shows on different agricultural themes

