

Press release

Microbial Resources for Sustainable Agriculture (V16 –H2:S3)

VAIBHAV Summit recommends to develop strong research collaborative network within India and international labs for developing microbial technologies for Indian agriculture.

The ongoing Vaishwik Bharatiya Vaigyanik (**VAIBHAV**) Summit, is a collaborative initiative by Science and Technology and Academic Organizations of India to enable deliberations on thought process, practices and R & D culture with a problem-solving approach and forge collaborations. In this pursuit, the session on “**Microbial Resources for Sustainable Agriculture**”, conducted on 10th October, discussed the scientific and technological gaps for harnessing the microbial resources for sustainable agriculture- livestock and fisheries sector to achieve national food and nutrition security and employment. The technological options, opportunities and collaborative needs were also discussed. The major recommendations out of the session were to initiate research collaborations to develop Centers of Excellence in Microbial Resource Technologies, Microbiome initiative in Indian Agri-ecosystem, Inclusion of microbiological indices in soil health card in tiered fashion and Skill development and capacity building for enhancing the research quotient in serving the farming community.

The session was chaired by Dr. T.K. Adhya, former Director, NRRI, Cuttack and Co-chaired by Dr. D.L.N. Rao, Ex-Emeritus ICAR Scientist, IISS, Bhopal. The Session was coordinated by Dr. K. Annapurna, Head, Division of Microbiology, ICAR- Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi. In his welcome address, Dr Ashok Kumar Singh, Director, ICAR-IARI outlined the contributions of Indian scientists in bringing Microbiology Science in the forefront and its role in soil health. He applauded the role of Division of Microbiology, IARI for pioneering the work on Bioinoculants and Biofertilizers, and for housing the largest Rhizobial and cyanobacterial culture collections.

There were three presentations by the global Indians and two by the resident Indians. The overseas presenters included Prof MS Reddy from Auburn University, USA; Dr. VVSR Gupta from CSIRO, Adelaide, Australia and Prof. Brajesh Singh from Western Sydney University, Australia. Two Indian presenters were Dr. DLN Rao and Dr. Yogesh Schouche. Apart from these, panelists included scientists from various Institutions in India. The session reviewed the progresses and insights gained so far, and new perspectives on the microbiomes as the critical genomic resources for all the components of agriculture. There were discussions on the need for the structured and continued global initiatives and plans for partnerships, knowledge exchanges, and skill development, and for the advancement of entrepreneurial efforts.

The month long **VAIBHAV** virtual summit was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 2nd October 2020, on Mahatma Gandhi birth day, in the virtual presence of academia and researchers from across the world and is planned to be concluded on 2nd November after month-long deliberation sessions through webinar mode.