Report of visit of Dr. M. Dutta, National Consultant (Oilseeds) for participation in the Farmers’ Fair-cum-Exhibition on Groundnut from 30th Sept. to 1st Oct., 2016 at ICAR-DGR, Junagarh

A visit to Saurashtra region, the largest groundnut growing region of Gujarat State was undertaken while participating in the National Farmers’ Fair-cum-Exhibition on groundnut organized by ICAR-Directorate of Groundnut Research, Junagarh on 30th Sept. to 1st October, 2016. The salient observations and action points are given below:

30th Sept., 2016 (Meeting at ICAR-DGR and visit to farmers’ fields)

A brief meeting was held with the Director, ICAR-DGR, Junagarh and Deputy Director of Agriculture, Junagarh at the institute. The DDA informed that Veeraval, Manvadar, Vanthily, Junagarh and Usavadar are the regions having largest concentration of groundnut. However, recently white grub infestation has become acute in about 19000 ha area. Currently, the department is engaged in the assessment of loss through crop cutting experiments. FLD by KVK was taken up in Sutrapara area, but the crop condition was not good. Although, GJG-22 is the new groundnut variety developed by JAU, Junagarh, there is high demand for GJG-20 which is more than 10 years old.

At village Kareni, Keshad Taluka field of the farmer Shri Vajjubhai Gopalbhai Ingraiya was visited who has grown groundnut variety ICGV-05155 in 0.5 ha area and about the same area was planted with variety TG-37A. The seed was supplied by the scientist of Junagarh Agricultural University. The crop condition was good and the performance of ICGV-05155 was better with an estimated yield of about 3000 kg/ha. The variety was disease free and would yield good amount of fodder. The farmer owns a mini oil mill for crushing groundnut with a capacity of 450 litre oil/day. It was informed by the scientists, JAU that at village Karwani, farmer Shri Alpeshbhai Khanapora has grown variety GJG-22 in 0.2 ha area and at village Ajab of the same Taluka, farmer Haribhai G Shekhot has taken up variety GJG-9 in about 2.2 ha area. The expected pod yield from the crop was about 3500 kg/ha.

The following salient observations could be made:

- Although groundnut was sown in ridge-furrow method, the ridges had become almost flat possibly due to low heights of the ridges under bullock drawn seed drill. Rainfall received during last 3-4 days has given some relief to groundnut farmers.

- Pure groundnut crop was predominant with inter crop of pigeon pea in some areas, however, intercropping with coconut plantation was a novel planting method observed in some areas.

- Irrigation by rain gun was followed in some farmers’ fields, where rainfall was scanty.
1st Oct., 2016 (Participation in the Farmers’ Fair-cum-Exhibition)

A visit to the experimental fields of ICAR-DGR, Junagarh was made followed by participation in the Farmers’ Fair-cum-Exhibition. Detailed report submitted by Director, ICAR-DGR is enclosed, however the salient observations are as under:

- The inaugural session was attended by Dr. A R Pathak, Vice-Chancellor, JAU, Junagarh; Dr. A. Bandopadhyay, Former Director, IACR-DGR, Junagarh; Dr. T. Radhakrishnan, Director, ICAR-DGR, Junagarh; Er. Pradeep K Singh, Dy. Conservator of Forest, Junagarh; Dr. I U Dhruj, Associate Director of Research, JAU; Dr. Gonthiya, Dean, College of Engg., JAU; Dr. Tonk, Dean, College of Veterinary Science, JAU; DDA, Junagarh and Programme Coordinators of KVKs -Amreli, Kodinar and Pipaliya.
- Director, ICAR-DGR thanked NMOOP, DAC&FW for the financial support; VC, JAU, Junagarh, urged the farmers to avail the benefit of having the Groundnut Research Institute in the region; former Director, ICAR-DGR emphasized on the use of new varieties to boost yield; DCF, Junagarh informed about the legal and policy support available for blue bull management and National Consultant (Oilseeds) emphasized upon the convergence of efforts by various developmental/research organizations.
- More than 700 farmers from five districts viz. Junagarh, Amreli, Jamnagar, Gir – Somnath and Rajkot covering 35 villages including Sarpanches and Talatis of 25 adopted villages under ‘Mera Gaon Mera Gaurav’ and 34 farmers from Madhya Pradesh participated in the mela.
- 20 exhibition stalls were set up by input dealers and private companies with various exhibits.
- Two lectures on “Management of Neel Gai (blue bull) and Wild Boars in groundnut – legal issues and government policy support” and “Management of white grubs in groundnut” were delivered.
- A question-answer session was organized with the farmers in which farmers requested to consider whether damage by wild animals like Neel Gai and Wild Boars could be availed under Central crop insurance scheme.
- Farmers were judged for their live plant samples & innovations and awarded to recognise their efforts.

Going by the participation of large number of farmers and enthusiasm shown by them, the Farmers’ Fair-cum-Exhibition on groundnut in the Saurashtra region, the groundnut bowl of the country, was a success. The following action points emerged during the visit:

1. A comprehensive strategy may be adopted for white grub management in the region affected by the pest. (Action: State Department of Agriculture/SAU/ICAR-DGR, Junagarh).
2. Damage by blue bull (Neel Gai) and wild boars is a serious issue affecting groundnut farmers in the region. A comprehensive strategy involving socio-political, legal and policy measures is required to combat the menace. (Action: State Departments of Agriculture & Forestry/ICAR-DGR/SAUs/DAC&FW).

3. Seed of recently released varieties may be made available to the farmers by submitting indent in time and involving Central & State Seed Agencies. (Action: SAUs/ State Department of Agriculture/ICAR-DGR/Seed Agencies).

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Report on the ‘Groundnut farmer fair cum exhibition’ organized by ICAR-Directorate of Groundnut Research, Junagadh’ (October 1st, 2016)

In Gujarat, groundnut is grown in an area of about 17 lakh hectares annually yielding 20 lakh tons with productivity of 1400 kg per hectare and thus occupies first in area and production in India. Among the 33 districts in Gujarat, eight districts which are generally called ‘Saurashtra’ contributes about 95% of the area and production of Gujarat and aptly referred to as, ‘Groundnut Bowl’ of India. The ICAR-DGR, Junagadh directly and through AICRP-G has developed various improved technologies for this region and contributed substantial for the increase of groundnut productivity in the region.

In the last few years, the cultivation of groundnut crop of this region is marred due to the attack of vertebrate pests like Neel Ghai, Wild Boar etc. and white grubs. In the current kharif crop season the damage by white grubs in groundnut is estimated to be around 20-30% in Gujarat depending on the region and intensity of infestation. White grubs not only pose threat to groundnut crop presently but also has a wide host range and can form further the base for rapid spread during subsequent crop season.

Therefore, the ICAR-Directorate of Groundnut Research, Junagadh organised a ‘Groundnut farmer fair cum exhibition’ on 1st October, 2016, to acquaint the farmers of Saurashtra region of Gujarat about Management of Neel Ghai, White boars in groundnut, legal issues associated with and Government policy support for managing these pests and on managing white grubs in groundnut with a special emphasis on community based approach. This fair was sponsored to ICAR-DGR, Junagadh under NMOOP with a financial assistance of Rs. 4.00 lakh. In all, there were more than 700 farmers from five (Junagadh, Amreli, Jamnagar, Gir-Somnath, and Rajkot) districts covering about 35 villages. The sarpanchs and Talatis of the 25 adopted villages under the “Mera Gaon Mera Gourav” programme, and 34 progressive farmers from Madhya Pradesh have also participated.

Dr AR Pathak, Vice-Chancellor, JAU, Junagadh, Dr Manoranjan Dutta, Advisor, DAC, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation and Farmers welfare, New Delhi, Er. Pradeep Singh, Deputy Conservator of Forest, Junagadh and Dr A Bandyopadhyaya, Former Director, ICAR-DGR, Junagadh and Dr IU Dhruj Associate Director of Research, JAU were the Special Guests of the function. The other guests present on the occasion included Dr Gonthiya, Dean, College of the Agricultural Engineering, Dr Tonk, Dean, College of Veterinary Sciences and Deputy Director Department of Agriculture, Government of Gujarat, Junagadh. In this occasion, programme coordinators of various Krishi Vigyan Kendras like Amreli, Kodinar and Pipaliya (Dhoraji) and scientists from JAU were also present.

The program started by the lighting of the lamp by the guests present on the dais. At the inaugural session, Dr Radhakrishnan T., Director, ICAR-DGR, Junagadh, welcomed all the farmers and dignitaries and requested the participants to take full advantage of the programme organised during the farmers’ fairs-cum-exhibitions to the improve their productivity and profit.

After the inaugural session, lectures on, ‘Management of Neel Ghai, White boars in groundnut, legal issues associated with and Government policy support’ and ‘Management of white grubs in groundnut’ with a special emphasis on community based approach were delivered by Er Pradeep Singh, Deputy Conservator of Forest, Junagadh and Dr MK Ghelani, Assoc. Professor, Dept. of Entomolgy, from Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh respectively in local languages.
Interactive sessions were well organized between Scientist and farmers after the formal inaugural session. The highlights of the farmers fair are given below:

1. More than 700 farmers including about 75 women from the major groundnut growing districts participated in the farmers fair.
2. Scientists from ICAR-DGR, Faculty of Junagadh Agricultural University (Junagadh), Officials of Gujarat State, personals associated with various groundnut industries participated in the farmers’ fair.
3. The exhibition had 20 stalls set up mainly by the input dealers, the ICAR-DGR and the JAU.
4. Presentations on management of vertebrate pests and white grubs followed by question answer session. During the discussion session, various queries raised by the farmers were answered by the experts.
5. On this day, a competition was also organised for farmers. The farmers were given an opportunity to display their groundnut plant samples, and technological innovations which were evaluated by an expert committee. As a token of recognition of their efforts in promoting good agricultural practices; some utility items were given away to these farmers as prizes.
6. The farmers were taken around the ‘Technology Park’ of ICAR-DGR to enable farmers appreciate the impact of various technologies on growth and other yield attributes of groundnut plants.
7. Farmers also visited various stalls exhibiting the agro-chemicals that are now available in market for use in agriculture. Information pamphlets and brochures describing (in Gujarati) various aspects of groundnut were distributed to farmers free of cost.
8. A number of progressive farmers expressed their confidence and acknowledged the services rendered by ICAR-DGR and the KVKs operating in the Gujarat state.

Mr. PV Zala, Cheif Technical officer, ICAR-DGR, thanked all the guests and farmers for their active and constructive participation. Overall, the event was widely appreciated by the farmers, who suggested that such Kisan Melas should be organized at regular intervals with representation of all stakeholders including Private Sector.
The mela was inaugurate by Dr. AR Pathak, Hon. Vice Chancellor, Junagadh Agricultural University

Address by Vice-Chancellor, JAU, Junagarh
A view of the farmer audience

Dr. M. Dutta, National Consultant (OS), DAC&FW addresses the farmers
Farmers’ interactive session in progress

Groundnut plant materials exhibited by the farmers
Progressive farmers were also honoured during the mela

Exhibition by input dealers and private companies
A stall in the exhibition

Farmers in one of the stalls