

ICAR lauded for enhancing oilseed production through Sunflower cultivation in Sikkim

Oilseeds constitute a very important group of cash crops in India. The oil extracted from oilseeds form an important item of our diet and is used as raw material for manufacturing large number of products like paints, varnishes, hydrogenated oil, soaps, lubricants etc. Moreover, oil cake which is the residue after the oil is extracted from the oilseeds forms an important livestock feed. In Sikkim, 64 per cent deficit is observed in oilseeds. To encourage the farmers of Sikkim for more production of oilseeds, ICAR- Indian Institute of Oilseeds Research (IIOR), Hyderabad organized a Field Day on Sunflower along with Farmer's- Scientist Interaction in collaboration with ICAR-National Organic Farming Research Institute (NOFRI), Tadong on March 17, 2017 at ICAR-NOFRI. A total of 124 farmers, farm women and rural youth from East, South and West district of Sikkim participated in the programme. During the programme the two nos. poly-houses, power tiller, seeds of high yielding variety of maize and organic inputs was distributed among the selected beneficiaries.

Dr. R.K. Avasthe, Joint Director, ICAR-NOFRI welcomed the gathering and highlighted the objectives of programme. He encouraged the farmers to undertake production of oilseed to retain them for becoming self-dependent since treated seeds had been banned in the state. He encouraged the farmers towards establishing the sources of organic inputs within the farm to reduce dependence on outside inputs.

The programme was chaired by Dr. V.N. Sharda, Member, Agricultural Scientists' Recruitment Board (ASRB), ICAR, New Delhi. He briefed the issue of soil health management, water conservation, formation of custom hiring centre and entrepreneurship development for profitable agriculture. Addressing the gathering he stressed on the importance of judicious use of water for agricultural productivity. He encouraged the farmers to use stored water economically for various farm activities which is the most acceptable and profitable particularly to those facing crisis due to water scarcity. He motivated the farmers to develop agri-prenurial ability towards the organic farming to uplift their livelihood.

The Guest of Honour, Dr. A. Vishnuvardhan Reddy, Director, ICAR-IIOR, Hyderabad stated that the oil seed is not surplus in our country and India spends more than Rupees 69,000 crore every year in importing oilseeds from other countries. He detailed the importance of production of oil seeds especially North Eastern Region, West Bengal and Bundelkhand of India. He encouraged the farmers to undertake production of organic oilseed and retain them for next two to three years to become self-reliant in organic seeds and motivated the farmers to develop agri-prenurial ability towards the organic oilseed production to uplift their livelihood as well as self sufficiency in oilseed.

During the technical session an interaction programme was held. Dr. A. Vishnuvardhan Reddy, Director, ICAR-IIOR, Hyderabad, Dr. Abdul Aziz Qureshi, Principal Scientist, ICAR-IIOR, Hyderabad, Dr. A. Ranganatha, Principal Scientist, Mrs. Asha Lama, Director, SAMETI and Mrs. Bina Rai, Joint Director, ATMA-East Sikkim, Dept. of FS & ADD, Govt. of Sikkim, team of scientists of ICAR-NOFRI, Tadong and Subject Matter Specialists from ICAR-KVK, East Sikkim interacted with the progressive farmers for production and possibilities of sunflower and sesame. The farmers queried about the different problems and prospects of both of these oilseeds

crops in Sikkim under organic condition to which they were suggested possible approaches for profitable sunflower seed production in Sikkim.

At the end of the programme Dr. Raghavendra Singh, Senior Scientist and Head, ICAR-KVK, East Sikkim proposed vote of thanks for initiating an inspirational process by ICAR-IIOR, Hyderabad.

Source: ICAR-NOFRI, Tadong, Gangtok



Chief Guest Dr. V.N Sharda, Member, ASRB, New Delhi addressing to the gathering



Chief Guest Dr. V. N. Sharda, Member, ASRB, New Delhi handed over the poly house to Timpyem farmers representative