

Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare inaugurates *Kisan Mela* & Agriculture Innovations Day at CAZRI, Jodhpur

Sh. G.S. Shekhawat, Honourable Union Minister of State (MoS) for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare inaugurated Kisan Mela & Agriculture Innovation Day on September 23, 2017 at ICAR-Central Arid Zone Research Institute, Jodhpur. More than 3000 farmers including 900 women farmers from Western Rajasthan participated enthusiastically in the event. On this occasion, MoS who was the Chief Guest in *Kisan Mela* stressed upon doubling of farmers' income by 2022 and further mentioned that improving agricultural productivity by adopting new and innovative technologies developed by CAZRI and elsewhere would play a catalytic role. He also emphasized to place a high priority for enhancing resilience in arid agriculture in view of prevalent adverse agro-climatic conditions in western Rajasthan. He acknowledged contribution of ICAR in making country self-reliant in food production and of CAZRI in developing sustainable farming systems and drought tolerant crops which have led to providing food security to country's population.



Dr. O.P. Yadav, Director, highlighted the activities undertaken by the Institute and briefed about demonstration of various technologies at Institute farm including new varieties of crops; water harvesting and its recycling for fodder production; solar farming combining crop cultivation and electricity production from a single piece of land; seed production; integrated farming system and dairying for the benefit of farming community. He categorically mentioned that promotion of water-efficient crops and modern methods of irrigation are must to sustain the agricultural growth in the region. He also emphasized that the country has produced 280 m t of food grains and 180 m t of fruits and vegetables during the year 2016-17 and the country is the largest producer of milk in the world.

Dr. Balraj Singh, Vice Chancellor of Agriculture University, Jodhpur and Dr. NV Patil were the Special Guests on this occasion and they appreciated the remarkable efforts of the institute in demonstration, transfer and upscaling of improved technologies in a challenging production environments of arid areas.

Dr. G.L. Keshwa, Vice Chancellor of Agriculture University, Kota; Dr. P.S. Rathore, Vice Chancellor of SKN Agriculture University, Jobner and Dr. A.K. Gehlot, Former Vice Chancellor of RAJUVAS, Bikaner, Dr. Arun Tomar, Director, CSWRI, Avikanagar; Dr. A.K. Rai, Director, DRMR, Bharatpur, Dr. S.K. Singh, Director, ATARI, Jodhpur; Sh. Gaur, Cairn Energy, Barmer and Sh. Thanvi, General Manager, NABARD, were also expressed their views on this occasion.

Seven farmers (Captain Babu Khan, Babu Lal Suthar, Vijay Singh, Ram Chander, Gordhan Singh, Govind Ram and Mala Ram) were recognized CAZRI *Kisan Mitra* in acknowledgement of their significant contribution in adoption and upscaling of agricultural improved technologies. Farmers producing best crops of pearl millet, mungbean, mothbean and clusterbean were also awarded. A '*Scientist-Kisan Sangoshthi*' was organized in which more than 100 farmers' queries were addressed by experts and several farmers also shared their experiences of undertaking modern agriculture to further enhance their income. More than sixty exhibitions showcasing agricultural technologies suitable for drier regions were also arranged.

Earlier, Dr. Bhagwan Singh, Convener of the Farmer's Fair, briefed about the activities of the event and Dr. Dheeraj Singh, Coordinator of KVK, Pali proposed the vote of thanks.