

HIGH DENSITY COTTON PLANTING FOR IMPROVING RAINFED COTTON PRODUCTIVITY IN VIDARBHA

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High density cotton planting system is a new initiative from CICR, Nagpur in collaboration with the State Agriculture Department and KVK's to improve the productivity of rainfed cotton on marginal (shallow to medium deep) soils of Vidarbha (Maharashtra). Three varieties viz., Suraj, PKV 081 and NH 615 amenable to high density planting at 45X10-15 cm spacing were identified for this purpose.

A stake holder meeting with the officials from Agriculture Department of Maharashtra, officials from KVKs of Vidarbha region and other implementing agencies was held in the presence of Shri J.C. Bhutada Jt. Director Agriculture, Nagpur Division on May 15, 2012. Dr. K.R. Kranthi, Director CICR, explained the concept of HDPS and its adoption in cotton growing countries across the globe stressing upon Brazil as a classical example which brought about dramatic yield improvements adopting this technique. Dr. M.V. Venugopalan,

Principal Scientist, CICR, summarized the results conducted in India to develop and evaluate the HDPS technology. It was decided to conduct around 160 demonstrations of one acre each, in 8 districts of Vidarbha. The overall planning of demonstration trials was discussed in presence of Dr. Bhutada, Guardian Director on my 23, 2012. A review meeting was held in the presence of Dr. Ashok Lokhande, Jt. Director Agriculture, Amravati Division on June 25, 2012 where Dr. A.R. Raju, Sr. Scientist (Agronomy), Dr. D. Blaise, Head, Crop Production Division briefly explained the crop production and pest management techniques and responded to the queries raised by the participants. Er. Gautam Majumdar, Sr. Scientist (Ag. Engg) conducted



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Hands on training on the calibration of tractor operated soybean seed drill and its use for dry sowing of cotton seeds from May 29 to June 2, 2012. Dr. P.K. Chakrabarty, Head, Crop Improvement Division and Dr. P. R. Vijayakumari, Principal Scientist made arrangements for the procurement, treatment and distribution of seeds of Suraj, NH615 and PKV 081 for the demonstrations.

Since large scale adoption of this technology would involve substantial alterations in the way cotton is produced today, efforts are also underway at other centres under the All India Coordinated Cotton Improvement Project to identify suitable plant type for their agro-ecological situation. If the new system clicks, it would be boon for the rainfed cotton farmers of Vidarbha, particularly those cultivating cotton on marginal soils.