

DG ICAR inaugurates the Virtual XXIX Annual Workshop of All India Coordinated Research Project on Biological Control of Crop Pests organised by ICAR – NBAIR, Bengaluru

21 - 22 May, 2020, Bengaluru, Karnataka

The ICAR-National Bureau of Agricultural Insect Resources, Bengaluru organized the Virtual XXIX Annual Workshop of All India Coordinated Research Project on Biological Control of Crop Pests.



Dr (Ms) Chandish R. Ballal, Director, ICAR-NBAIR, Bengaluru & Project Coordinator, AICRP on Biological control welcomed the dignitaries and participants. She briefly presented the highlights of the project for the period 2019-20, which included the development, validation and commercialisation of promising bioagents by the project and area covered through the adoption of biocontrol modules. She also presented the monitoring and management of the recent invasive pests and preparedness to tackle the invasive attacks.

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XXIX AICRP Biocontrol Workshop
21-22 May 2020

**All India Coordinated Research Project
Biological Control of Crop Pests
Bangalore**

Year of establishment: 1979: with 13 centres

Covering 16 states with 37 centres
25 SAU based
10 ICAR based

Dr. Chandish R Balla
Project Coordinator

Honourable Secretary (DARE) & DG (ICAR) Dr Trilochan Mohapatra inaugurated the workshop and stated that for effective implementation of programmes, half yearly workshops could be conducted on virtual platform. He appreciated the participation of representatives of private companies and requested the centres to capitalize the companies' interest. He added that the research organisations should go beyond commercialization, by strengthening the partnerships with private companies to test, validate and register the potential biocontrol products. Measures should be explored to advise the companies to reduce pesticide applications. Government funding should be explored for generation of toxicological data to register the biopesticide products. Companies should be allowed to promote the products after adequate field testing and registration. Dr Mohapatra stressed on the need for all centres to share their promising materials with other relevant centres. A study has to be taken up to quantify the area covered and reduction in consumption of pesticides through adoption of biocontrol modules. Active collaboration has to be established with State Govt. and KVKs to conduct more field demonstrations and trainings. Field trials on biological control have to be conducted in North Eastern states, especially in Sikkim. Comprehensive programmes should be initiated to bring about quick and tangible solutions for the management of locusts. Dr Mohapatra highlighted the importance of generating molecular signatures for the promising bioagents and depositing the same in recognised nodal centres. He emphasized that the project should also concentrate on biocontrol of plant diseases and effect of climate change on the population and behaviour of natural enemies in different regions.

Dr. Tilak Raj Sharma, Deputy Director General (Crop science), ICAR appreciated the progress made in the project and emphasized on the need to use local isolates of bioagents and to study the impact of the local isolates through socio economic expert analysis. Market share of the bioagents in comparison with chemical insecticides has to be studied. He also stressed on the need to conduct research on plant – pest - microorganism interactions and stability and host range of bioagents. He also focussed upon the need to develop nano carriers for biopesticides and drones to apply bioagents. He urged the biocontrol workers to study the association of microbes with entomopathogenic nematodes and to develop methods to upscale the production of bioagents. He urged the centres to also focus on plant disease management, especially on alien invasive plant pathogens and to develop integrated pest and disease management strategies. He advised AICRP BC to collaborate with NIBSM, IARI and NCIPM.

Dr. P.K.Chakarbathy, Member ASRB & former ADG (PP&Biosafety) and Dr Rajan, present ADG incharge (PP&Biosafety) shared their knowledge and experiences on registration of microbial biopesticide products. Experts nominated by ICAR: Dr H C Sharma, Dr H B Singh and Dr S K Jalali; former directors of NBAIR Dr R J Rabindra and Dr Abraham Verghese; Director ATARI Dr Chandre Gowda and senior retired biocontrol workers Dr T M Manjunath, Dr Sithanatham, Dr A Krishnamurthy and Dr M S Rao actively participated in the workshop. Around 89 scientists and nine company representatives from different parts of the country participated in the XXIX Virtual AICRP BC Workshop. During the valedictory session, the finalised recommendations were presented. Dr G Sivakumar, PS, NBAIR & in-charge, AICRP BC cell proposed the vote of thanks.

(Source: ICAR- ICAR-National Bureau of Agricultural Insect Resources, Bengaluru)