

SEED UPDATE

Bi-monthly News Letter exclusively for Seed industry

Vol-1 Jan-Feb 07



Hello,
Happy New Year 2007 ! We wish the new year brings all the happiness you have always been aspiring for.
In the onset we would like to inform you that we at Gubba have introduced a Seed Update mailer. The objective of this mailer is to update you and also gives us a medium to be in touch with you. This bi-monthly mailer will update you on the happenings of the Seed Industry and also the happenings at Gubba. As always Preservation is not just one thing we do.

We are also delighted to inform you that we are expanding our Dehumidified cold storage and the operations of which would begin very soon.

Enjoy the mailer and do send us your feed back



Gubba Kiran

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Business Today, December 17th edition



Taking stock of Indian agriculture: The future is hybrid

High Hopes On Hybrid

Business Today, December 17th edition
To increase rice output, India needs more hybrid cultivation.

FROM JUST 10,000 HECTARES IN 1995, hybrid rice is today cultivated over a million hectares (hybrids are produced by crossing two varieties of a crop). The quantity of seeds produced has risen to 20,000 tonnes from just 4,000 tonnes in 2003. And some 30 companies, 90 per cent of them in the private sector, are registering robust growth along with a market that's expected to become as large as 50,000 tonnes (expected requirement for hybrid seeds) by 2010. If that appears big, consider China, which has 15 million hectares under hybrid rice which makes up nearly half of its total area under cultivation.

The China perspective is encouraging from the point of the potential that exists for Indian producers of hybrid rice. One of the main drivers for future growth is sheer demand for rice itself. "Hybrid rice is an option that could come handy at a time when (in keeping with the population growth trends) India will have to increase rice production by at least 2 million tonnes (MT) per year if it has to get to 106 MT by 2011-12 (current production is 88 MT over 42 million hectares)," says B.C. Viraktamath, Project Director at the Directorate of Rice Research, located in Hyderabad. That's where the China example comes handy, as the hybrid route played a big role in helping that country achieve food security. But then, China began in 1964; India began hybrid rice cultivation only in end-1989.

Yet, India is only the second country in the world to develop and commercialise hybrid rice (after China). Since then, a clutch of companies, including Bayer Crop Science group company Proagro Seed, Maharashtra Hybrid Seed Co (Mahyco), DuPont subsidiary Pioneer Hi-Bred, United Phosphorus (through Advanta India), DCM Shriram's Shriram Bioseed Genetics India, and JK Agri-Genetics, has been doing its bit to increase the share of hybrid cultivation in overall rice output. But it is all not quite rosy. One of the problems facing the spread of hybrid rice market is its lower acceptability in some regions of south India, due to issues like stickiness and aroma. (To deal with this, Proagro, for instance, is working on new varieties to suit local taste. Its Latest version '6129 hybrid' is believed to be closest to the popular 'Sona Masuri'.) Then, the yield advantage in some hybrids is marginal and believed to be inconsistent across regions. The high cost of seeds (and fresh purchases each season) is yet another dampener. But, as M. Ilyas Ahmed, Principal Scientist at the Directorate of Rice Research, points out, China has delivered on the hybrid rice front and, if India has to deliver on the targets set for rice output, hybrid rice is an option that cannot be ignored.

E. KUMAR SHARMA

Cumin seed may turn hot

TAPASH TALUKDAR

TIMES NEWS NETWORK [FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2006 03:58:20 AM]

Cumin seed, prices are expected to rise by next March in the backdrop of low sowing area and heavy rainfall this year. The total sowing area has been reduced by 40% against last year and would yield less production this year.

Market sources said relatively large number of farmers has shifted their focus towards cotton production. The fresh arrival for this year's sowing will reach the market in mid-January 2007, till end of April. Vimal Patel of Patel Ambalal Lalludas Co says, "The prices may touch Rs 10,000 per quintal from the current Rs 7,500-Rs 8,000." During the full season, the fresh arrival may go up to 15,000 bags per day of 75 kg each at Unjha.

Currently, 1,000-1,200 bags, old stocks with the farmers and stockiest, are arriving in the market. Mr Patel said that cumin seeds are been considered as the critical crop and require measured volume of rainfall. Heavy rainfall in the parts of north Gujarat such as Banaskatha, Kutch and parts of Saurashtra, where cumin jeera is produced, raised worries in the eyes of farmers, which resulted into low sowing.

The total jeera production for the next year is expected to go down to 14 lakh bags than last year's 18 lakh bags. Out of the total production, 75% goes to domestic production and rest fulfils the export demand.

Fennel seed: The domestic fennel seed market is expecting a bullish market in the coming season. Fennel seed producers believe that the overall production would get double than last year as the total sowing in Gujarat has taken place in huge. The fresh fennel seed will arrive in end of January and the season continues till April.

Pankaj Patel of Tribhuvandas R M & Sons explains, "The total production registered nearly 7.5 lakh bags of 75 kg each in the last year, which is earmarked to cross over 14 lakh bags this year. Enthused with high prices last year, farmers have shown interest in this crop.

"Currently, the prices fluctuate between Rs 60 to Rs 80 per kg which, the traders believe, would come down by Rs 8 to Rs 10 during season. Gujarat and Rajasthan together contributes nearly 60% of total production in India.

Sesame seed: Low demand in the domestic as well as in the European market has restrained the overall production of Sesame seed. The overall production in sesame seed will see a downfall as heavy monsoon spoiled in many areas of Gujarat and Rajasthan, where floods havoc the crops.

A local manufacturer said, "Last year, the total production registered at 1.20 lakh mt which may fall by 25,000 to 30,000 mt this season." Market sources also expressed that Gujarat may have to purchase from MP, UP where the crop has grown relatively well. As soon as the fresh arrivals come in the market, somewhere in the mid-February, the prices may become stagnant during this time.

Micro level services 'At Gubba-we care'

- Pest infested stock which comes to Gubba is properly taken care of. It is shifted to the 4000 sft dedicated are for fumigation. And then professionally fumigated (Jardine).
- Intermittent spraying on your stock to prevent pest infestation.
- Moisture meter for your perusal
- Detailed thought goes into what you need. Stitching machine, samplers, sample bags, sutli, sample trays etc are all provided for your personnel who come to Gubba.

We, at Gubba are on our toes to serve you. Please do mail us on support@gubbagroup.com with your recommendations and concerns to serve you better.

JK GroupCo develops 19BT cotton varieties

JK Agri Genetics has developed 15 more seed varieties in addition to the four already been launched in the market. Since last two years, JK Agri Genetics has been working on genetically modified (GM) seeds in major crops like cotton, rice and mustard besides focusing on hybrids like jowar, bajra and cotton.

The company released four BT cotton varieties in different regions after approved for commercialisation from the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee in May. Two BT cotton varieties - one in Punjab and Haryana and the other in ~1aharashtra and Gujarat - have also been launched. Fifteen more BT conan \-varieties developed by JK Agri Genetics are under experimentation and trials.



Monsanto eyes Fortified foods to push India sales

PRABHA JAGANNATHAN
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

[WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 06, 2006 12:25:03 AM]
NEW DELHI

While the corn seed is expected to be ready for commercial use by 2010, its cotton counterpart could take a little more time. Other key second-generation crops for which Monsanto may have plans for India include those pegged on some health benefits in fortified foods, edible oils and plant-made pharmaceuticals.

As part of its ongoing research, the company has begun exploring a biotechnology which will ring in Omega-3 fortified foods. Meanwhile, the company has received regulatory approval to import first generation Roundup Ready cotton seeds, as a follow up to Bollgard.

Simultaneously, Monsanto is working on developing Yieldgard corn, for which the regulatory process is under way. Monsanto scientific affairs director (Louisiana) Harvey Glick said grafting Omega-3 gene in vegetable seeds (it is now currently found mostly in fish and fish oil) would help increase the content of Omega-3 up to 20% in the seeds. India, with a huge consumption of vegetable edible oil, could be an ideal target region.

Some surveys have established that approximately 30% of parents use Omega-3 supplements as a therapy for autistic children. Omega-3 fatty acids are found in abundance in oily fish and are believed to have a significant protective effect against cardiovascular disease.

Quotes on Gubba

'Good facility, impressed in my first visit.
Good service. Motto noticed'

CH.RAMESH, G.M., Supply chain,
Syngenta India Ltd., Hyd.

Clean and well maintained.
Systematic & Professional approach.

M.VENKATA SUBRAMANIAN,
QA Lead, Monsanto

'Very well maintained with a choice
for customer to have his own choice of storage.'

VEERESH KADALI, DGM(ops.),
J.K.Seeds.

Make changes In seed Bill, urge farmers

ASHOK B SHARMA

Posted online: Monday, December 04, 2006 at 0257 hours IST

NEW DELHI, DEC 3: Farmers have urged the government to follow the Parliamentary panel's suggestions and effect necessary changes in the Seeds Bill, 2004 for ensuring farmer rights.

The government tabled the controversial Seeds Bill in the Rajya Sabha in December 2004, later it was referred to the parliamentary standing committee on agriculture for review. The standing panel took about two years to review the Bill and recently submitted its report.

Krishan Bir Chaudhary, head of the India's largest farmers' organisation Bharat Krishak Samaj who deposed before the House panel is, however, apprehensive. He feels the government may bypass the panel's recommendations due to pressure from the industry. "It would be regrettable if the government ignores relevant suggestions made by the peoples' representatives and opts to favour the seed industry. If the government does so then we will launch a nationwide agitation to restore our rights," he said.

The House panel headed by Ram Gopal Yadav strongly recommended that the farmer's right to exchange unbranded seeds among themselves be acknowledged. It said, "the Plant Varieties Protection & Farmers' Rights (PVP&FR) Act 2001 should be made fully operative first," before implementing the proposed Bill. The new law should not undermine the provisions of PVP&FR Act.

In this context, Chaudhary said: "On behalf of the farmers I raised the issue of deleting the latter portion of Clause 43 (1) of the Bill so as to exempt farmers from any norms for saving and exchanging unbranded seeds. The panel agreed to my suggestion that the latter portion of the clause is restrictive and should be deleted."



LEARNINGS

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

n.

The ratio of the amount of water vapor in the air at a specific temperature to the maximum amount that the air could hold at that temperature, expressed as a percentage.

DEW POINT

n.

the temperature at which air must be cooled at constant pressure in order for it to become saturated with respect to a plane surface of water"



AN ISO 9001 : 2000 CERTIFIED COMPANY

He further said the PVP&FR Act should be implemented immediately and added, "In my personal view farmers should have the right to save and exchange whatever seeds they cultivate." Among others who deposed before the House panel were Vandana Shiva of Navdanya, Suman Sahai of Gene Campaign, S Ramachandran Pillai and K Varadharajan of CPI(M)' farmer's wing, Kolli Nageswara Rao and Chittar Singh of CPT's farmers' wing, Manavendra Kachole, Nikhade and Govind Joshi of the Pune-based Shetkari Sangatana and representatives of the seed industry.

Chaudhary said the House panel also said the Bill should address the issue of promoting sale of newly developed seeds, and at the same time, ensure that farmers' interests and sustainability of agriculture are not jeopardised. The law should strengthen the integrated growth of farmers and seed systems so that every farmer has access to quality planting materials at reasonable prices.

He said that his behest the panel also considered the issue of

genetically modified (GM) seeds and suggested that the new law should not undermine the existing procedure for assessment and release of GM seeds. It criticised the proposed provisional registration of GM seeds and also self-certification of seeds by seed companies as this would facilitate backdoor entry of unapproved GM seeds.

On pricing of seeds, the panel report said that the proposed Central Seed Committee should be given adequate powers to regulate seed prices. It cited "unfair trade practices" committed by the seed multinational Monsanto in charging exorbitant prices for Bt cotton seeds.

The panel suggested inclusion of a clause in the Bill for compensating farmers for losses due to bad quality seeds on the line of that in the PVP&FR Act and a designated arbitration tribunal or compensation committee be constituted for the purpose. It called for a Seed Mark to denote quality of seeds and labeling norms in harmony with the Weights & Measures Act and Packaging Act Seed inspectors should not search farmers.

SEED

I am a seed, Mother of all Plants
 Small, I may be
 I am the savior of all living things!
 I am a seed, Mother of all plant
 Inactive I remain, till moisture visit me
 I am a seed, the purer I am
 The better for survival of humanity.
 I am a seed,
 Guard me well, I warn you forever
 I remain seed

-UNKNOWN

Vikram Seeds Ties up with Yaaganti for Bt cotton

Yaaganti Seeds Pvt Lid has tied up with the Gujarat-based Vikram Seeds Ltd to market the latter's Bt cotton variety in Andhra Pradesh and Kamataka from the 2007 season. Mr. Babubhai Patel, MD, Vikram Seeds said the company will provide Vikram 5 Bt variety to Yaaganti Seeds, which in turn will market it at around Rs 750 per packet. Vikram Seeds has introduced Monsanto's Bt technology in its cotton hybrids - Vikram 5 and Vikram 9. Both hybrids have got approval from the inter-ministerial Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) for sale in 2005.



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