

**ICAR-AICRP on Pearl millet, Mandore organized a meeting on "Policies and Strategic Research Priorities for the Enhancement of Productivity of Pearl Millet in A1 Zone" on June 18, 2016.**



A meeting on "Policies and Strategic Research Priorities for the Enhancement of Production and Productivity of Pearl Millet in A1 Zone" was organized by the ICAR-AICRP on Pearl Millet, Mandore, Jodhpur under the chairmanship of Dr. J.S. Sandhu, DDG (Crop Science), ICAR in collaboration with CAZRI at Jodhpur on June 18, 2016. A1 zone of pearl millet

includes the rainfed regions of Rajasthan, Haryana and Gujarat where production and productivity of pearl millet is very low even in some of the areas of Rajasthan it is less than 100 kg/ha. Dr. K.N. Rai, former Principal Scientist of ICRISAT was the Guest of Honour of the meeting. About 90 senior pearl millet researchers and officer including the Vice Chancellor of Agriculture University, Jodhpur, Director Research of CCSHAU, Hisar, SKRAU., Bikaner, JAU, Junagadh and AU, Jodhpur, Directors of CAZRI, IIMR and ATARI Zone VI, senior officers of Agriculture and State Seed Corporations of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Haryana, senior officers of N.S.C. and Directorate of Millets, Jaipur, Head of the Departments of CAZRI and its Regional Stations, KVKs., senior scientists from ICRISAT, scientists from pearl millet A1 zone of ICAR Research Institutes and Agricultural Universities of Rajasthan, Haryana and Gujarat, non-government agencies and progressive farmers participated in the meeting. Dr. Om Vir Singh, Project Co-ordinator (acting), AICRP on Pearl Millet gave introductory presentation of the meeting. He apprised the Chairman and participants that there is an urgent need to re-organize of pearl millet A1 zone, prioritizing and strengthening of basic and strategic research, increasing and strengthening of testing centers for hybrid and open pollinated varieties for initial and advance trials and development and transfer of technologies to the farmers for enhancement of productivity of pearl millet in A1 zone. Director, CAZRI, Dr. O.P. Yadav, presented the status of pearl millet in A1 zone. Dr. Balraj Singh, the Vice Chancellor of the AU, Jodhpur told the house that Agriculture University Jodhpur produced the seed of pearl millet hybrid MPMH 17 at the

University Farm successfully during summer 2016 and planned to produce seed of this hybrid at 100 hectare of land area in the summer, 2017.



The Chairman Dr. J.S. Sandhu conducted the proceedings of the meeting. He listened to the ideas/views of everyone who participated in the meeting, including 20 odd farmers from Rajasthan, Haryana and Gujarat, for the enhancement of the productivity of pearl millet in A1 zone of pear millet. Based on the lengthy discussion he

finally gave his remarks and guided that (i) on the basis of annual rainfall, soil texture and fertility status, zone A1 of the pearl millet will be re-organized, (ii) the 12-15 more testing centers to be opened in pearl millet A1 zone for testing initial and advance pearl millet trials, (iii) a set of germplasm of pearl millet to be evaluated in A1 zone to identify the breeding materials having adaptation to drought prone environments. A germplasm field day also will be organized to allow the A1 zone scientists to select the materials of their choice. These materials will be utilized in breeding programs to generate new wave of breeding lines, (iv) shuttle breeding approach should be strengthened, (v) thrust of research programme should be on the development of hybrids in pearl millet, however, open pollinated varieties development may be considered for very dry areas such as those typical of most of the Barmer and Jaisalmer districts of Rajasthan, (vi) pearl millet hybrids of this zone should be of 60-70 days maturity duration however, hybrids up to 75 days of maturity duration will be acceptable, (vii) The trials shall be evaluated under rain fed conditions only there should not be even life shaving irrigation for trials, (viii) emphasis should be given on the development of dual purpose hybrids for this zone, quality traits of the fodder should be monitored from third year of the evaluation of the trials and infrastructure for fodder quality analysis should be developed, (ix) efficient and cost effective crop management technologies should be identified/developed and KVKs in the region will demonstrate such identified/ developed technologies at farmers fields, (x) Rajasthan State Seed Corporation should establish a special Hybrid Seeds Cell to focus on hybrid related issues, (xi) Rajasthan State Seeds Corporation should produce sufficient quantity of seeds of hybrids developed by public institutes for A1 zone to meet the

requirement of the seeds of the farmers. Also RSSC should open seed windows in A1 zone to enable farmers to procure seed easily, (xii) public – private seed production mechanism should be strengthen. Rajasthan Agriculture University, Bikaner should take strong measures to strengthen seed production under PPP mode, (xiii) also possibilities may be explored to identify/release hybrids based on two years of AICPMIP cultivar testing network system to reduce the time period to deliver promising cultivar at farmers field. A daylong meeting ended with the vote of thanks proposed by Dr. Om Vir Singh, Project Co-ordinator (acting), AICRP on Pearl Millet, Mandore, Jodhpur.