

Cumin farmers of Rajasthan participate in DBT's Farmers-Scientists Connect Meet

Ajmer, Rajasthan (29 Oct 2021). As part of Farmers-Scientists Connect Meet by Department of Biotechnology (DBT) Govt of India, The National Research Centre on Seed Spices, Ajmer (ICAR-NRCSSS) & South Asia Biotechnology Centre, Jodhpur (SABC) in collaboration with the Spices Board of India and Department of Agriculture Rajasthan organized Cumin Production and Value Chain System on 28th October, 2021 at Dr. R.S. Paroda Auditorium, NRCSS, Ajmer

Cumin farmers including women farmers from 5 districts participated in the farmers-scientists connect meet inaugurated by Hon'ble Minister Jitendra Singh ji; DBT Secretary Dr Renu Swaroop, DSIR Secretary Dr Shekhar Mande; Chairman DBT PSMC Dr HS Gupta and IARI Director Dr AK Singh, followed by an intensive engagement on Cumin Production and Value Chain System program chaired by Dr. S.N. Saxena, Director, ICAR-NRCSS, Ajmer, Dr Bhagirath Choudhary, DBT-SABC Biotech Kisan Hub, South Asia Biotechnology Centre, Jodhpur; Dr. Sumer Singh Meena, Dr. Shiv Lal and Dr. Murlidhar Meena of ICAR-NRCSS and Dr Sandip Agale of South Asia Biotechnology Centre (SABC).

DBT Biotech Kisan hub for Western Dry region felicitated four farmers for their immense contribution in adoption and spread of IPM based package of practices of cumin in Rajasthan. Dr SN Saxena and Bhagirath Choudhry felicitated farmer Ramesh ji from Katyasani; Ms Kavita Shivkiran from Balaya; Sh Hari Ram ji from Budi Arjunapura and Sh Pyarelal Ji Bairwa from Rajsamand. Farmers shared ideas with dignitaries and shared their inputs and feedback about various activities on seed spices and Isabgol carried out by DBT Biotech Kisan Hub jodhpur in collaboration with ICAR-NRCSS.

While interacting with farmers, Dr Saxena empathized on value chain development of seed spices particularly cumin and invited farmers to take full advantage of technologies developed by NRCSS. He referred to "jeera" as "hira", the most important crop of seed spices. He also invited farmers to come forward and adopt scientific methods of cultivation, production, processing and value addition.

Bhagirath Choudhary of DBT Biotech Kisan hub briefed farmers about DBT-SABC biotech kisan hub activities, and appreciated engagement of farmers in demonstration of GAP, use of IPM based package of practices, timely use of biological and botanicals popularize residue free cumin production in Western Rajasthan. He also talked to farmers about major challenges in food safety, MRLs and residue requirement and shared success stories of farmers complying with norms to increase export of cumin from India.

Dr Shiv Lal of NRCSS highlighted the research activities and production technologies of various seed spices developed by NRCSS. He also explained the importance of adopting advanced farming practices in quality production of seed spices. Dr Sumer Singh Meena and Dr Murlidhar Meena coordinated the program, interacted with participating farmers, facilitated farmers to purchase cumin seeds and biologicals, shared economic benefits of growing quality spices.

Cumin farmers also visited seed spices museum and bought high quality GC-5 cumin seeds from NRCSS seed processing centre and procured biologicals such as *Trichoderma viride* from biocontrol unit of NRCSS



Photo: Glimpses of the farmers-scientists connect meet organised on 28.10.21 at ICAR-NRCSS