

Field Day cum demonstration on Specialty flower cultivation – a potential commercial venture in the Island

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Port Blair, Aug 02: The climatic condition of the Island is highly conducive to grow speciality flowers especially the heliconias, Calatheas, Etlingera and Alpinias. These specialty flowers are high value cut flowers crops with versatile utilities like bouquets, flower arrangements and hall decorations. ICAR-CIARI maintains a large germplasm collection of specialty flowers and their cultivation and value addition is popularized in the Island in collaboration with NABARD, Port Blair. As part of the NABARD funded project, planting material of 20 species of heliconias viz., H.psittacorum cv. Tropics, H.latispatha Cv. Scarlet Orange Kairo, H.psittacorum Cv. Guyana, H.latispatha Cv. Yellow, H.psittacorum Cv. Petra Orange, H. rostrate, H.latispatha Cv. Distans, H.chartacea Scarlet, H.bihai Cv. Arawak Red, H.latispatha Cv. Big Yellow, H.bihai Cv. New Double colour, H.chartacea Pink, H.psittacorum Cv. Sassy, Heliconia angustifolia Cv Red Christmas, Heliconia andromeda, Heliconia jacquini, H.psittacorum Cv. Parrot Beak, H.psittacorum Cv. Kenya Red, H.wagenaria Cv.Turbo and H.psittacorum Cv. Lady Di and four species of specialty flowers were planted in the field of Mr. Jagdish Halder at Namunagar village of South Andaman in an area of 1200 m² as demonstration and for popularization of the same for commercial cultivation. The field day cum demonstration was attended by 20 farmers and SHG members along with the Pradhan of the village, in which the cultivation aspects and the value addition was briefed by the scientists of ICAR-CIARI, Dr. V. Baskaran, Principal Scientist and Dr. K. Abirami, Principal Scientist. The General Manager NABARD and team explained the different schemes available to extend the cultivation of specialty flowers by the SHG members on a cluster basis and the marketing opportunities as it is highly suitable for commercial exploitation as an income earning venture. Pradhan, Y. Venkat, Namunagar expressed his interest to expand the cultivation in his village.

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