

Field Day-cum-demo on "Speciality flower cultivation – a potential commercial venture in the Islands"



PORT BLAIR, AUG 2/--/The climatic condition of the Island is highly conducive to growing speciality flowers especially the heliconias, Calatheas, Etilingera and Alpinias. These speciality 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 speciality 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* Sexy Scarlet, *H. bihai* Cv. Arawak Red, *H. latispatha* Cv. Big Yellow, *H. bihai* Cv. New Double colour, *H. chartacea* Sexy Pink, *H. psittacorum* Cv. Sassy, *Heliconia angustifolia* Cv. Red Christmas, *Heliconia andromeda*, *Heliconia jacquinii*,

H. psittacorum Cv. Parrot Beak, *H. psittacorum* Cv. Kenya Red, *H. wagenaria* Cv. Turbo and *H. psittacorum* Cv. Lady Di and four species of speciality 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 speciality 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.