

THE ECHO OF INDIA

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PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM KOLKATA, SILIGURI, GANGTOK, GUWAHATI and PORT BLAIR

NO 229

PAGES 8

PORT BLAIR • TUESDAY • DECEMBER 19, 2023

ICAR-CIARI imparts training on 'Nursery Techniques' to staff of Agriculture dept

PORT BLAIR, DEC 18/--/ Spices are the major commercial crops of the islands; however, their cultivation in the islands faces several challenges. One of these



challenges is availability of quality planting material. A number of superior varieties of various spices have been developed/ identified at ICAR-CIARI through years of research. Also, nursery techniques for these crops have also been standardized at the Institute. In order to disseminate these techniques and educate the grassroots workers working at various farms of the Department of Agriculture, two consecutive capacity building programmes entitled "Hands-on training on nursery techniques of Horticultural Crops (Spices)" of three days each were organized by ICAR-CIARI in collaboration with CSS-MIDH(NHM) Project on Spices and All India Coordinated Research Project on Palms project during December 11-16, 2023. The programme was inaugurated by Dr. E.B. Chakurkar, Director, ICAR-CIARI, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest in the presence of Dr. P.K. Singh, Head, Division of Horticulture and Crop Improvement and Coordinator of the programmes. The Chief Guest urged the participants to utilize the knowledge gained in the training programmes for achieving self-sufficiency in spices planting material production in the islands. Three days long technical sessions were handled by Dr. Ajit Arun Waman, Scientist (SS) and Course Director of the programmes and Dr. Pooja Bohra, Course Coordinator. Participants represented all the districts of the islands wherein first batch of participants included 11 officials from South Andaman

and Little Andaman Islands, while second batch was constituted by 12 participants from Baratang, Middle Andaman, North Andaman and Car Nicobar Islands.

Technical session started with an orientation to propagation techniques and basic requirements to establish and run a nursery unit. Participants underwent hands on training on multiplication of spices viz. black pepper, nutmeg, cinnamon, tejpat, long pepper, lemongrass etc. using suitable vegetative propagation techniques including division, stem cutting (herbaceous, softwood, semi-hardwood and hardwood), layering (air layering and serpentine layering) and grafting (approach grafting and softwood grafting). Practical sessions on growth regulator preparation for cutting/layering, preparation of potting mixtures, preparation and application of nutrient solutions and plant protection chemicals such as Bordeaux mixture, Bordeaux paste and biopesticides were also organized during the programme. An exclusive session was dedicated for demonstration of Dweep Goottee- 365 technique (a novel propagation technique developed by ICAR-CIARI) to the participants. Shri. Vikram Singh, Director (Agriculture) was the Chief Guest during the valedictory programme of the first batch on 13/12/2023. He acknowledged the sincere efforts made by the Institute in organizing the need based programme and expressed his gratitude towards the organization. He further opined that such inter-organizational collaborations would pave way for the better prospects of island agriculture and island farmers. Valedictory programme for the second batch was organized on 16/12/2023, which was chaired by Dr. E.B. Chakurkar, Director, ICAR-CIARI. Participants of both the batches expressed that the programme was aptly designed and empowered them with required skills in taking up their assignments with higher efficiency.