

CIARI Conducts Three Days Training Programme on Nursery Techniques

Denis Giles – 14 September 2024



Port Blair, Sept. 13: Spices are the cash crops, cultivation of which could not only bring prosperity to the island farmers but would also complement the tourism industry here. Availability of quality planting material is the pre-requisite for establishing commercial scale plantations, but the nursery activities require skilled manpower. In order to develop skills among the island stakeholders, a three days training programme on 'Scientific Nursery Techniques in Tropical Spices' was conducted during September 9 to 11, 2024 at ICAR-CIARI, Port Blair under the CSS-MIDH (NHM) Project on Spices and Human Resources Development Cell of ICAR-CIARI.

During the inaugural programme, Dr. E.B. Chakurkar, Director, ICAR-CIARI interacted with the participants and appealed them to use the opportunity to start nursery as an enterprise. He emphasized upon production of quality planting material locally to reduce the dependence on mainland supplies. During the technical session, Dr. Ajit Arun Waman, Senior Scientist and Course Director, gave a detailed presentation on theoretical background about importance, constraints encountered in the production of various spices and their nursery techniques. During practical session, participants were taken to various experimental blocks to demonstrate the selection of mother plants, their care and maintenance. Use of improved varieties, drip irrigation, weed mat and nutrient management in mother block was demonstrated to them. Further, trainees also learnt about maintenance operations in protected structures including regulation of humidity and temperature, irrigation control in the polyhouses and shade net houses.

Hands on practical sessions were held at the Horticultural Plants Propagation Unit of the institute, wherein trainees tried their hands on various plant propagation techniques including propagation by division, stem cuttings, serpentine layering, air layering, softwood grafting and approach grafting. The process of plant protection in nursery structures including organic pesticides and traps were practical learnt by them. Dr. Pooja Bohra, Course Director, convened the inaugural and valedictory sessions of the programme, while Dr. R. Kiruba Sankar, Nodal Officer, HRD Cell guided the trainees during the valedictory session of the programme. The event was attended by 30 participants including members of self-help groups, farmers, aspiring youth, and technical and supporting staff of ICAR-CIARI. At the end of the programme, planting material of black pepper, cinnamon, woody pepper, long pepper and lemongrass was provided to the trainees.