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3-days training prog under CSS-MIDH project

PORT BLAIR, SEPT 2/-/ Spices are the low volume high value horticultural crops having immense potential for commercial exploitation. However, maximizing the



returns from their cultivation requires knowledge of scientific cultivation and postharvest management techniques. To create awareness about these techniques through demonstration and hands on experience, a three days training programme on 'Scientific Cultivation and Postharvest Handling of Spices under Island Conditions for Better Profits' was organized by ICAR-CIARI, Port Blair under CSS-MIDH (NHM) project on Spices from August 29 to 31, 2022. During the inaugural programme, Dr. E.B. Chakurkar, Director, ICAR-CIARI and Chief Guest of the programme interacted with the participants and expressed his happiness over the diversity of participants who had gathered for a common cause of enriching their knowledge about spices, despite variations in their profession, age group, gender etc. He encouraged the participants to take up diverse enterprises related to spices for generating livelihood opportunities in the islands.

During the technical sessions, Dr. Ajit Arun Waman, Coordinator of the programme gave a presentation about the basics of spices cultivation and overview of its present status and future opportunities in the islands. It was followed by an interactive session with the participants on their expectations from the programme. Hands on training sessions on appropriate postharvest handling techniques for cinnamon, black pepper, lemon grass, long pepper and tejpat were conducted. Dr. Pooja Bohra, Co-coordinator of the programme explained about the value addition opportunities for creating novel products from the spices. Value added products developed by the Institute

were also showcased. Practical sessions on propagation of spices through division, cutting, layering and grafting were carried out for the participants. An exposure visit was also paid to the Horticulture Plants Propagation Unit of the institute to show various protected structures, irrigation setups and diversity of important horticultural plants of the islands.

Participants were taken to the experimental blocks of various herbal, rhizomatous and perennial spices and were explained about the layout, planting and after care of various spice crops. For nutrient management in spice gardens, vermicomposting and panchgavya preparations were also demonstrated by Dr.



T. Subramani, Senior Scientist of the Institute. Dr. Sirisha Adamala, Scientist, practically explained the concepts of soil and water conservation measures which could be adopted in undulated cultivable land.

During the valedictory session, Director, ICAR-CIARI interacted with the participants about their experience during the training programme. Participants expressed happiness over the programme contents and overall smooth conduct of the event. To promote the cultivation of spices, planting material of cinnamon, tejpat, long pepper, woody pepper and lemon grass was distributed to the participants. Participants were selected based on the response received for open invitation to the stakeholders and twenty-five participants were trained under this programme.