

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE EXPERT GROUP ON PULSES HELD UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF DR. Y.K. ALAGH AT KRISHI BHAWAN, NEW DELHI ON 7<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2010**

1. First meeting of the Expert Group on Pulses constituted for suggesting the measures to be taken in the medium term to eliminate or to at least reduce the demand supply mismatch of pulses was held under the Chairmanship of Dr. .Y.K. Alagh at Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi on 7.4.2010.
2. Following members of the group participated in the meeting:-
  - i. Shri R. Gopalkrishnan- Vice Chairman, Tata Chemicals
  - ii. Dr. S. Mahendra Dev- Chairman, CACP
  - iii. Dr. Ashok Gulati- Director, IFPRI
  - iv. Dr. J.S. Sandhu, ADG (Seeds)- ICAR
  - v. Dr. G.B. Singh, Agriculture Commissioner, Min of Agri
  - vi. Dr. K.B. Saxena- ICRISAT
  - vii. Dr. Prabhat Kumar, ICRISAT
  - viii. Dr. B.B. Singh for Director, IIPR, Kanpur
  - ix. Dr. R.B. Deshmukh, VC, MPKV, Rahuri
  - x. Shri Mukesh Khullar, JS( Crops) Min of Agri
3. Chairman in his opening remarks exhorted the Group to comprehensively view the constraints faced by the pulses farmers and come out with the strategy to not only wipe out the deficits in pulses production but sustainably produce enough for net export as well, in a trading regime. Holistic understanding he said could lead to construction of solution paradigms for different pulse production sub economies like rainfed or irrigated, mixed crops and so on. An attempt could be made to reinforce the strategies for the Kharif campaign of the MOA, which must be already underway and more ambitious programmes developed for Rabi 10/11. In the medium term of three to five years we could develop full scale technology development programmes and delivery mechanisms in a public private mode. The meeting must aim at setting up working groups to find solutions to the problems identified.
4. Dr. Gurbachan Singh, Agriculture Commissioner, Government of India gave a background on pulses and their crop promotion programmes by the Government of India. He informed that that 85% of total area under pulses was rainfed and that farmers considered pulses as secondary crops. He said that about 75% area under pulses was in central and southern parts of the country although there was a considerable scope for raising pulses especially as summer crop in the

rice-wheat farming systems of northern India. He stated that potential existed for about 4 million ha area of rice fallows in the Indo-Gangetic plains that could be brought under rabi pulses like chickpea and lentils. Lastly he said that pulses were being given additional focus from 2010-11 for more intensive promotion of technologies to the farmers through strengthening of National Food Security Mission (NFSM), launching Accelerated pulses production programme and supporting dry land agriculture in 60,000 pulses and oilseeds villages in the rainfed areas. He wanted the MSP to be effective

5. Dr. Prabhat Kumar from ICRISAT shared experience of implementation of two on-going pilot projects on pulses launched in Madhya Pradesh and Chattisgarh with the financial assistance of the National Food Security Mission (NFSM). One project was being implemented on improved production and protection technologies on growing chickpea in rainfed rice fallows and the other project was on demonstrating potential of pigeonpea hybrids developed by ICRISAT. He said that both the projects were shaping well, however more work was required to produce better varieties of hybrid pigeonpea. Their programmes were facing difficulties which could be solved and spread could be faster with some effort.
6. Dr. J.S. Sandhu, ADG (Seeds), ICAR mentioned the incidence of pests and diseases in pulses being the major hurdle that was required to be addressed. He, therefore, suggested, on lines of Bt. Cotton, development of transgenic pulses on priority. Seed supply chain planning was essential. A seed and storage plan was necessary. On this Chairman, felt that ICAR should come out with a specific research plan with medium and long term perspective for improvement of yield potential of different pulses crops including the development of such transgenic pulses. Like in the hybrid paddy programme public private partnerships could be considered.
7. Dr. B.B. Singh, Project Coordinator (MULLaRP) at IIPR (ICAR), Kanpur reported that a large number of varieties of pulses were developed which could make a dent in pulses production. However the real problem was that those developed varieties could not be multiplied by the seed producers to meet the demand. He suggested that proper storage facilities should be developed for the seeds produced until their utilization in the next season.
8. Dr. Mahendra Dev, Chairman, CACP, opined that merely increasing the minimum support price for pulses would not be enough unless arrangements were made for ensuring procurement of the same. Chairman, suggested that private sector organizations could also be

involved for marketing support to the farmers. He noted that in grain procurement private agents were used.

9. Shri R. Gopalakrishnan, Vice-chairman, TATA Chemicals, Mumbai suggested that 10(ten) groups should be constituted from among the experts to take up problems like pre-harvest problems(seed), post harvest problems (processing), pest management, water management, including drips, package of practices, covering of new area (hilly area and tea estates) and communication/technology dissemination. He opined that it was important to get active involvement of big farmers as well to boost the overall production and productivity of pulses in the country.
10. Vice-Chancellor, Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidhyapeeth, Rahuri Dr. R.B. Deshmukh reported that there remained an ample scope for increased productivity of pulses particularly for pigeonpea and chickpea with 1-2 irrigations. Drip or micro-irrigations should therefore, be introduced in case of pulses to provide such protective and light irrigation without any wastage of water.
11. Dr. Ashok Gulati, Director, IFPRI, New Delhi expressed his concern on the risky nature of pulse crop. He opined that adequate insurance coverage should be ensured for pulses with innovative products.
12. Dr. Y.K. Alagh, Chairman of the Group in his concluding remarks formed seven sub groups which would work independently to suggest suitable measures for the specific issue assigned to them. The sub-groups would formulate strategies/approach on those issues to aid the policy prescription to the Government.
13. The seven suggested sub-groups for specific jobs/responsibilities are as follows:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Responsibilities/job assigned</b>	<b>Sub-group Leader</b>
<b>Group-I</b>	Identification of additional area having potential for pulses crops	CEO-NRAA, New Delhi
<b>Group-II</b>	Seed replacement/multiplication strategy/programs	Dr. R.B. Deshmukh, VC, MPKV, Rahuri, ; Dr. Saxena, ICRISAT
<b>Group-III</b>	For identification of best agronomic practices	Dr. Gurbachan Singh, Agri. Commissioner, GOI.
<b>Group-IV</b>	Review of Prices, tariff and trade policy	Dr. S. Mahendradev, Chairman, CACP and Dr. Ashok Gulati
<b>Group-V</b>	Communication strategy to reach out to more farmers;	DDG (Extn.) ICAR/IIPR

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<b>Group-VI</b>	Researchable issues-with medium term and long term planning	Dr. J.S. Sandhu, ADG(Seeds),ICAR
<b>Group-VII</b>	Dialogues/consultations with chambers of commerce-Business model	Dr. R. Gopalakrishnan, Vice Chairman, Tata Chemicals, Mumbai

**Note: The Group leaders may opt for more members in their groups from any other organizations.**

14. The Chairman suggested that each group should give priority to recommendations for kharif '10 and rabi '10/11. Chairman clarified that the more comprehensive recommendations should show results in 3 years. However, for research plan the time frame could be 5-7 years. Chairman offered to engage along with the Agriculture Commissioner, JS(Crops), Shri R. Gopalakrishnan and Dr. Ashok Gulati of IFPRI, New Delhi with FICCI, ASSOCHAM, CII etc during the course of time so as to get their perspective. He requested Dr. Gulati to help the First group with back up of statistical exercises.
15. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

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