

Rice-Wheat Information Sheet

No. 16

Changes

We propose to make some changes in the format of RWIS to facilitate (our major work!) easy reading. We suggest the following sections, and we welcome suggestions from readers to make RWIS more readable!

New things

Views

Happenings (since last issue)

Planned Ahead

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Food for thought!

News

We are extremely happy to report that USAID has approved the Cornell University's proposal "Sustainability of Post-Green Revolution Agriculture: The Rice-Wheat Cropping System of South Asia", submitted on behalf of the Consortium, for funding in the next 5 years to the tune of US\$3 million. Just to remind you all, Cornell University has been an active partner of the Consortium and we hope to develop a strong research program soon.

On the same note, the UK Overseas Development Agency (ODA) has given us the green signal to utilize the Hold back funds- at Centro Internacional de mejoramiento del maiz y del Trigo (CIMMYT) to provide support to national agricultural research systems (NARS) in the area of Crop Establishment and reduced tillage activities in rice-wheat systems in the Indo-Gangetic Plains. This means that Sterling 120,000 will be available for the next 3 years. It is proposed that these funds are used to supplement NARS's research programs by providing equipment, and meeting operational costs for diagnostic and adaptive surveys, on-station experiments, and farmer participatory research. On behalf of the Consortium partners, we would like to congratulate John Duxbury and Larry Harrington at CIMMYT and all those who acted with "vested interests" (no pun intended!) on their achievement.

While we are talking about finance, we are sure you will be pleased to know that the pledged support from Government of the Netherlands, i.e., 250,000 Guilders for the Consortium has been received at International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT).

With all this money and more to come, we look forward to strengthening national systems in an interactive manner.

Welcome

We welcome Dr Nasiruddin, Director, Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI), who has been appointed to succeed Dr M A Razzaque as the National Rice-Wheat Coordinator for Bangladesh.

Views

L S Brar, Senior Agronomist (Weed Control) at Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana recently visited CIMMYT in Mexico for 8 weeks to work with Ken Sayre. He writes:

"During my stay, we visited large areas of wheat infested with *Phalaris minor*. In Sonora Valley, the farmers face the same problem, herbicide resistance, in controlling this weed, where they are using a

single herbicide over a long period of time. However, the farmers have a good number of options of herbicides available to control the “resistant variety”. Since they do not have the “rice-wheat pattern” as in the Indo-Gangetic Plains, *P.minor* appears only in one flush and can be controlled by chemical or mechanical weeding. The visit to Dupont Lab was educative where the work on selection on new chemicals in different crops are underway. This visit enabled us to gain knowledge of the reasons for poor control of this weed, and to identify solutions which could be passed on to our farmers. What we need is an Integrated Weed Management approach wherein the genotypes along with their planting schedule and pattern from a major component. We had discussions on bed planting of wheat, which is common in Sonora Valley. In our rice-wheat system, a thorough work is required particularly in the machinery aspect. This may also help in providing good control of weeds in combination with other methods”.

We thank Dr Brar for writing to us, and would like to ‘share experiences’ with other colleagues.

Happenings

As mentioned in the last RWIS, we organized a traveling workshops on Tillage and Crop Establishment (TCE) at Rajendra Agricultural University (RAU), Pusa in Bihar, India during 7-9 March, and at Bhairwaha in Nepal during 11-12 March. The 27 workshop participants came from 7 locations, including Bangladesh and Nepal. Multidisciplinary teams drawn from each location generally included an agronomist, soil scientist, engineer, and IPM specialists. The workshop was led by Larry Harrington and Peter Hobbs of CIMMYT and Jugu Abraham from ICRISAT Donor Relations provided the back-up for proposal writing. The feedback we received from the participants shows that they were indeed appreciative of their efforts. The major outcomes of the workshop are:

- It brought together scientists from different disciplines to focus on a particular area and develop work plans
- Seven location- specific research proposals were drafted by the teams.
- These proposals emphasize the diagnostic, strategic, and adaptive aspects of research so as to better understand the socioeconomic situations of the farmers and research needs.
- Over and above, the participants’ feedback shows that the systematic learning process on “proposal writing” will help them in their future endeavors.

Planning Ahead

Workshop on Tillage and Crop Establishment.

The second in the series, this workshop, will be held at the Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), Ludhiana during 5-8 April. It will be followed by a day’s field trip. We expect about 30 participants from 6 locations and six colleagues from Pakistan to attend.

Workshop on Social Sciences Research, and Sustainability of Rice-Wheat Production Systems.

TO be held 29 April to 2 May at Kathmandu. We expect about 25 participants from participating NARS, and resource persons from CIMMYT, ICRISAT, the International Irrigation Management Institute (IIMI), the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), and other interested institutions.

The main objectives will be to discuss:

- The overall role of social science research in enhancing the productivity of rice-wheat systems, e.g, roles in natural resources management research, trend analysis, farmer participatory research (diagnostic and adaptive), economic consequences of adoption on-and off-site effects, policy related issues, impact assessment, etc.
- How the socioeconomic research efforts can be integrated into on-going work on the priority research themes of the Consortium while developing time-bound plan?
- The possibility of forming a network of social science researchers
- The development of an issues paper

We have now sought nominations from four NARS. It is expected that this Workshop will be a starting point for the development of a strong social science research component that could complement the efforts of bio-physical scientists in search of ways to attain sustainable production.

Visitors

Julie Lauren from Cornell University, USA is on a visit to the region during 25 March to 8 April.

Publications

The following research articles were brought to our attention:

Verma, U.N. and Srivastava, V.C. 1994.

Production Technology of non-tilled wheat (*Triticum aestivum*) after puddled transplanted rice (*Oryza sativa*) Indian Journal of Agricultural Science 64(5):277-84.

Sharma, P.K., Verma, T.S., and Bhagat R.M. 1995.

Soil structural improvements with the addition of *Lantana Camara* biomass in rice-wheat cropping. Soil Use and Management. 11:199-203.

If you need a copy, please write to us in the Facilitation Unit or to the authors

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Food for Thought

*All of us have ideas. Learn to share this and you'll create a great team.
Remember, the team is not an end in itself.*