

Rice-Wheat Information Sheet

No. 21

News

Symposium during International Crop Science Congress

The half-day Symposium on Sustaining Rice-Wheat Cropping Systems - Emerging Research Agenda will be held at Hall No. 6, Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi on 20 Nov 96 (1500-1800 hours) in conjunction with the Second International Crop Science Congress (ICSC). The Symposium would be inaugurated by the R S Paroda, Director General, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi and will be chaired by M J Petit, Director at the World Bank Head Quarters. The following will make presentation on the indicated topics to highlight the issues, approaches, and efforts towards enhanced sustainability of this important production system:

1. I P Abrol, Facilitator: Rice-Wheat Consortium for the Indo-Gangetic Plains - The Rationale
2. M Hossain, Principal Scientist, International Rice Research Institute (IRRI): Rice-Wheat Production System in South Asia - Recent developments and Constraints to Expansion
3. J H J Spiertz, President, European Society of Agronomy: The Ecoregional approach to research
4. S M Virmani, Principal Scientist, International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT): Rice-Wheat Cropping Sequence in the Indo-Gangetic Plains of India: Its agro-climatic characterization by GIS approach
5. L W Harrington, Director, Centro Internacional de Mejoramiento de Maiz y Trigo (CIMMYT): Social Science with a purpose: Towards more sustainable and productive rice-wheat systems in the the Indo-Gangetic Plains through social science research
6. P R Hobbs, Regional Agronomist (South Asia), CIMMYT: Technology options for enhancing productivity and sustainability of Rice-Wheat Cropping Systems

The presentations will be followed by half-hour discussion session on the above topics. We invite all of you, especially those who intend to participate in the ICSC, for the Symposium and contact us for any further information. The full papers relating to the presentation would be published by the Facilitation Unit (FU) in early 1997.

The FU will be supporting the participation of a number of scientists from Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh in the ICSC. We expect that this would also provide an informal forum for discussions among the partners in New Delhi.

RTCC Meeting

The Fourth meeting of the Regional Technical Coordination Committee (RTCC) of the Consortium would be held at India International Centre, New Delhi during 25-26 Nov 96, immediately after the ICSC.

Modeling Workshop

The proposed workshop on Crop Modeling during 9-13 Dec 96 have been postponed to 13-17 Jan 97 and will be held at the International Rice Research Institute, Manila. This had to be done since most of the scientists will be involved in ICSC and Meetings of Consortium during Nov/Dec period.

Views

Dr R S Rekhi, Senior Soil Chemist, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana (a participant in the Long Term Rice-Wheat Soil Fertility Workshop) wrote:

It was great to participate in the Regional Long Term Rice-Wheat Soil Fertility Workshop organized by the Consortium at Surajkund, Haryana during Oct 96. The meeting provided us an opportunity to discuss our data in finer details with our fellow scientists engaged in similar scientific pursuits. The program planning and the venue was excellent and best suited for conducting such an activity.

I would like to suggest that the data collected on long term experiments at various centers needs to be put into a model to draw valid inferences applicable at similar sites elsewhere. For this purpose, the Consortium can do a great job if it could involve the participating scientists in a planned program of training on crop models. You may indicate the relevant data set which an individual site/center should collect for this purpose. Further, a training program at IRRI or ICRISAT will give them the opportunity to learn the techniques of crop models. It will be a great contribution to analyze the various factors responsible for the decline in yield of the rice-wheat system.

Happenings

Long Term Rice-Wheat Soil Fertility Workshop

This workshop was held as scheduled during 15-18 Oct 96 at Hotel Raj Hans, Surajkund. About 35 participants from India, Nepal, ICRISAT, CIMMYT, IRRI, and Cornell University actively participated in the deliberations. 16 papers were presented in poster sessions during the workshop and threadbare discussions were held on the emerging issues on yield decline, nutrient use efficiency, needed future efforts, etc. On the question of yield decline, the participants tended to agree that decline in the productivity of rice was observed only in treatments that involve high nutrient use aiming at 10 times higher food grain productivity was not evident when the productivity levels were lower and especially when organic matter had been applied. Participants emphasized the need:

- to learn and adopt techniques for analyzing time series data for a meaningful interpretation and to adopt crop modeling technique to understand yield variations
- to establish extrapolation domains for extending the results of LTFEs
- to commission inter disciplinary research teams at each of the sites for a holistic understanding of the issues.

The participants also identified a range of site specific nutrient related issues that were affecting yield trends.

Donor Support Group Meeting at Washington

Facilitator presented a brief update of Consortium activities and progress before a selected group of donors during the International Centers' Week held at Washington during 28 Oct to 2 Nov 96. The response of the donors was encouraging and we expect a favorable response from the potential donors for the Consortium.

Planning ahead

Start-up workshop of Cornell-Consortium Project

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded Soil Management Collaborative Research Program (SM-CRSP) titled "Sustainability of Post Green Revolution Agriculture: The Rice-Wheat Cropping System of South Asia" will commence soon. The start-up workshop of the Project is planned to be held during 3-5 Dec 1996 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The workshop will emphasize the multidisciplinary and regional approaches of the project with the following objectives:

1. To discuss with all partners, the objectives and structure of the SM-CRSP and the project
2. To determine how national and international center interests fit within the goals and structure of the project for each of the main activity areas, namely Diagnosis and Assessment, Strategic Research, and Technology Transfer;
3. To identify common threads that can be used to formulate regional activities, as distinct from country activities; and
4. To develop plans and action agendas for regional activities.

Five to seven participants from each of the Consortium countries, including the National Rice-Wheat Coordinators and two scientists from the participating Centers are invited for the workshop. The national coordinators have been suggested to select participants from disciplines such as plant pathology in addition to soil science and agronomy. We also requested participation by a social scientist and suggested that this be a person who participated in the recent social science workshop organized by the Consortium in Apr 96. In addition to other international center participants, we anticipate that about ten scientists will come from Cornell and other US Universities.

Craig Meisner at CIMMYT Bangladesh is handling local arrangements and if you have "local" questions contact him at cm@cimmyt.bdmail.net for further information. You can also get more information from John Duxbury in Cornell University (jmd17@cornell.edu).

Publications

Consortium Directory

It is proposed to bring out a directory of Rice-Wheat researchers by the Consortium. To facilitate this effort, all rice-wheat scientists are requested to fill up the enclosed pro forma and send to us soon as possible. You may also circulate to your other colleagues who are involved in rice-wheat research.

Food for thought

Failures are divided into two classes - those who thought and never did, and those who did and never thought.-
John Charles Salak