

Rice-Wheat Information Sheet

No. 22

Happy New Year

We wish you all of our readers a very happy and prosperous new year. Let us jointly decide that we will work more towards achieving our goals and make the Consortium stand on its legs. We also apologize for being late with this issue.

News

Training Course at International Rice Research Institute, Manila

The Facilitation Unit (FU) in association with IRRI is sponsoring 18 scientists from the four partner countries for a 1-week course on Simulation Modeling and Yield Trend Analysis in Rice-Wheat Systems during 13-17 Jan 97 at IRRI in Los Banos. This training is expected to provide a base for the Consortium's efforts towards developing information systems related to rice-wheat cropping system in the Indo-Gangetic Plains.

Funding Proposal

ICRISAT has submitted a proposal, on behalf of the FU, seeking funding support for the planned research activities of Consortium during 1997-2000 to the tune of US \$ 2,400,000. A copy of the proposal has been sent to the partners and are available on request at FU. We are grateful for the support documents provided by the NARS collaborators.

ICAR-IRRI collaboration

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and IRRI will jointly start a project to field test the values of MANAGE-N model - derived N recommendations vis-a-vis local and soil test based recommendations. The project has been taken up as a follow-up of the IRRI sponsored Simulation Analysis for Rice Production (SARP) Project, which was successfully completed last year. Training of agronomists and soil scientists in generating recommendations using MANAGE-N and in the use of Chlorophyll Meter for monitoring N status and fertilizer recommendation in collaboration with the CREMNET Project of IRRI will be an important component of this Project.

Tillage equipment

The FU has provided tillage and farm equipment worth US \$ 50,000 to various sites in India under the Tillage and Crop Establishment Project of the Consortium funded by ODA thro' CIMMYT. In addition to this similar equipment, imported from China and USA were distributed also to Nepal and Pakistan. We expect that this will boost site level research activities and FU would be able to provide a small amount of operational funds also to the sites for prototype testing, and field experiments.

Happenings

National Workshop on Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

ICAR has designated the National Center for Integrated Pest Management (NCIPM), New Delhi as the nodal point for Rice-Wheat IPM research. A group discussion was organized during 18-19 Oct 96 at Delhi to discuss the priority issues. The identified problems include the accentuation of pest and diseases due to the practice of growing rice crop in summer which served as a green bridge for pests allowing their carry over

from one season to another. It was mentioned that some pests like stem borer, army work, and soil borne fungi are now reported on wheat. Similarly, rice stubble and volunteer plants growing in or around wheat fields can play a significant role in transferring pests from rice to wheat, *Phalaris Minor* in wheat, nematodes, basmati and hybrid rice induced pests. The need for training programs for survey and monitoring in collaboration with IARCs, organizational aspects of multi-disciplinary teams at site level were also discussed in the meeting.

Second International Crops Science Congress

As planned we were able to bring in quite a few scientists from the partner countries to attend the Congress and conducted the half-day Symposium on Rice-Wheat Sustainability Issues on 20 Nov. The speakers in the Symposium presented the current scenario and the problems faced by the farmers in the rice-wheat cropping patterns and suggested technology adoption like new farm equipment, GIS, modeling approach, etc. to revive the Green Revolution era. The FU had also put up a display about the Consortium in the Exhibition held in conjunction with the Congress.

Potatoes and Rice-Wheat Cropping System

Potato is an important component of cropping systems in the Indo-Gangetic Plains dominated by Rice-Wheat Cropping System based production system. Unlike in the past future increases in production of most crop commodities will come only through increased productivity per unit of area and time i.e. cropping intensification. While most research efforts to enhance productivity often address single crop related issues, farmers invariably take decisions based on risk and productivity considerations of the entire cropping/production system. For this reason our research strategies need to address productivity issues of a commodity in the context of its relevance on the entire system. A systems perspective is also important for integrating crop improvement and resource management concerns for optimizing productivity, effective land use, on-farm management systems, water use, integrated pest and nutrient management in the total system of crops. Recognition of the above calls for new research approaches that involve building systems perspective and involving multidisciplinary team in finding solutions to emerging problems.

In a meeting held on 24th Nov which included Senior Scientists of CIP (Peter Gregory, Sarath Ilangatilake) ICAR (K L Chadha, E A Siddiq, R K Gupta, G S Shekawat) and the Facilitator of R-W Consortium) it was decided to organize a brain storming session in April 1997 session to develop an outline of research agenda to address system related issues where potato was an important component of the cropping system. It was further decided that a concept paper will be prepared and circulated before the session.

Regional Workshop on SM-CRSP Project

Soil Management -Collaborative Research Support Program (SM-CRSP) of the Consortium supported by Cornell University, USA through the United States Agency for International Development was organized in Dhaka, Dec 3-5, 1996. The objectives of the workshop were:

- How can the national priorities for Rice-wheat research be best addressed by SM-CRSP?
- Identify common national interests that are lead to regional scale priorities.
- Develop collaborative activities for the first year of the program.

The workshop was well attended by participants from Consortium countries Bangladesh, India and Nepal and partner institutions include CIMMYT, IRRI, ICRISAT and Cornell University. In all, there were about 40 participants including senior professionals from the Cornell University. Intensive group discussions during the

workshop were aimed at defining country specific issues of importance for diagnostic, strategic and adaptive research efforts. The groups also discussed the issue where regional activities would add value to the program. Some of the key emphasis that emerged in the workshop were:

- SM-CRSP program would endeavor to identify and promote collaborative activities in R-W research that would compliment the existing/ongoing activities in NARS through different program.
- The program will address priority issues involving diagnostic, the strategic and the adaptive research.
- There is a need to expand the research agenda on rice-wheat research to address the human nutrition aspects (e.g micronutrients) of the population dependent on rice-wheat based production system.
- Strengthening of information exchange mechanism
- Enhancing the NARS scientists capacity by
- Strengths available within the region, with IARCs and with other advanced institutions including Cornell University.