

# Rice-Wheat Information Sheet

No. 23

## News

### Regional Steering Committee (RSC) Meeting

The Fourth Meeting of the RSC of the Consortium will now be held during 15-16 Mar 97 in Hotel Sheraton, Dhaka, Bangladesh. The Meeting will be attended by the Chief Executives of the Agricultural Councils of the partner countries and the Centers would be represented by the International Rice Research Institute. The Agenda Notes have already been circulated to all participants and we expect to have the full attendance.

## Changes

### Pakistan

Dr M Akbar has been appointed as the new Chairman of the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council effective Jan 97 and Dr N I Hashmi will be the new National Rice-Wheat Coordinator for Pakistan. Both of them are our old colleagues and are fully involved in the Consortium activities.

### Bangladesh

Dr Z Karim has been appointed as the new Executive Chairman of the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council and Dr M A Bakr as the new National Rice-Wheat Coordinator.

We wish all the very best to Drs Akbar, Hashmi, Karim, and Bakr on behalf of all the partners and hope to help them strengthen their efforts in their respective countries.

### ICAR and IFDC to organize Training Courses :

Facilitation Unit will co-sponsor a training courses on "Computer Simulation for Crop Growth and Nutrients Management" being jointly organized by ICAR and IFDC. The training will be held at the Project Directorate of Cropping Systems, Modipuram.

### New Telephone Numbers

Please make a note of the change in the following telephone numbers:

Dr I P Abrol, Facilitator - 91 (11) 631-4312 and 91 (11) 692-8119 [Both Residence]

Mr Ramakrishnan C Iyer, Admn. Officer - 91 (11) 613-8632 [Residence]

## Views

### Excerpts from the observations of participants in the training course on Simulation Modeling held at IRRI during Jan 97

The term Simulation Modeling was a fashionable word to me before given an opportunity to participate in the training course at IRRI. Now I understand the terminology and methods to an extent. The implication and objective of the course is appreciable and will surely make an impact on our efforts to improvise rice-wheat research.

*A L Kundu, Reader(Agronomy), B C Krishi Vishwavidyalaya, Kalyani, West Bengal*

The good thing about the program was that we returned with a feeling that we can do it. I am confident that we can successfully use the DSSAT 3 Model for simulating our long-term experiments on rice-wheat cropping system. I have planned to record the minimum data set from the forthcoming rice season to validate the software under the local climatic conditions using the available rice and wheat varieties. I would suggest that the participants of this particular course should meet periodically to discuss and solve the issues and find commonalities.

*Bijay Singh, Senior Soil Chemist,  
Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana*

### **Zero Tillages Technology for Wheat**

*Dr. S.C. Modgal, Vice Chancellor of the G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar send a note on the subject, which is excerpted for comments from readers*

Nearly 45 percent of the areas under Rice-Wheat cropping system is in Uttar Pradesh. Farmers face great difficulty in preparing land for wheat after rice harvest. Conventional tillages operations require 6 to 8 harrowings and 2-3 plantings before wheat is sown. This entails costs, delays wheat sowing, and affects wheat yield advances. Researches were initiated in 1992 to develop a 'No Till Drill'. Prices of the imported New Zealand Seed Drill was high and beyond the reach of an Indian farmer. By 1993 'Pantnagar Zero Till - Ferti Seed Drill' was developed by Farm Machinery Scientists and its performance tested extensively over the next three years. The drill was an inverted T type furrow opener which opens a narrow slit in rice fields and plants 9 rows at 20 cms distance in one pass. The cost is US \$ 275 as compared to the New Zealand Drill which costs about US\$ 1,150.

The Drill has been extensively tested in farmers fields over the past 3 years. Based on the design provided by the University, 16 Drills have been sent to various Institutes. Results of these tests have shown that compared to conventional method, the use of this Drill reduced the cost of land preparation by 800 to 1000 INR per ha. Although the scientists are developing and refining the management options associated with reduced tillage system it is time for :

- adopting a few villages and promote this technology on a large scale;
- Government to provide subsidy on the Drill to promote its use; and
- Non Government agencies (including fertilizer/seed agencies involved) in popularizing the technology.

On the research side, it is necessary to initiate a long term study on Reduced Tillage Systems involving a multi-disciplinary team of scientists to study the long term benefits and management issues. It is also felt that the new tillage system would also require a re-look at the varietal suitability for these systems.

## **Happenings**

### **Training Program Organized**

Punjab Agricultural University organized a training program on "Chemical, Physical and Biological Transformations in Soils under Rice-Wheat cropping system" Jan 23 to Feb 4, 1997 for 15 researchers from Agricultural Universities from six States. The training program was designed to assist researches analyze emerging problems of sustaining Rice-Wheat productivity from the with respect to the chemical, physical and biological transformation in soils under Rice-Wheat cropping system. The training program, according to the organizers will help the trainees better assess the nature and extent of soil related problems so that appropriate management strategies are developed. The topics included nutrient and organic matter transformations in soils in relation to Rice-Wheat nutrition, losses of nutrients and fertilizer use efficiency, chemical and biological changes in soils amended with green manure, tillage and puddling in soil environment and crop growth, environmental pollution etc.

## **ICAR-ODA Collaboration**

Dr. John Barrett, Program manager of the ODA's Natural Resources System Program along with a team of Program leaders / Managers participated in a 2-days discussion with senior ICAR Scientists with a view to identify possible areas where the two sides could develop joint research projects involving UK and Indian Institutions and scientific groups. The discussion were centered around focusing researchable issues in each of the important production systems identified by the Natural Resource Systems Program. The identified production systems included the high potential production systems, Semi Arid and Arid production system, Hill side production systems, Forest/Agriculture and Land / Water interface systems, the Peri-urban interface, and the cross cutting theme of Socio - economic methodologies. Rice-Wheat cropping constituting a major production system of the high potential area in India was identified as one of the several area where, it was felt that collaborative efforts would be rewarding. Issue of long term maintenance and enhancement of soil quality, improved on-farm and system level water management, rational use of agricultural inputs, enhancement of yield barrier, are amongst other issues for possible follow-up for developing collaboration.

## **Visitors**

### **CIMMYT Scientists to the Region**

A visit is planned by a group of CIMMYT scientists to the Indo-Gangetic region during end of Mar 97. The purpose of this tour would be to identify priority issues in the area of soil, nutrient management, GIS, and associated subjects. More details are available with the Facilitation Unit ([rw@cgnet.com](mailto:rw@cgnet.com)) and the Natural Resource Group of CIMMYT ([lharrington@cimmyt.mx](mailto:lharrington@cimmyt.mx)).

## **Publications**

### **Consortium Paper Series**

As informed earlier, the Guidelines for Authors for contributing towards the proposed Consortium Paper Series have been circulated to partner institutions. For information of the readers, the purpose of the Series is reproduced below:

The Consortium Paper Series is intended to serve as a forum for the publication of papers on topics covering a narrow, but significant research topic - the productivity and sustainability of the rice-wheat based production systems. The topic would thus cover:

- research aimed at understanding problems that affect productivity and resource quality
- research to adapt prototype technologies to specific farming situations
- socioeconomic and policy related issues on the use of natural resources/inputs
- research on the consequences of farmers adoption of new technologies, including off-site and long term consequences
- research on strategic issues aimed at developing/modifying existing technologies to achieve greater productivity/sustainability
- sustainability indicators

Those readers who are interested to contribute to the publications, may please write to the Facilitation Unit indicating the proposed topic or send an e-mail ([rw@cgnet.com](mailto:rw@cgnet.com)). The Guide to Authors is available on request with the Facilitation Unit.

**Food for thought**

If you have an important point to make, don't try to be subtle or clever. Use a pile driver. Hit the point once. Then come back and hit it again. Then hit it a third time—a tremendous whack.

*Sir Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill*