

Rice-Wheat Information Sheet

No. 32

News

National Coordinator

Dr Mohammad Salim has been nominated as the new Rice-Wheat Coordinator for Pakistan. He can be contacted at Crop Sciences Institute, National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC-P), Islamabad, Pakistan. Tel # 92 (51) 241461 Ext. 3126 (Off) and +92 (51) 290593 (Home).

Contact address

Kevin Bronson, who was at IRRI and was closely working with all the partners in the Consortium has now moved to Texas A&M University since Jul 98. He can be contacted at Texas A&M University - Texas, Agricultural Experimental Station, Route 3, Box 219, Lubbock, TX 79401, USA. Email: k-bronson@tamu.edu, Tel # +1 (806) 746-6101, Fax # +1 (806) 746-6528.

Happenings

Workshop on Sustaining Rice-Wheat Production Systems: Socio-economic and Policy Issues

As planned, this workshop was held at Hotel del' Annapoorna in Kathmandu during 1-3 Jul 98. The workshop was attended by 29 scientists from the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) of Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan and CIMMYT, IIMI, Cornell University, IRRI, and ICRISAT. Presentations were made by the participants and three working group were formed on (a) Policy Issues (b) Farm Level Constraints To Sustaining Productivity Growth and (c) Systems Approach: Interdisciplinary Research and Long Term Data needs to identify researchable issues on these domains were identified. The Group recommended to develop a research project addressing the critical issues which were defined during the deliberations and to bring out a publication to reflect the socio-economic issues in rice-wheat production system in the post-green revolution era in Indo-Gangetic Plains (IGP). Dr Prabhu Pingali, Head, Economics Division at CIMMYT led the discussions.

Planning ahead

Workshop on Agricultural Research Information System for the Indo-Gangetic Plains (ARISGAP)

As detailed earlier, this workshop will be held at ICRISAT Patancheru during 17-19 Aug 98 and is expected to be attended by scientists from the (NARS) of Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan and CIMMYT, IIMI, Cornell University, Michigan State University, IRRI, International Agricultural Center, Wageningen, and ICRISAT. We hope to have detailed interactions among the group so as to develop a basic information management system for the IGP.

Regional Technical Coordination Committee (RTCC)

The Seventh meeting of the RTCC will be held at the IIMI Campus in Lahore during 12-13 Sep 98 and will be followed by a one-day field trip in the rice areas in and around Lahore. Please make a note of the dates. The local contact in Pakistan will be Dr Mohammad Munir (munir@rwcs.sdnpc.undp.org) at the NARC-P and Iqbal Khan at IIMI-Lahore (m.iqbal@cgnet.com).

National Workshop on Long-Term Soil Fertility Experiments 11-13 August, 1998

The Soil Science Division of Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC-N) is organizing the above workshop at Lalitpur in Nepal. The objectives of the workshop are to:

- Review the results of long-term experiments conducted in different agro-ecological situations in Nepal
- Discuss issues of data standardization and management
- Consolidate the results of long-term soil fertility experiments and publish as Proceedings of the Workshop.
- Recommend future soil fertility and plant nutrient research strategies based on findings of long-term studies.

The contact person for the workshop is Dr S L Maskey, Chief, Soil Science Division NARC-N, Khumaltar, Nepal. E-mail: narc@ed.mos.com.np.

Publications

Consortium Paper Series

Hobbs, P.R., Giri, G.S., Grace, P. 1998. Reduced Zero Tillage Options for the Establishment of Wheat after Rice in South Asia. Consortium Paper Series 2. pp 18

The paper summarizes results of research on several tillage options that will lead to greater sustainability of rice-wheat based production systems in the Indo-Gangetic Plains. New practices being evaluated can raise input efficiency and reduce machinery use while raising yields and cutting costs - typically by overcoming problems of later wheat planting. The options tried include zero-tillage systems, ranging from surface seeding to planting with four-wheel tractor seed drills and reduced tillage systems which include drills that combine land preparations and seeding in one operation. Many of these options show promise for wide scale adoption. The results of research are discussed in light of issues that warrant additional research.

Malik, R.K., Gill, G., Hobbs, P.R. 1998. Herbicide Resistance - a major issue for Sustaining Wheat Productivity in Rice-Wheat Cropping Systems in the Indo-Gangetic Plains. Consortium Paper Series 3.

One of the traits of the Green Revolution varieties leading to their wide acceptance is their high responsiveness to applied fertilizers. For this reason, fertilizer use has kept pace with the spread of new varieties. In addition to increasing wheat yields, increased fertilizer use has also encouraged greater intensity and spread of weed problems. To overcome this, more herbicides are being used to control grassy weeds due to their similarity with wheat plants. Effective and efficient control of the most common weed in wheat, *Phalaris minor*, which has developed resistance to the commonly used herbicide Isoproturon, has become a major sustainability issue in the system. This paper reviews some of the earlier research efforts, suggests some alternative weed management practices, and discusses the future research needs.

Please write to the Facilitation Unit, if you require a copy of these publications [scientists in the collaborating institutions have been mailed a copy each already].

Food for thought

"'Change' is scientific, 'progress' is ethical; change is absolute, whereas progress is a matter of controversy." - *Bertrand Russell*