

SKUAST Jammu organised 30th Annual Group Meeting of AICRP on Rapeseed Mustard

30th Annual Group Meeting of All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on Rapeseed Mustard commenced today at the prestigious Baba Jitto Auditorium, SKUAST-Jammu. Dr. B.N. Tripathi, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor of SKUAST-Jammu was the Chief Guest on the occasion and Dr. Sanjeev Gupta, ADG (Oilseeds & Pulses), ICAR, New Delhi was the Guest of Honour.

In his address, Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-Jammu highlighted the pressing challenges posed by the projected population growth. To meet the growing demand for essential food items, including oilseeds, pulses, vegetables, fruits, dairy products, and meat, he stressed the need for substantial improvement in agricultural practices, increased productivity and sustainable farming techniques. The Vice Chancellor emphasized that technological interventions and sustainable farming practices enhancing productivity while minimizing environmental impact must be embraced by all stakeholders. Addressing the alarming deficit in oilseed production, the Vice Chancellor highlighted that the country currently faces over 60% annual demand shortfall. Jammu and Kashmir (Union Territory) also reported a deficit in total oilseed production by over 70%.

The Vice Chancellor praised the role of the ICAR sanctioned AICRP sub-centre at SKUAST-Jammu that was established in 2009 and has significantly increased the acreage and productivity of rapeseed mustard crops in the region. The initiative has achieved remarkable results over the past decade, with acreage increasing from 55,000 hectares and productivity from 762 kg/ha in 2012 to 140,000 hectares and 1149 kg/ha, respectively in 2022. The Vice Chancellor also appreciated the recent sanction of 31 crore project by the Jammu and Kashmir Government, focusing on the promotion of oilseeds under the "Holistic Agricultural Development Project (HADP)." This collaborative effort with the SKUAST-Jammu in the Union Territory aims to overcome the shortage of oilseeds in J&K-UT in the next 3-5 years in a phased manner.

During the meeting, Dr. Sanjeev Gupta, ADG (Oilseeds & Pulses), ICAR, New Delhi, emphasized the significance of oilseed production and the challenges and opportunities in the sector. He stated that the production of oilseeds has been a top priority, given its vital contribution of 5% to the total GDP. Dr. Gupta mentioned that ICAR is actively collaborating with NITI Aayog to set challenges and goals for the year 2047. The aim is to achieve surplus production in oilseeds, pulses, meat, fr

uits and vegetables and exports by the year 2047, ensuring food security and economic growth. He said that current production scenario as per the 3rd advance estimates for 2023 projected, a total of 41 million tonnes of oilseed production during the year. Among this, about 12 million tonnes are expected to come from rapeseed mustard cultivation alone. The scientist community is actively working on a diverse range of 65 oilseed varieties, with a focus on developing more new and improved varieties to address the evolving needs of the agricultural sector. Dr. Gupta further emphasized the Prime Minister's directive to reduce pungency in oilseeds and stressed the crucial role of developing hybrids of oilseeds to boost productivity. He further highlighted the implementation of the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model as a strategic approach to foster collaboration and expedite research and development efforts in the oilseed sector.

Dr. R. K. Samnotra, Director Research, SKUAST-Jammu highlighted the potential of the Jammu region for rapeseed mustard cultivation, with a productivity potential of more than 17 quintals in irrigated areas and 14-16 quintals in rainfed areas. The Director praised the contributions of the AICRP (Rapeseed Mustard) Chatha centre, sanctioned by ICAR-DRMR in July 2009, in developing 10 varieties beneficial for the region's farmers. He also highlighted the recent receipt of a 31 crore Holistic Agricultural Development Programme (HADP) project on "Promotion of Oilseeds" from the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. Earlier Dr. P. K. Rai, Director, ICAR DRMR Bharatpur welcomed all the dignitaries and guests. He presented crops status and research highlights of the program for the year 2022-23 and also presented Annual Report of AICRP (R&M).

Dr. Vivek Arya, Associate Professor, Soil Science conducted the proceedings of the programme and Vote of Thanks was delivered by Dr. S.K Rai, Sr. Scientist and Organising Secretary.