

## **Biennial Workshop of AICRP on Management of Salt Affected Soils and Use of Saline Water in Agriculture Organized at Tirupati (3-5 July, 2009)**

The Biennial Workshop of the All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on "Salt Affected Soils and Use of Saline Water in Agriculture" was organized at Regional Research Station, Directorate of Research, Acharya N G Ranga University of Agriculture, Hyderabad from July 3-5, 2009 at Tirupati located in the foothills of Tirumala hills, the abode of The Lord Venkateshwara. The workshop was inaugurated on 3rd July by Dr. G. Lakshmi Kantha Reddy, Director Research, ANGRAU, Hyderabad. Dr. P. S. Rao, National Programme Officer, FAO India Office, New Delhi was the Guest of Honour. About 90 delegates participated in the workshop. Dr. K. Raja Reddy, ADR, Tirupati, welcomed the chief, guest, guest of Honour, participants and other invited guest for their graceful presence. Dr. Gupta presented the achievements of the project during the biennium 2007-2009. At the very outset Dr. Gupta informed the house that in spite of their keen desire Dr. A. K. Singh, DDG (NRM), Dr. P. Raghva Reddy, VC, ANGRAU, Hyderabad, and Dr. P. D. Sharma, ADG (Soils) could not be present because of their pre-engagements. He thanked them for their support in organizing the workshop. He mentioned that AICRP achieves its mandate through 8 AICRP centres located in State Agricultural Universities at Agra and Kanpur (UP), Hisar (Haryana), Bikaner (Rajasthan), Indore (MP), Bapatla (AP), Tiruchirrapalli (TN) and Gangawati (Karnataka) with coordinating center located at CSSRI, Karnal. The project made significant achievements in the management of alkali waters, reclamation of rain fed salt affected lands, reclamation of abandoned aqua ponds and survey of water quality and salt affected soils. The water quality map of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh were printed and distributed to various stakeholders.



Photo: A view of the inaugural function of the biennial workshop (From left: Dr. K Raja Reddy, ADR, Dr. P.S. Rao, National Programme Officer, Dr. G. Lakshmi Kantha Reddy, chief guest, Dr. S. K. Gupta, Project Coordinator and Dr. N. Ramavatharam, Associate Dean, Tirupati)



Photo: Release ceremony of the Biennial Progress Report of the AICRP

Dr. P.S. Rao, speaking on the occasion recalled his association with CSSRI under the Indo-Dutch Network Project on Land Drainage and said that he still cherishes the memory. He identified the global level problems related to environment and climate change. He said that very few donors are interested in funding projects solely addressing to the problems of agriculture but once integrated with global problems would receive priority funding.

Progress achieved by different centers was presented by the respective teams and it was spread over three technical sessions followed by the technical session on program formulation. The programme formulation session was chaired by Dr. Gurbachan Singh, Director CSSRI, Karnal. In his initial remarks, Dr. Singh recalled his remarks made during the previous biennial workshop that we should be quick to adjust to current challenges that are being faced by the farmers. He emphasized that energy crisis calls for taking up projects on biomass based energy production, seaweeds and their value addition for human and animal consumption and adjustment of crops and cropping systems to climate change. Low water requiring crops should have to be explored to adjust to the global water crunch. Following these initial remarks, the programme of each center was discussed and finalized.

Plenary session was organized late in the evening on 04.07.2009. Dr. G. Lakshmi Kantha Reddy, Director Research, ANGRAU, Hyderabad was the chief Guest while Dr. Gurbachan Singh presided over the function. Dr. Gupta in his valedictory remarks emphasized that each center should prioritize their activities within the framework that has been approved. He thanked the University for providing excellent support in organizing the workshop. Dr. Gurbachan Singh in his presidential remarks exhorted the project teams to take up the new projects with zeal and explore the possibilities of helping the farming community through cost cutting and maximizing benefits. He said that all the programmes should be dovetailed to the national programmes such as NAREGA and RKVY to get funding from these programmes. The chief guest in his remarks added that although he could not be present during the deliberations but his heart



Photo: Dr Gurbachan Singh chairing the Technical session on Programme formulation. Dr. S.K. Gupta and Dr. T.V Satyanarayana are also seen

was always here. He was in touch with the organizers and is happy to know that a vibrant technical programme could be finalized. He assured that the University would support the project activities through additional funds besides the funds received from ICAR. He thanked ICAR for choosing ANGRAU as the host organization and Tirupati as the venue for organizing the workshop.

Dr. R.L. Meena and Dr. P.R.K. Prasad presented vote of thanks on behalf of CSSRI and ANGRAU respectively.



Photo: Dr. Gurbachan Singh delivering the presidential address at the plenary session