

Press note

A Delivery and Adaptive Research planning workshop is being held at Central Soil Salinity Research Institute, Karnal on 28-29 May 2009 under the new project on “Cereal System Initiative for South Asia (CSISA). This project is funded by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and USAID and implemented by International Rice Research Institute, Philippines and CIMMYT, Mexico. This project aims to enhance the farmer’s income by a minimum of US \$ 300 per year per household. This workshop will define the blue print for enhancing the farmer’s income by fine tuning the available technologies in rice-wheat, cotton-wheat and other cropping systems on conservation agriculture platforms and identifying key issues for speedy adaptive research. In the first phase (2009-2011) this project will be implemented in the states of Punjab, Haryana, Eastern U.P., Central Bihar and Tamilnadu. Dryland areas of Karnataka in irrigation commands of Upper Krishna and Tungabhadra will also benefit from this project. More than 65 delegates comprising farmers, scientists, farm machinery manufactures and policy planners are participating in this workshop for two days.



While welcoming the delegates, Dr. Gurbachan Singh, Director, CSSRI, Karnal laid emphasis on adopting zero tillage and precision agricultural practices to protect our natural resources. He also informed that CSSRI will act as one of the four research platforms to be established in Indo-Gangetic plains to fine tune the available conservation agriculture based technologies for their speedy adoption by the farmers. The workshop was

inaugurated by Er. Balwinder Singh Sidhu, Director Agriculture, Punjab. Mr. Sidhu remarked that the concept of conservation agriculture is showing a better result that has helped in improving the crop yield as well as the soil health. He also elaborated that the cost of labour will be higher during the transplanting time in the agriculture sector compared to skilled industrial sector and the new agricultural practices should address the issue of labour shortage in the agriculture sector in the coming times. Dr. Raj K. Gupta the Regional Coordinator of this project detailed the work plan for this project and informed that the technologies will be fine tuned before rolling out to large number of farmers under this project. The project will be implemented through 5 delivery hubs formed in above mentioned states involving the research institutes, universities, NGOs, farmers and farm machinery manufactures. The 4 other hubs are located in Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh. This project will cover 70,000 ha area in different hubs during the first year of the project. Dr. I.P Abrol chaired the inaugural session and remarked that the benefits accruing out of adoption of conservation agriculture increases income of the farmers by way of cost reduction and yield enhancing practices besides improvement in soil health and adjusting to climate changes. He enumerated that the country's food basket will get positive boost by adopting these conservation agriculture technologies similar to the yield gains received during the green revolution period of 1960's.