

Review meeting on Date Palm at Mundra

21th June 2014, Mundra

National Review Meeting cum consultation meet on date palm was held on 21st June 2014 at Date palm Research Station, Mundra, Gujarat under the chairmanship of Dr. N.K. Krishna Kumar, Deputy Director General (Horticulture Science), ICAR. Dr.R.M.Chauhan, Vice-Chancellor of SDAU, S.K.Nagar, Gujarat presided over the function. The participants comprised of farmers, NGO's and private companies involved in production of date palm tissue culture, researchers from ICAR institutes (CIAH, Bikaner; CAZRI, Jodhpur; CPCRI, Kasaragod) and SAU's (SDAU, S.K. Nagar and AAU, Anand). Dr. Kumar emphasized that date palm is the future crop for India. The constraints in its cultivation and other issued for oil palm development in India were discussed and analyzed in depth. Dr. J.R. Faleiro, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) consultant at Riyadh (SA) delivered a special lecture. Dr Faleiro presented the global scenario of date palm production and its potential in Indian subcontinent. He said that date palm will be future crop as dates have higher energy (3000 cal/kg) with very good mineral content and pharmacological values. It was indicated that 60 per cent of the processed dates are produced in the Middle East and North Africa. It was highlighted that in India, date palm plantations are scattered with seed progenies. Therefore, it was recommended that for optimum and quality production of date palm, uniform date palm plantation with better agronomic management of orchard is the need of the hour. The management of red palm weevil incidence in date palm and its management were also discussed.



The major recommendations forwarded from the meeting were that India needs early maturing varieties (preferably 10th June) having tolerance to drought. Clonal fidelity test should be conducted on the tissue culture raised date palm material, so that farmers get quality and true to type plants. Keeping in view the demands of farmers, it was also highlighted that characters like sweet taste, earliness and colour of fruit should be taken into consideration to identify an elite type. Post-harvest management techniques need to be standardized for better storage and transportation of dates. The issue of pesticide residue was also addressed and in this pursuit it was recommended that Pesticide residue analysis laboratory needs to be established in the SDA University, S. K. Nagar, Gujarat for exporting dates.

A date exhibition was also organized which showcased a total of 75 elite clones from 14 villages covering 5 talukas, comprising of 46 from red category, 22 yellow and 7 mixed type.

(Source: CIAH, Bikaner)