

Farmer FIRST Programme (2016-17)

The term “*Farmer FIRST*” means the farmers’ Farm, Innovations, Resources, Science and Technology (FIRST). The initiative was taken by ICAR to move beyond the production and productivity; to privilege the smallholder agriculture; and complex, diverse and risk prone realities of majority of the farmers through enhancing farmers-scientists interface. The basic concept is that the farmer will be in a centric role for research problem identification, prioritization, conduct of experiments and its management in farmers’ field conditions. It emphasizes resource management, climate resilient agriculture, production management including storage, marketing, supply chains, value chains, innovation systems, information systems etc. With this concept, Agricultural Extension Division of ICAR, New Delhi invited project proposals for funding under Farmer FIRST Programme from ICAR Institutes/ Agricultural Universities and directed to submit the project proposal to the concerned ATARIs considering their Zone.

In three consecutive phases, this institute received a total of 14 project proposals from various ICAR Institutes/ Agricultural Universities under this zone. All the projects were screened by the Zonal Programme Management Committee (ZPMC) constituted by the Council and 7 projects were forwarded to the Programme Management Committee (ZPMC) at the Council level for consideration. Four projects, two for ICAR Institutes and two for state agricultural Universities, were sanctioned under ICAR-ATARI, Kolkata during 2016-17. The name of the institute, their project title, budget allotted for the project etc. are given below.

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Name of the Institute</i>	<i>Title of project</i>	<i>Fund sanctioned during 2016-17 (Rs. in lakh)</i>
1.	Bihar Agricultural University, Sabour, Bhagalpur, Bihar	<i>“Cross Sectional Livelihood Improvement and Income Enhancement through Agro-Enterprise Diversification”</i>	54.30
2.	Birsa Agricultural University, Ranchi	<i>“Technology integration for doubling farm income through participatory research and extension approaches in Ranchi district of Jharkhand”</i>	56.33
3.	ICAR-NRC, Litchi, Muzaffarpur	<i>“Improved livelihood through good practices in agricultural production system”</i>	45.95
4.	ICAR-IIAB, Ranchi	<i>“Enhancing food, nutritional and livelihood security of marginal and small farmers in Jharkhand through need based agricultural technologies”</i>	7.40
Total			163.98

Achievements in brief

1. Cross Sectional Livelihood Improvement and Income Enhancement through Agro-Enterprise Diversification

To diversify the income sources, more than 150 landless households, small and marginal farmers were trained for mushroom cultivation, 30 rural households were trained for beekeeping activity during 2016-17. Wheat crop, zero tillage and resource conservation technologies were demonstrated on around 35 acres of farmers' fields to reduce yield losses. Further, the summer crop like moong and other pulses were extensively promoted to increase cropping intensity. The appropriate varieties were promoted in the project area covering the major vegetable crops like okra, bottle gourd, sponge gourd and bitter gourd to enhance the quality and quantity of vegetable production. In order to enhance the quality of livestock, the veterinary services like artificial insemination, animal feed block preparation, vaccination etc. were provided to the project area during the period of report.



- 2. Technology integration for doubling farm income through participatory research and extension approaches in Ranchi district of Jharkhand***
- 3. Improved livelihood through good practices in agricultural production system***
- 4. Enhancing food, nutritional and livelihood security of marginal and small farmers in Jharkhand through need based agricultural technologies***

During 2016-17, baseline survey of project villages viz. Kutiatu, Pindarkom, Tetri and Malti under Kutiatu panchayat of Namkum block of Ranchi district was conducted. Exposure visit of farmers to ICAR-Indian Institute of Natural Resins and Gums (ICAR-IINRG), Ranchi was organized. A two-days sensitization workshop was organized for 200 farm-men, farm-women and agri-entrepreneurs from project villages were oriented and trained on technical interventions to be carried out under different

approved modules, viz. crop, livestock/fish, enterprise, natural resource management (NRM) and integrated farming system (IFS), of the farmer FIRST project. Scientists and faculties from different organizations, namely ICAR-IIAB, Ranchi; ICAR-Indian Institute of Natural Resins and Gums, Ranchi; ICAR Research Complex for Eastern Region (ICAR-RCER), Research Centre Ranchi and Birsa Agricultural University, Ranchi, acted as resource persons in the workshop.

Shri Sudarshan Bhagat Ji, Hon'ble Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Govt. of India, graced the workshop as chief guest in the farmers-scientist interface on the second day (26 March, 2017). Shri Subrata Mandal, Chief General Manager, NABARD, Ranchi was present as Guest of Honour in the interface. Shri Bhagat appreciated the workshop, and commented that Farmer FIRST programme may be an important step toward realizing the dream of doubling farmers' income by 2022, as envisioned by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India. A leaflet on 'Machli Palan' (fish culture) was released by the Hon'ble minister on this occasion. Farmers were provided kisan diaries (published by Birsa Agricultural University, Ranchi, 2017), leaflets and other literatures relevant to the project. The workshop was widely covered by the media, and also appeared in ICAR website (link: <http://www.icar.org.in/en/node/12597>).

