Kisan Samvaad Baithak

Focuses on Promoting Floriculture, Better Market Linkages and Farmers' Income in Haryana

New Delhi, October 27

Haryana Kisan Kalyan Pradhikaran organised a *Kisan Samvaad Baithak* at ICAR-IARI, Pusa, New Delhi, to discuss opportunities, challenges and practical measures for promoting floriculture in Haryana. Around 60 progressive floriculture farmers took part in the event along with government representatives, experts and scientists.

The workshop commenced with a warm welcome by Dr. S.S. Sindhu (Emeritus Scientist, ICAR-IARI). Following the opening, Dr. Ravinder Singh Chauhan (CEO, Haryana Kisan Kalyan Pradhikaran) introduced a strategic vision to divide Haryana into 3 distinct floriculture zones based on critical environmental parameters like water availability and soil types (highlighting saline and sodic soils). Dr. Chauhan suggested recommending high-value flower varieties tailored precisely to these regional variations and advocated for a dedicated component exclusively for flowers under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH).



Technical Presentations & Policy Recommendations

• **Floriculture Scope:** Dr. Markandey Singh (Head, FLS, ICAR-IARI) delivered a detailed presentation exploring the vast economic scope of commercial floriculture in Haryana.

• **Protected Cultivation & Supply Chains:** Dr. M.C. Singh (Principal Scientist, CPCT) delivered a lecture emphasizing the absolute necessity of establishing robust production chains for flowers and nursery cultivation. He recommended that a dedicated policy draft be prepared by the working group to map out areas ideal for nursery cultivation, rootstock development, seed production, and overall crop diversification.

• **State Initiatives:** Dr. Mandip (DDH, Jhajjar) presented an overview of the current status of floriculture in Haryana, detailing the operational frameworks of the state's Center of Excellence for Flowers Cultivation and existing departmental schemes.Progressive farmers Raj Kumar of Marodhi Jattan village, Kalanaur, Rohtak and Ranbir Singh of Patlikalan village near Dudhola, Palwal, shared their practical experiences and highlighted the requirements of flower growers at the field level. The discussion emphasised the importance of affordable quality seeds and planting material, accessible technical guidance, timely availability of inputs and better market connectivity.

Sh. Virender Singh Badkhalsa (OSD to Chief Minister, Haryana) addressed the gathering, emphasizing a cultural shift to drive local demand. He proposed encouraging priests (pandits) and event managers to exclusively use natural, real indigenous flowers for spiritual activities and daily temple supplies. He urged organizing structured meetings with event decorators to systematically replace imported plastic/Chinese artificial flowers with native, original flowers, boosting local farmers' income. He also supported creating farmer clusters or associations to directly supply to local temples.

Dr. Pawan Verma, Joint Director, Horticulture Dept. And Sh. Vinod Kumar, progressive farmer, also shared their views, suggestions and provided guidance to the farmers on prevailing schemes as Members of the Working Group.

A presentation on **agro-photovoltaics in ornamental horticulture** was delivered by Saurabh Ganguli of Oak Foundation, Switzerland. The presentation introduced the potential of integrating solar energy generation with ornamental horticulture as an area for further exploration.

Renowned progressive farmer Sh. Raj Kumar (who handles 35 acres of flower cultivation in Rohtak) and Sh. Ranbir Singh shared practical insights on practicing crop rotation, mixed farming, seed production, and nursery development, focusing specifically on evolved Marigold varieties. The farmers collectively highlighted the immense profitability of floriculture for small landholders but put forth critical structural demands:

• **Subsidy Revisions:** A call to revise the current 5-acre lifetime subsidy ceiling, establishing a time-bound refresh period so farmers can claim subsidies on the same land after a set number of years.

• **Portal Integration:** Integration of horticulture crops into digital tracking systems similar to the Meri Fasal Mera Byora (MFMB) portal.

• **Infrastructure:** Providing localized processing units for village clusters, 90% net-house subsidies for nursery growers, and standardizing pack houses/cold storage chains.

Key recommendations emerging from the discussion

The meeting highlighted the following key areas requiring attention to strengthen floriculture in Haryana:



- **Location-specific crop planning:** Promote suitable flower varieties according to agro-climatic conditions, soil type, water availability and market demand.
- **Cluster-based development:** Develop flower-growing clusters to facilitate common facilities, technical support, aggregation of produce and better marketing.
- **Scientific and water-efficient cultivation:** Encourage drip irrigation, mulching, fertigation, scientific nursery management and strict implementation of Integrated Pest Management (IPM).
- **Quality planting material and protected cultivation:** Improve the availability of affordable, high-quality seeds, seedlings and other planting material through reliable nurseries and seed-production systems. Identify suitable crops and locations for protected cultivation and assess its cost-benefit potential, particularly for small landholders.
- **Post-harvest infrastructure and logistics:** Strengthen grading, packaging, storage, cold-chain facilities and transportation to minimise flower losses and maintain produce quality. Explore the introduction of high-tech service vans to address transportation-related challenges.
- **Market-oriented production:** Strengthen direct linkages between farmers and commercial mandis, wholesalers, decorators, event managers, institutional buyers and other potential markets to improve price realisation.

- **Value addition and waste utilization:** Explore flower-processing and value-addition opportunities, including the use of waste flowers from temples and other institutions, cow dung and kikar wood for preparing jigit/incense powder and other value-added products under a *waste-to-wealth* approach.
- **Farmer training and exposure visits:** Expand practical training and exposure visits to successful floriculture farms, research institutions and modern cultivation facilities covering nursery management, irrigation, fertilisation, pest and disease management, harvesting and post-harvest handling.
- **Insurance and crop-specific compensation:** Recommend the inclusion of flower crops under the *Bhawantar Bharpai Yojana* and the PM crop insurance scheme, as applicable. Farmers highlighted that short-duration crops of three to four months may be left out of *Girdawari* records under the *Mukhya Mantri Bagwani Bima Yojana* (MBBY). The need to address this gap, expand the *Kshatipurti Portal* to cover all horticultural crops and revise the existing base compensation of ₹5,000 to realistic, crop-specific amounts was emphasised.
- **Financial support and specialized machinery:** Review the adequacy of existing horticulture subsidies and financial assistance, particularly during the initial years of cultivation, and consider enhancing subsidies on specialized farm machinery and equipment.
- **Affordable electricity and solar infrastructure:** Recommend bringing electricity tariffs for flower cultivation at par with normal agricultural activities instead of commercial rates. Explore the provision of solar tube-well connections, solar-powered irrigation and agro-photovoltaic systems in ornamental horticulture, along with common processing and storage facilities.

The discussions will inform a multi-pronged approach by Haryana Kisan Kalyan Pradhikaran to promote floriculture in the state. The key areas identified include agro-climatic zone-specific varieties, water-efficient cultivation, integrated pest management, improved insurance and compensation arrangements, affordable farm utilities, better logistics, exposure training, waste-to-wealth initiatives and stronger direct market linkages.

The suggestions emerging from the meeting are intended to support the development of practical recommendations for improving the viability of floriculture and encouraging agricultural diversification in Haryana.