

Seed Village Concept

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INTRODUCTION

Seed is the starting point of agriculture and dictates ultimate productivity of other inputs. Good quality seed alone increases the yield by 15-20 per cent. To meet the potential challenge of catering to the food need of 1.4 billion people of our country by 2025, a quantum increase in agricultural productivity is very much essential and hence production and distribution of high quality seeds of improved varieties/hybrids to the farming community is becoming increasingly important. The expansion of agriculture under tropical conditions due to the improvement of cultivars with juvenile period imposed a scientific and technological challenges concerning the seed production under different environmental conditions. There is vast scope to produce and distribute quality seeds in these corps for which seed village concept is a novel and highly practical approach and needs to be promoted to facilitate production and timely distribution of quality seeds of desired varieties at village level. In this context, the concept of seed village which advocates village self-sufficiency in production and distribution of quality seeds is getting momentum. A village, wherein trained group of farmers are involved in production of seeds of various crops and cater to the needs of themselves, fellow farmers of the village and farmers of neighboring villages in appropriate time and at affordable cost is called "a seed village". Its concept is organizing seed production in cluster (or) compact area, replacing existing local varieties with new high yielding varieties, to meet the local demand, timely supply at reasonable cost, self-sufficiency and self-reliance of the village and increasing the seed replacement rate. Its features are: seed is available at the door steps of farms at an appropriate time, seed availability at affordable cost even lesser than market price, increased confidence among the farmers about the quality because of known source of production, producer and consumer are mutually benefited and facilitates fast spread of new cultivars of different kinds.

Establishment of seed villages

The present programme of seed village scheme is having two phases

a. Seed production of different crops

Seed village concept is to promote the quality seed production of foundation and certified seed classes. The area which is suitable for raising a particular crop will be selected and raised with single variety of a kind.

Selection of area:

The area with the following facilities will be selected. Irrigation facilities, suitability of climatic conditions to raise the crop for more than one season, labour availability and knowledge of local farmers on that particular crop, occurrence or outbreak of pest and diseases and past history of the area for suitability to raise seed crop.

To upgrade the quality of farmer-saved seed which is about 80-85% of the total seed used for crop production programme, it is proposed to provide financial assistance for distribution of foundation/certified seed at 50% cost of the seed of crops for production of certified /quality seeds only and to provide training on seed production and technology to the farmers. The seed produced in these seed villages will have to be preserved/stored till the next sowing season. In order to encourage farmers to develop storage capacity of appropriate quality, assistance will be given to farmers for making/procuring of Pusa Bin/Mud bin/Bin made from paper pulp for storing of seed produced by the farmers on their farms.

Seed Supply:

Suitable area for seed production will be identified by the scientists. The foundation seeds, certified seeds or university labeled seeds will be supplied by the University through Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) and Research Stations at 50% subsidy cost to the identified farmers in the area. The farmers will use these quality seeds and take up their own seed production in a small area (1 acre) for their own use. The crops are rice, pulses and

oil seeds. In order to harness the synergy between technologies and the community participation, special emphasis is being given to build farmer's capacity to produce quality seeds. A training on seed production and seed technology to the identified farmers for the seed crops grown in the seed villages will be given for technology empowerment of farmers.

Implementing Agencies:

The implementing agencies will be State Departments of Agriculture, State Agriculture Universities, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, State Seeds Corporation, National Seeds Corporation, State Farms Corporation of India (SFCI), State Seeds Certification Agencies, Department of Seed Certification. One implementing agency will be identified for the area/locality and is to be authorized by the State Government.

b. Training:

The concerned implementing agencies distributing foundation/certified seed will provide the training on seed production and seed technology to farmers for the seed crops grown in the seed villages. The duration of the training would be three days out of which the first one day training will be given to farmers at the time of sowing of seed crop. During this training seed production technique, isolation distance, sowing practices and other agronomic practices to be followed for the given crop will be taught to the farmers. The second one-day training will be organized during flower initiations stage of the seed crop.

The seed growing farmers will be trained to identify off types, rogues and its removal of these plants from the seed plots and to maintain the quality of seed production and other agronomic practices, plant protection measures and harvesting methods to be followed by the farmers. The third day training will be organized/provided after harvest and at the time of seed processing to impart knowledge on seed cleaning, seed grading, seed treating, seed storage, seed packaging

aspects, how to draw the representative seed sample, send the seed sample for seed

testing/local seed testing method to assess the seed germination.



Advantages of Seed Village Concept or Compact Area Approach

1. Solve the problem of isolation. Mainly in cross pollinated crops like maize, sunflower where it required more Isolation distance the problem will be solved by raising a single variety in a large area.
2. Mechanization is possible from sowing to harvesting
3. Post-harvest handling of seed is easy
4. Because of a single variety, the problem of varietal admixture during processing,drying will be avoided
5. Seed certification official will cover large area per unit time
6. Totally it reduces the cost of cultivation
7. Seed will be with high genetic, physical purity