Ministry of Science & Technology

National Certification System for Tissue Culture Raised Plants Stakeholders discuss ways to realize full potential of Certification System

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Tissue Culture Industries, Farmers and Mission Directors of State Horticulture Mission/ Senior Officials of Horticulture Department in the State's dealing with tissue culture plants/quality planting material interacted at a Stakeholder Meet on "National Certification System for Tissue Culture Raised Plants (NCS-TCP)" to identify the way forward to realize the full potential of this certification system which in unique, dynamic and comprehensive in nature.

Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology conducted the meetin New Delhi today to create awareness among all the Stakeholders particularly key Officials from Centre and State Government's Agriculture and Horticulture Departments.

In his keynote address,Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture Cooperation and Farmers Welfare, Shri. S. K. Pattanayakstressed on a system in which all tissue culture material would be procured from accredited laboratories and the need for participation of states in such a system. He said that India is doing very well in tissue culture research and that scientific institutions of international repute is now open for Indian scientists for new research. He underlined the need for fund for popularization of tissue culture from the Ministry of Agriculture.

In his inaugural address, Secretary Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Professor K VijayRaghavan, highlighted the strong foundation of partnership between farmers and scientific community and added the need to have a well articulated project for new improved varieties for horticulture. Since India is the only country to develop this certification system, Professor VijayRaghavan pointed out that this progress can be used for building capacities in the neighbouring countries and that it would be an important step in science diplomacy.

Highlighting the structure and current status of NCS-TCP and the impact it has made on production of quality materials in different states, Dr RenuSwarup, Senior Advisor, DBT stressed on the need for popularising tissue culture plants across India by 2020 and enlisting the participation of the states in the process.

Government of India established the **"National Certification System for Tissue Culture Raised Plants (NCS-TCP)"** authorizing Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology as the Certification Agency vide the Gazette Notification dated 10thMarch 2006 under the "Seeds Act, 1966" for ensuring production and distribution of quality tissue culture planting materials.

With increasing demand for agricultural, forestry, plantation and horticulture crops, the demand for high quality, high yielding, disease free planting stock has been increased significantly over the last two decades. Conventional propagation method which includes sowing of seeds, propagation by cutting, layering etc suffers from the inherent limitations in the number that can be produced, non-uniformity of quality and incidence of diseases. Plant Tissue Culture has emerged as an important biotechnology and commercially viable tool to multiply elite varieties of high quality, disease free and high yielding plants rapidly in the laboratory irrespective of the season of the year. In India the tissue culture Industry is growing at a rate of 15% per annum.

The purpose of NCS-TCP is to ensure production and distribution of quality tissue culture planting materials. NCS-TCP isa unique quality management system, first of its kind in the world which ensures recognition of Tissue Culture Production Facility for the production of quality planting material and certification of end products.

NCS-TCP has made significant impact in the last one decade of its implementation. Currently, around 80 Companies are recognized. Two Referral Centre's andfive Test Laboratories are accredited under this system. The recognized companies are eligible for getting their planting material certified from the Accredited Test Laboratories. So far, more than 275 million Tissue Culture plants have been certified through this system.

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