

Third Trimester and Seasonal Technical Training for Livelihood enhancement through Conservation, Multiplication and Marketing of Traditional Seeds

25 to 27 March 2017, Jaitu

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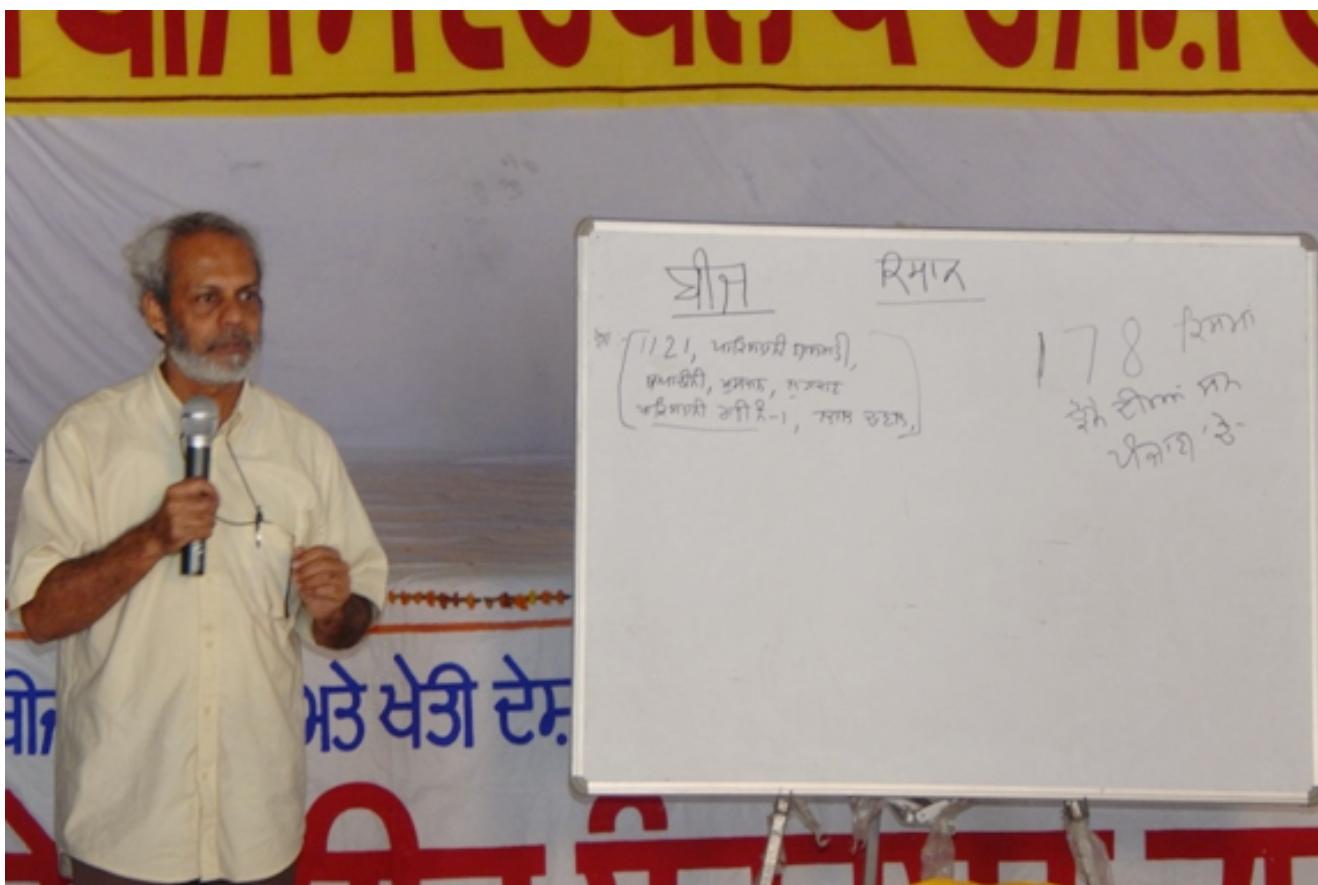
Kheti Virasat Mission

NABARD

INAUGURATION:



The workshop was inaugurated by Umendra Dutt along with Dr. Debal Deb (Scientist and Seed Conserver), Amarjeet Sharma (Master Organic Farmer), Manveer Redu (Pest Literacy Expert) and expert organic farmers Gurmukh Singh, Vinod Jyani & Anirudh Vashishta. All of the above mentioned were introduced to the attendees of the workshop and all of them shared their views on traditional seed saving and also the agenda for the workshop was put forward.



SEED CONSERVATION AND CROP CHARACTERISATION:

Dr. Debal Deb, a prominent scientist and world renowned seed conserver of 1200 varieties of rice, 40 types of Brinzol and a number of other Vegetables also; took sessions on seed conservation and crop characterisation. He laid bare the drastic situation of Punjab in terms of the indigenous varieties of seeds left. Only a fraction of the paddy varieties of Punjab which existed in mid 1960s exist now. He explained the process of crop characterisation to the farmers, which is basically a process of differentiating between crop varieties and maintaining genetic purity of the seeds. He explained the 10 characters of wheat crop that farmers can very easily register. The characters include tiller age, collar colour, flag leaf angle/margin, Awn spread, grain pattern etc. All these can be used to distinguish the mixed up variety from sown variety. He also explained that how to record the characters of onion, Brinzol, rice, millets and a few other crops. In a further meeting with farmers he informed about the verities that they will be characterising.

FARM VISIT AND ON – FARM TRAINING:

Amarjeet Sharma's Farm was visited and Mr. Sharma explained all the processes and methods of seed production and seed saving he has evolved over the years of his farming and now practices them. Later on Dr. Debal Deb took a live session on characterisation of wheat crop by taking 4 plants of different varieties of wheat and 1 plant of barley from Amarjeet Sharma's farm and very engagingly and in a simple manner explained the process of characterisation which scientists do in labs. He showed the differences in node colour, flag leaf angle, Awn spread, grain density, grain pattern etc which were very clearly visible and the exercise was appreciated by the farmers. It followed with many questions from farmers to Dr. Deb and he busted many myths about organic farming and seeds in the session.



Genetic Modification in Seeds: A Big Threat to Indigenous Seeds

Kapil Shah from Jatan Trust, Gujrat , explained what genetic modification in seeds is and what are the associated problems with it. He talked about the scientific process of genetic modification, the potential harmful effects of GM seeds on the environment and human health, loss of bio-diversity due to GM seeds, the failure of Bt Cotton in India, the socio-political impacts of GM seeds in India, risks on farmers, increased input costs, seed sovereignty etc. He also explained that nobody can prevent Genetic pollution and Contamination caused by GM Crops. GM technique has the cruel potential to done a permanent damage to our food chain, environment and health. In the light of above discussed facts he urged the farmers to be active in such issues where the farming community at large is at stake.



NON-SEED PRODUCTION:

Narayan Singh Ji, an expert farmer on grafting from Rohtak – Haryana took a session with the farmers in the workshop. Grafting is the process of crafting a new plant by mixing two plants/trees of same varieties or making a plant/tree without a seed from another plant/tree without using the seed and rather using the branch. It was an engaging session where Narayan Ji showed three different processes of

Grafting in Mango, Guava and Ber practically by bringing plants, cutting them and showed it closely to all participants by personally moving around the seated guests and explained all the processes in small groups.



BIO - PESTICIDES AND BIO - FERTILISER PRODUCTION:

Sanjeev Kumar Scientist of Bio technology Application in agriculture and developer of Different Bio inputs in Agriculture and owner of a bio-inputs production company, From Delhi took a session on, on farm production of Bio-Fertilisers, Nutrient Solutions and Microbial cultures. All the methods and solutions explained by him were easy to do at farm level for farmers. He gave a lot of emphasis on using materials from home itself, for example, for enhancing the zinc content in the soil he suggested not buy zinc from outside and rather use things such as caps of old oil cans which are made of zinc.



DOUBLING THE FARMER'S INCOME:

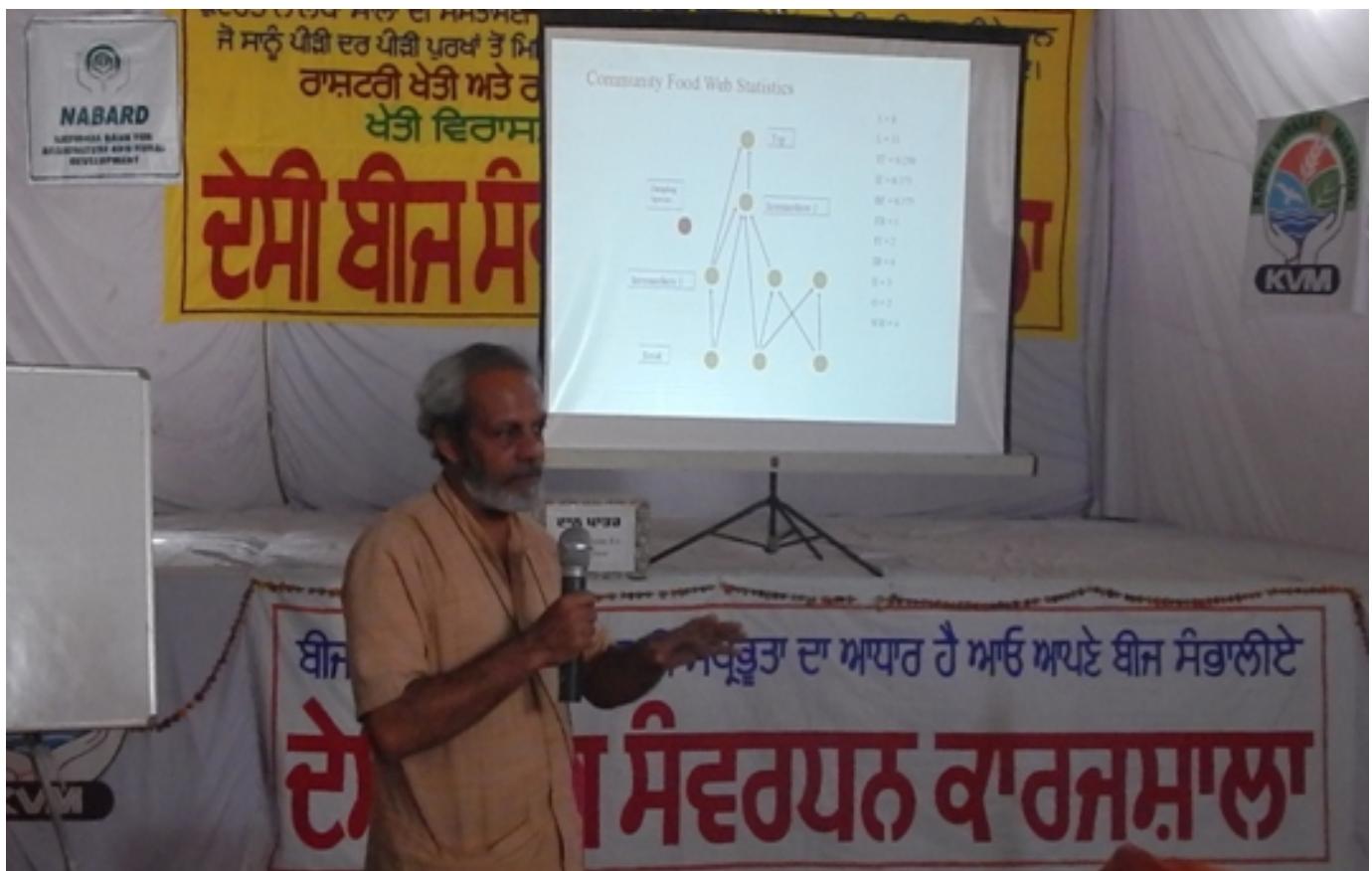
Kapil Shah ji, took a session on the topic of doubling the farmer's income. He is part of the govt. committee on Doubling Farmers Income. He concedes that though it may be very difficult to double the income in recent years, keeping aside inflation, it is possible to increase the income by reducing the input costs in the long run and the only way to do that is through Organic



Farming. He also touched upon the comparison between Conventional and Organic Farming, also explaining the many ways in which Organic Farming is better than

Conventional Farming such as Bio-diversity, low input cost, environmental health, human health, empowerment of farmers. He also said that though in terms of yield Organic Farming is slightly behind but there is a lot of work going on that and infect he showed govt. estimates which prove that the yields of Organically grown Mustard using the System of Mustard Intensification is much higher than the GM Mustard that is being claimed with higher yields.

AGRO-ECOLOGY IN SEED PRODUCTION:



Dr. Debal Deb took another engaging session on Agro-Ecology in seed production. He talked about all the processes that are involved in an ecosystem and how a farmer can make his farm sounder ecologically. He emphasised on the fact that there are no weeds, infect they are plants that provide many elements to the soil such as potassium etc. He shared design principles for farmlands such as the number of trees of varying heights in the farm. He explained the levels of ecosystem, mentioning that the more complex the ecosystem or food system in the farm, the more resilient it is perturbations in the climate and will yield best results. He also spoke about the role of pollinators such as honey bees who will only be thriving if the ecosystem for them exists.

PEST MANAGEMENT:

Manvir Redu Ji, a renowned expert on pests and insects, took session with the farmers. He clarified many misconceptions that farmers have about insects and pests such as misinterpreting insects which kill harmful pests, as pests. He said that in his district, Jind, the incidence of pesticide usage has reduced by 60% due to awareness among farmers about how to identify pests and insects and hence manage them. He also explained the role of insects in Seed Formation in plants/crops. His session was thoroughly enjoyed by the farmers and they took away a wealth of information with them after this session.



Photos of Field Visit



Photos of Seed Training



Photos of Seed Training



Exhibition

