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# ARICARE

news

**ABOUT US:** As the life expectancy of people today has increased, retired life is not meant for taking rest and being homebound. Retired persons have so many things to do and so much to contribute to our society. Moreover, if colleagues & friends can be together even after retirement, it becomes a support system in our lives and keeps us motivated & rejuvenated. With these thoughts, ARICARE was born in 2014. ARICARE is registered under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act, 1961, and with that, we the retired employees of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) have started our journey together. It may also be pertinent to mention that ARICARE is the first of its type of association of ICAR employees in the Eastern India.



## Our Mission

Safeguard general welfare and provide a forum for sustaining the interests of the members.

Further the interests and Social commitments of ICAR/Govt. of India

Strive for redressing problems of the members and their families in relation to pension, medical and other facilities extended from time to time to the retired employees and their families by ICAR/Govt. of India.

Promote Social, Cultural, and welfare activities for the benefit of the members and their families

Assist/participate in Seminar /Symposia/ Workshop organized by ICAR/GOI/SAU etc.

### ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH EMPLOYEES ((ARICARE)

**C-43 New Garia Development Co-Operative Housing Society, Kolkata- 700094**

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**(Registration No. S/2L NO.29668 of 2014-2015)**

Serve as a pool of resource persons readily accessible to GOI/ICAR/State Govt./SAU/ National Financial or Technical Organization in planning/reviewing/HRD /Program implementation/ Environmental protection/ R & D Programmes in Agriculture & Allied Fields

Provide Scientific/Technical/ Advisory assistance in all relevant fields to the NGOs, farming communities and other related organizations without intention of profit.

Maintain close liaison among the members of the society and to assist the members in the event of their any crisis.

Organize Seminars/ Symposia/ Workshops/ Training Programmes etc. dealing with Scientific, Technical, Environmental, Agricultural and Social awareness issues.

#### FROM THE DESK OF PRESIDENT

Retirement(superannuation) as an event and a process is a complex, multidimensional transition involving many possible changes: loss of income, loss of work role, changes in daily activities, changes in social interactions, residential and geographical mobility, public identity, social interaction and so on. Further a retiree, on his receiving the retirement benefits such as provident fund, gratuity, etc. is forgotten by the organization to which he was attached during the service period. His bonds with the organization, colleagues were scrapped overnight even though he has still a lot to offer to the society. He feels totally cut off and grapples to adjust to the void created by cessation of linkages with the institutional colleagues and friends.

In such an environment, some of the retired (but not tired) employees of ICAR formed the “Association of Retired ICAR Employees “(ARICARE) to provide a platform to continue the snapped linkages and foster the spirit of fraternity and fellowship among the retirees. The Association was registered under the Society Registration Act of West Bengal (Registration No. S/2L/29668 of 2014-15) and has entered the third year of its productive existence. ARICARE also recognizes that a wealth of knowledge and experience may be lost to the profession as a result of retirement from the active practice of its retiring members and aims to make our society realize that we have a lot to offer utilizing our long and rich experience. Apart from providing a forum to safeguard the general welfare including those of redressing the problems in relation to pension and other facilities extended to retired employees from time to time, it would foster communication and social activities/programmes which may be enjoyed in retirement making retirement a memorable journey. The organ needs to be strengthened and focused on various problems of retirement and remedial measures for safe and comfortable living. We expect more active feedback and contribution from members making full use of their intellectual resources yet untapped. I hope the vigorous, meaningful, productive activities undertaken by the Association will keep the members young, occupied and healthy in future.

#### FROM THE DESK OF SECRETARY

It was a long cherished craving of Retired ICAR Employees residing in Kolkata and its surroundings, and as a whole in the Eastern region of the country that a platform for Retired ICAR Employees may be established to share their professional/ personal experiences, to perform useful services to the society and to meet their hurdles of life collectively instead of living in isolation. The dream came true on registration of “Association of Retired ICAR Employees “(ARICARE) on 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2014. For larger participation of members and proficient functioning of ARICARE different sub-committees have been formed to cater the needs of key issues. The contributions of different sub-committees have been very laudable. Now, it is a very happy occasion that the ‘e-Journal & Facebook’ sub-committee has brought out the first issue of ‘e-journal’ in the name of ‘ARICARE news’ which can be accessed from any computer/ mobile phone with internet facility. This will keep the members of ARICARE in constant touch and up-to-date informative on various issues. The ‘ARICARE news’ will provide a scope for publishing scholarly articles by members. I hope, with active participation of members the forthcoming issues of ‘ARICARE news’ will be further enriched and will play a vital role as a medium of effective communication among the members.



## ***MEETINGS AND EVENTS***



**GENERAL BODY MEETING AT ICAR-NIRJAFT, KOLKATA ON AUG. 12, 2016**



**FFELICITATION OF DR. B. K. DAS, DIRECTOR, ICAR-CIFRI, BARRACKPORE, WEST BENGAL  
ON SEPT. 27, 2016**



**VIJAYA SAMMILANI AT ICAR-NBSS&LUP,  
KOLKATA ON NOV. 5, 2016**



**VISIT AT BANGKOK, PATTAYA AND  
PHUKHET, THAILAND ON NOV. 17-24, 2016**



## ***NEWS ROUND UP***

### **Q2 Agricultural Growth Fastest in 2Yyears**

Agricultural growth as measured in Gross Value Added (GVA) at constant prices was the highest in two years this July-September quarter, second (Q2) of four in this financial year. The rate of rise was 3.3 per cent, on the back of a record *kharif* harvest, aided by a good monsoon, says P K Joshi, South Asia Director at the International Food Policy Research Institute. The 3.3 per cent growth in GVA compares to 2 per cent in the same period last year, and 1.8 per cent in this year's April-June quarter.

***(Business Standard, New Delhi, 02 December 2016)***

### **A Experts list out challenges in agri sector due to climate change**

At the 4th international Conference on Environment and Agriculture, Agriculture expert Prof Sapna Narula from Delhi-based TERI University said that climate change associated with extremes in maximum and minimum temperatures is changing the agriculture pattern in India and a few places mostly in North India are expected to get more rain while some remain dry, which will impact the agriculture pattern in the country. A 1 meter sea level rise is projected to displace nearly 7.1 million people in India and about 5,764 sq. km. of land area will be lost, along with 4200 km. of roads. More than 50% of India's forests are likely to experience shift in forest types, adversely impacting associated biodiversity, regional climate dynamics as well as livelihoods based on forest products. "Gross per capita water availability in India will decline from 1,820 cubic meters per year in 2001 to as low as 1,140 cubic meter per year in 2050.

***(Hindustan Times, Bhopal, 19 December 2016)***

### **Monsanto says next breakthrough for farmers is a friendly fungus**

Monsanto Co., a lightning rod for critics of modern agricultural techniques, is introducing a new feature next year for its genetically modified corn seeds that it says will not only boost yields but cut down on fertilizer use and carbon-dioxide emissions. The seed giant, together with Danish company Novozymes A/S, has developed a coating for seeds made from a friendly fungus that helps corn plants in their earliest growth stages. Corn crops treated with the new Monsanto-Novozymes microbial—officially known as Acceleron B-300 SAT—had better yields than those without the treatment.

***(Mint, New Delhi, 07 December 2016)***

### **NITI Aayog drawing up farm reforms blueprint**

India is readying a draft of far reaching reforms in the neglected agricultural sector, often seen as a politically sensitive subject by trying to pitch the Niti Aayog's blueprint directly with the states. Liberal contract farming, direct purchase from farmers by private players, direct sale by farmers to consumers, single trader license, single point levy of taxes and taking fruits and vegetables out of the Mandi laws are among a no. of measures being considered by the government to unshackle agriculture. The reforms are part of a blueprint drawn up by Niti

Aayog to double rural in coming 5 years as promised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Niti Aayog has proposed a three-pronged strategy to usher in reforms in agriculture in the short run. The big tact changes mooted and driven by the government's think tank include state level agriculture marketing, land leasing and forestry reforms, which the Niti Aayog feels would push up the sector on to a higher growth trajectory.

*(The Economic Times, Oct. 20, 2016)*

**NITI Aayog launches first ever Agricultural Marketing & Farm Friendly Reforms Index.**

NITI Aayog has identified three key areas for reform - Agricultural market reforms, Land lease reforms and Reforms related to forestry on private land – felling and transit of trees. It has launched an index to rank States and UTs based on implementation of seven provisions proposed under model APMC Act, joining e-NAM initiative, special treatment to fruits and vegetables for marketing and level of taxes in *Mandis*. The Index named as “Agricultural Marketing and Farmer Friendly Reforms Index” has a score with minimum value “0” implying no reforms and maximum value “100” implying complete reforms in the selected areas. States and UTs have been ranked in terms of the score of the index.

Maharashtra (Score 81.7) has implemented most of the marketing reforms and offers best environment for doing agribusiness. Gujarat ranks second with a score of 71.5 closely followed by Rajasthan (70.0) and Madhya Pradesh (69.5). Five states like, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telengana, Goa and Chattisgarh scored above 50. Major states like U.P., Punjab, West Bengal, Assam, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu and J&K could not reach even halfway. Bihar, Kerala, Manipur, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Andaman and Nicobar are not included in the ranking as they did not adopt APMC Act or revoked it.

*(Press Information Bureau, Government of India, NITI Aayog, Oct. 31, 2016)*

**Don't go ahead with import of cheap wheat''**

Dr. M. S. Swaminathan has asked the Government not to go ahead with the import of cheap wheat. Taking cudgels on behalf of the wheat farmers in India, he has made a passionate plea to the Union Government to listen to the request made by wheat farmers of the country to do away with the import of wheat.

Referring to the pleas made to the Centre by wheat farmers for slapping a 40 per cent duty on the wheat to be imported, the nonagenarian scientist said that was the only way to save the Indian farmers from distress sale of locally grown wheat. Prof Swaminathan pointed out that the country's wheat production went up to 17 million tons in 1968 from 6 million tons in 1946. This achievement was possible through synergy between technology and public policy. Technology creates the potential for high yield, while public policy helps to realise the potential,” said Prof Swaminathan. He reminded the authorities that import of wheat has been detrimental to the interests of the farmers and the country. “Our progress in wheat production in the past was hampered by cheap wheat imported through the PL480 programme of the USA. Our goal for 2030 is to produce 150 million tons of wheat from 30 million hectares..

*(The Pioneer, Chennai, 23 December 2016)*



#### **4,000 farmers in banking network**

Without waiting for states to act on implementing cashless transaction in every sphere, including agriculture, the Centre has stepped up its own efforts by enrolling about 4,000 farmers under the banking network in about 20 days. The agriculture ministry has identified 244 Mandis for cashless transactions. More than 3,000 farmers have opened bank accounts in Gujarat and Telengana since November 28, when the campaign was launched. Maharashtra tops the list of Mandis with cashless transaction of about Rs 10 crore a day. More than 75 per cent of the payment in Mandis in Maharashtra is being paid either through cheque or by RTGS. While Tamil Nadu has reported 100 % cashless transaction at one of the Mandis where the Centre has been promoting the concept, it is more than 95 % in agricultural markets in Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. With the prime minister's office monitoring the progress of cashless transaction, closely seeking daily inputs, officials in all ministries are working overtime to show the desired results, the sources said.

***(Financial Chronicle, New Delhi, 24 December 2016)***

#### **Over 8,000 acres of vacant rail land to grow farm products**

Railways has given more than 8000 acres of vacant land for farming purpose under grow more food scheme. The vacant railway land is given on license to railway employees working in Group 'C' and 'D' category under Grow More Food (GMF) scheme, said a senior Railway Ministry official. According to railway policy, licensing of railway land to private parties for the purposes not connected with railway working is not permitted. "Railways has given 8859.18 acres of land under grow more food scheme," he said adding "it helps preventing encroachment of vacant railway land." About 930.75 hectares of railway land is currently encroached upon including over 206 hectares of land under illegal occupation in Northern Railway zone alone. To outwit land encroachers, Railways is now planning to lay new tracks on the extreme ends of existing lines. This would effectively deal with the problem of land encroachment, a politically-sensitive issue in the country.

***(The Financial Express, New Delhi, 24 December 2016)***

#### **Indian Angel Network Wants to Spread its Wings to Agriculture, IoT Next Year**

India's largest angel investor network IAN, or Indian Angel Network, is looking to broad base its investments across sectors like agriculture and internet of things (IoT) in 2017. IAN is looking at newer and diverse sectors in keeping with its theme of being sector-agnostic as it looks to enable follow-on rounds for its portfolio companies and streamline the focus on exits for its investors in 2017. This shift in strategy comes at a time when early-stage investments have dipped significantly to \$258 million as against \$302 million in 2015, as per data from Tracxn. But despite the drop, the angel network has been able to facilitate investments worth Rs 340 crore in seed and early stage across 32 deals. The network was also able to get significant follow-on rounds for 12 of its portfolio companies including online lingerie retailer Pretty Secrets, logistics management firm Zipper and online fashion portal FabAlley, among others. IAN has enabled investments in companies working on stem cell research, clinical drug trials, virtual reality such as Transcell Technologies, Vitas Pharma, SmartVizX, among others this year. The network

received 7,500 applications in 2016 compared to the 6,000 last year with companies increasingly becoming aware of the necessity to deliver on key numbers.

***(The Economic Times, Mumbai, 27 December 2016)***

#### **Patanjali's next big vertical take-off – edible oil**

Coinciding with the 22nd birth anniversary on Jan. 5, Ramdev's yoga foundation, Patanjali will be launching seven varieties of edible oil – rice bran, groundnut, soyabean, sunflower, sesame, canola and virgin coconut oil. It already has a play in mustard oil. All the oils will be physically processed as virgin oils - with no chemicals involved. Patanjali Refined, as the oil vertical is being called is eyeing sales of Rs. 20,000 crore in three years' time, and will be one of the big contributors to the target of Rs. 50,000 crore in 2020 that the company has set itself. The total market size of edible oil in India is around Rs. 1,25,000 crore currently (roughly 50 per cent unorganized sector) and is growing at 7-8 per cent annually. Production units have been taken on lease but own manufacturing units will come up too. Patanjali Refined will be rolled out nationally across one million retail touch-points. 30 per cent of Patanjali sales are through its own stores which are equipped with card readers and digital payment systems.

***(Business Line, Haridwar, 30 December 2016)***

#### **Remote Sensing Tech to Help Map Full Area under Potato, Onion Cultivation**

The agriculture ministry plans to use remote sensing technology to map the area under potato and onion cultivation for the entire country to provide an accurate estimate of the likely production of the respective crops. This would be extended to cover orchards in the next phase. The department was working on uploading maps of fruit crops (from oranges to mango) onto the Bhuvan platform, a software application browser which explores 2D/3D representation of topography. Currently, details of mango orchards are being worked out in three major districts of Karnataka and other states and their database creation is being done on Bhuvan. Maps on areas under mango cultivation have already been finalised in the major mango producing districts of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The ministry is also working on developing a methodology for precision farming and assessment of major vegetable crops under a project called 'Coordinated Horticulture Assessment and Management using Geo-Informatics' (Chaman). Launched in Sept. 2014, the project at an estimated cost of Rs 13.38 crore aims to develop a methodology to estimate the area and production under horticulture crops using remote sensing technology and sample survey methodology.

***(The Economic Times, New Delhi, 30 December 2016)***

#### **Saudi keen on JVs with Indian firms for coconut industries**

The Arab business community is keen to form joint ventures with Indian companies for setting up integrated coconut-based industries in Saudi Arabia. The business offers received at the recently-concluded Foodex Saudi 2016 at Jeddah are a pointer to this. The Coconut Development Board got a series of enquiries from the trade on several value-added products, such as desiccated coconut powder, virgin coconut oil, Neera honey, coconut sugar, etc. The Arab community is highly aware of the health and wellness of coconut and this could be translated into a potential business for the export of coconut products in the entire West Asia. Many of the business groups have evinced interest in the import of de-husked nuts. In the first eight months of the current fiscal year, ending November, India exported 631.22 tons of fresh

coconut; 758.98 tons of coconut oil and 905.99 tons of desiccated coconut to Saudi Arabia. Besides, coconut oil, activated carbon and coconut chutney powder are finding new markets in the country. The figure should further increase with the firming up of more export orders after the trade enquiries from Saudi Arabia materialise into contracts, the official said.

***(Business Line, Kochi, 30 December 2016)***

#### **Agri Growth to be Much Better This Year**

Agriculture growth will be good this year after two years of back-to-back drought, Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh has said. And if rates fall below the minimum support price (MSP), the government will intervene and procure crops, he assured. Agriculture growth stood at 1.2% in fiscal 2015-16 due to drought, up from -0.25% in 2014-15. Ramesh Chand, member of premier think-tank Niti Aayog, said agriculture growth would touch 6% in 2016-17 with a 10% growth in Kharif production as per first estimates at 135 million tons and increase in Rabi area by 6% till date. “With prices of onions, tomato and potato crashing in the wholesale market to Rs 1-2 a kg, the Centre will begin the Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) after states send the proposal for the same. “We are procuring copra and arecanut under MIS to ensure MSP to farmers. The food ministry is also procuring pulses under the price stabilization fund, and is procuring Arhar tur dal in Karnataka after prices fell below the MSP of Rs 5,050 a quintal. Singh said post demonetisation, farmers faced difficulty but it would not impact the ongoing sowing of Rabi (winter) crops like wheat.

***(The Economic Times, New Delhi, 31 December 2016)***

#### **After currency ban, shrimp have caught viral fever**

India’s seafood export story is getting bleak as sporadic viral attacks in some shrimp farms and the government’s demonetization move are causing a temporary setback. Exports, which saw an uptick in the first few months of this year, is taking a beating now following sporadic viral attacks on cultured shrimp in South Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. Culture shrimp comprise 70 % of the value of total seafood exports from India which stood at Rs. 30,421 crore in 2015-16. The current crisis can create a shortage in the market considering that production isn’t on full swing in other major producing countries like Thailand and Indonesia. India continues to be one of the leading suppliers of cultured shrimp as South East Asian Countries are yet to recover fully from the diseases that struck their farmers a couple of years ago. Despite hiccups, shrimp production from farms is expected to touch over 4 lakh tons in the current year. Following demonetization measures in Nov., exporters are finding it difficult to pay wages as fishermen are used to cash payments at landing centers.

***(The Economic Times, Dec. 21, 2016)***

#### **FROM THE DESK OF EDITORIAL BOARD**

The first issue of the Newsletter, being the inaugural one may lack quality output which certainly demands upgradation based on your critical analysis and valuable comments. The Editorial Board likes to seek your kind intervention to enrich News Roundup Section with your feedback. A separate section on “Comments from the Members” will be introduced from the next issue containing your opinion on emerging issues which are confronting the growth of Indian Agriculture and recommendations to restore its lost pride in the national economy