

**REPORT ON THE ALL INDIA SEMINAR ON SUSTAINABLE SUGARCANE DEVELOPMENT
AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGY TOOLS FOR HIGHER SUGARCANE PRODUCTIVITY
HELD ON 1ST MARCH 2014 AT PUDUCHERY.**

Preamble:

The stagnating yield of sugarcane and the limitation of resources like water, fertilizers seed etc, put pressure on the cane researchers to look for various technologies for sustainable and productivity improvements in sugarcane. With the new ideas of **sustainable sugarcane initiative** to increase the productivity with limited resources will go a long way to improve the yield. With this idea the **The Sugar Technologists' Association of India (STAI)** in association with **The South Indian Sugarcane and Sugar Technologists Association (SISSTA)** organized **All India Seminar on 'Sustainable Sugarcane Development and Emerging Technology Tools for Higher Sugarcane Productivity on 1 March 2014 at Puducherry.** Deliberations were made by various stakeholders like Govt. officials, scientists, Input suppliers, Development workers from Sugar Industries of Tamil Nadu, Puduchery, Andhra Pradesh & Karnataka. The seminar was inaugurated by **Dr. Sandeep Saxena**, IAS, and APC& Principal Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu. The keynote address was delivered by Dr. N. Vijayan Nair Director Sugarcane breeding Institute, Coimbatore. **Mr K Nagendran**, Vice President, STAI and **Mr RV Vatnal**, President, SISTA welcomed the delegates and thanked for attending the seminar on a very important and burning issue of Sustainable Sugarcane Initiative and Mechanization of Sugarcane Cultivation. **Dr Sandeep Saxena** said that "Tamil Nadu government is mulling to provide subsidy to sugarcane cultivators to promote the use of mechanized harvesters for reducing harvesting costs, drip irrigation and support the whole mechanism of sugarcane production"

"Due to shortage of labour, cane cultivators are getting migrant labours to work in their field and they charge more money to do the harvesting. The cane growers need to adopt the pattern of cultivation including wide row cultivation suitable for mechanized harvesting", he added further.

Dr Sandeep Saxena also honored a progressive farmer from **Mr P. Poorasamy**, Perangiyur village in Villupuram district, Tamil Nadu for achieving Highest Cane yield by adopting SSI Technique.

The Technical Session of the programme was chaired by **Mr K Nagendran**, Vice President, STAI and Co-Chaired by **Dr. S. Panneerselvam**, Head, SRS, Cuddalore and **Mr. Krishnan**, Vice President, Rajshree Sugars & Chemicals Ltd.

Leading scientists and experts submitted 15 papers on various topics ranging from Nursery to Crop Production and Mechanization, Nine of which were presented during the programme by eminent speakers like Dr Gopinathan, Solidaridad-South & South East Asia, Mr S.J. Lakshman, Deputy General Manager, Rajshree Sugars & Chemicals Ltd., Mr. N. Sezhian, General Manager, Sakthi Sugars Ltd, Dr. S. Sithanatham, Director, SABRC, Dr Manjunath Rao, General Manager-EID Parry.

Recommendations by the Expert Panel:

After deliberations on Soil Organic Carbon Improvements, Bio – Fertilizer Usage, Wider Spacing, Reduced Seed Rate, Balanced Nutrient Application, Bio Control Agents for the Control of Borers, Soil Properties, Complete Mechanization starting from Land Preparation to Harvest and Weed Management, following recommendations were made by the expert panel:

Need for productivity improvement and to act on certain impediments for the implementation of the Sustainable Sugarcane Initiative may be cleared to speed up the process such as :

1. Need for enhanced co-operation from Micro Irrigation companies for installation of Drip Irrigation equipments and faster after sales service
2. Recognizing the need for ready availability of water soluble fertilizers at an effective cost and subsidy basis up to 5 HA per farmer must be considered.
3. Need for removing the subsidy component Ratio of 80:20 (small farmers Vs other farmers) need to be removed to enhance the enrollment of more farmers for the drip installations. The expectation of cane department officials is at least 60:40 ratio if not 50:50.
4. Complete set of Machinery and Implements right from Ploughing to Harvest is required in each Sugar Mill Area (at least 5 sets of implements per sugar mill).
5. SSI should also include regular single bed and direct seedling planting areas also. (currently only chip bud seedling planted crop with drip is eligible)
6. A single window clearance for SSD / SSI and distribution of Water Soluble Fertilizers is required to speed up the entire process.
