



ASSAM AGRIBUSINESS AND RURAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECT (APART) E-newsletter

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JUGEN BORDOLOI LEADS THE WAY IN DISSEMINATING CLIMATE RESILIENT TECHNOLOGY AMONGST HIS FELLOW FARMERS

"The farmers who succeed are the ones who are going to incorporate new technologies."

Stan Blade, CBC News, February 10, 2016



The above statement is apt to describe the person named Sri Jugen Bordoloi, a resident of Jurgaon village of Morigaon district and a progressive farmer under Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Morigaon. He was one of the many farmers of the district who got the opportunity to go for an exposure visit cum field day of Boro Paddy organized by Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Nagaon. The program was conducted to showcase the performance of BINA Dhan 11 grown as demonstration by KVK Nagaon under the aegis of APART.

During the meeting, it was informed by the IRRI scientists' that BINA Dhan 11, a short duration, high yielding variety of rice has many advantages over the other widely prevalent varieties in Assam. This increased the curiosity of the farmer to test the performance of the said variety by growing in his own fields.

He was happy to know that the variety is high yielding in nature and is of shorter duration in comparison to

the other varieties. However, the most interesting quality he found was that the harvested seeds of one season can be sown immediately in the next season after proper drying.

During the visit, he casually brought 4 - 5 panicles from the field in order to show to his fellow farmers who couldn't attend the technology showcase. The farmer had sown the seeds of the panicle he brought, and transplanted the seedlings. These seedlings were just sufficient for transplanting two and a half rows. However, he was surprised when these two and half lines of crop gave him stupendous result with 4 kg of harvested seed.

He said "It was a great learning experience at the exposure visit where I first came to know about BINA Dhan11 and its advantages over other varieties. My curiosity for the variety compelled me to grow the available amount of seed to see its performance and the result really satisfied me. I am very happy that being the President of Kalang Kapili SHG, I got the chance to help my fellow farmers by introducing a new variety which I think will be a blessing for our village".

His successful experiment and results have attracted other interested farmers who have approached KVK Morigaon, in the meantime, to enquire the source of the seed. In view of the interest and enthusiasm of the farmers of Jurgaon village, KVK has planned a series of demonstrations for the upcoming Boro season.

CAPACITATING ON WAREHOUSING AND WAREHOUSE RECEIPT FINANCING

ARIAS Society organized an exposure trip was organized by ARIAS society to understand the business model supporting warehousing services to farmers. The team consisting of officials from Project Coordination Unit (PCU), APART, Assam State Agricultural Marketing Board (ASAMB) & Assam State Warehousing Corporation (ASWC) visited warehousing clusters in Bihar, that are managed by Ergos, from 21-24 Dec. 2019.

Small and marginal farmers rarely use warehousing facilities. They either sell their marketable surplus immediately after harvest or use traditional storage facilities. Such storage methods are subject to rodent attack and infestation leading to high wastage and quality deterioration. Moreover, the business models supporting services - warehousing, loans & market-

linkages for farmers are not present in Assam, thus preventing the farmers to convert their products to a financial asset.

Ergos, a Bengaluru-based agri-supply chain firm is solving this warehousing problem of farmers. Ergos provides access to professional warehousing services to the farmers in their geographical vicinity as well as market linkages in a scalable and cost-effective manner. Ergos engages with a set of warehouses that are scientifically constructed and plans are approved by NABARD, WDRA, or State Agriculture Departments. During their tour, the team visited different warehouses in two different clusters and interacted with the officials handling these warehouses and also farmers who are availing the services besides officials from Ergos.



Visit to the Warehouses in Samastipur district, Bihar

Key aspects on the business model of warehousing:

- Ergos offers scientific warehousing solutions and services to smallholder farmers in rural Bihar. It operates a chain of efficient and hygienic warehousing facilities situated within a range of three to four kilometres from the farmers' locations. It provides 24/7 access to farmers to transact, sell, or hold the

commodities.

- Ergos also offers various packages that customers can choose according to their requirements; these packages include warehousing, bank linkage for eWHR financing, forward linkages, processors, etc. Ergos uses technology (IT) based platform for monitoring all aspects of warehousing operations.

INITIATION OF CREDIT LINKAGE FOR FISHERY FARMERS THROUGH APART

To initiate and explore the credit linkage for the fish farmers for sustainability, profitability and adaptability of the project interventions, a meeting was convened with officials from Canara Bank Officials, and the APART officials including the Fishery Coordinator and Financial Services Specialists, and it was agreed to conduct joint field visits to Fishery clusters / FPGs with Canara Bank officials to facilitate the Bankers understand the Fish value chain activities.

The team along with the District Fishery Officials conducted the visit to Morigaon, Darrang and Kamrup districts in between 20th November to 4th December 2019. Discussions and interactions were held with the fishery farmers, cluster groups on the various benefits

that can be availed through APART, like soft loans for Farmer Producer Groups. The team also visited the fishery ponds, developed under APART, in some of the clusters. The team from Canara bank gave a brief on the financial services available with the bank and how they can avail the benefits for better sustainability and profitability from their fisheries.

As a follow up of the initiative, a broad framework is been prepared by APART to take up the credit linkage of the farmers with leading public sector banks like United Bank of India, State Bank of India and Canara Bank, among others. APART will support the farmers in the documentation process as required by the respective banks.

VISIT OF DR JON HELLIN, THE PLATFORM LEADER, SUSTAINABLE IMPACT, INTERNATIONAL RICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE (IRRI)

A National Livestock & Poultry Show (NLPS) was organised by the Dept. of Animal Husbandry & Veterinary, Govt. of Assam from Nov 8-10, 2019 at Guwahati, where Chief Minister, Sri Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated the show in presence of Union Minister, Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, Sri Giriraj Singh. The inaugural meeting was also attended by State Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Minister Sri Atul Bora and ALPCO Chairman Sri Manoj Saikia. More than 50,000 farmers and entrepreneurs from different parts of the country visited the exhibitions.

The activities undertaken by the World Bank funded Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART) were exhibited by Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Services Society (ARIASS) in collaboration with all international Agencies including IRRI. IRRI exhibited climate-resilient technologies and different machineries introduced under APART. The farmers were very enthusiastic to understand the technical know-how on the usage of machineries, climate-resilient stress-tolerant rice varieties and the other IRRI technologies showcased.



Participants of the Workshop at KVK Kamrup

On the last day of the exhibition, Dr Jon Hellin, the platform leader, sustainable impact, International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) visited the exhibitions and interacted with the farmers to understand their requirements. Dr Jon shared that such efforts will help in faster communication and better reaches of IRRI technologies to the farming community. Dr Sudhanshu Singh, Senior Scientist and project leader APART also accompanied Dr Jon during the discussion and focused on how these technologies will play an important role in changing the life of the farmers.

Dr Jon also attended a three-day training on resource efficient crop establishment methods, best management practices and integrated weed management organized under rice program of Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART) at Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Kamrup. The program was organized by Assam Agricultural University (AAU) & International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) on Nov 11-13, 2019.

The core objective of the program was to build capacity of the extension functionaries on improved technological options in rice value-chain. Addressing the training program Dr Jon Hellin appealed all the participants to work hard for disseminating climate resilient technologies for faster adoption by the

farmers. "It is very encouraging that the STRVs are performing very well in stress-prone areas of Assam. For sure, it will create a sustainable impact on the livelihood of small and marginal farmers" he added. Dr Sudhanshu Singh, motivated the trainees to grab the opportunities of the project for betterment of the rice sector of the state. He also stressed on building capacity of each and every professional for updated knowledge and its fruitful implementation in the farmer's field. Attending the capacity building program Dr. Rupam Borgohain, Principal Scientist, AAU described the present agricultural scenario of Assam, and pathways for going forward to improve rice value-chain through introduction of improved technologies. He reiterated the commitment of AAU carrying for successful implementation of the project. Dr. Kanwar Singh, Resident Consultant-IRRI dug into the problems in rice cultivation created by the noxious plants and the management options available. He also briefed about the climate-resilient technologies that are best suited for the areas and how the GIS technology is being used for mapping the stress-prone areas and rice-fallow areas. During the three-day long training programme, Dr Rahul Priadarshoni, Vipin Kumar, Mr. Jyoti Bikash Nath Specialist, IRRI, Dr. R. K. Thakuria, Rijuwal Helim from AAU, Dr. Samiran Pathak, Dr. Nirmal Majumdar from Horticultural Research Centre delivered lectures on different location specific technologies.



Training programme held at KVK Kamrup

The valedictory function of the training program was attended by Dr. Dhirendra Nath Kalita, Principal Scientist and Head, KVK, Kamrup. He stressed on the adoption of the best management practices and realization of minimum support price for the produce to the farmers. The program was attended by thirty-four extension functionaries from Kamrup, Darrang, Goalpara, Morigaon, Cachar, Barpeta, Dhubri, Kokrajhar and Nalbari districts of Assam.

IRRI is a technical partner in APART to improve the

resilience of rice value-chain, for small and marginal farmers and agri-entrepreneurs currently in 24 districts of Assam. IRRI is providing technical assistance to improve rice production systems and management practices by promoting climate resilient technologies, encouraging adoption, and facilitating market linkages. The project among others aims at tackling Assam's frequent flooding as well as droughts, which have heightened climate change concerns in Assam.

EXHIBITING TECHNOLOGIES TO THE FARMERS

A technology showcase cum exhibition was organized by the Department of Agriculture, Govt. of Assam and International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) under APART in Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Jorhat on January 3, 2020. The exhibition was attended by more than 100 farmers including 22% women from Jorhat, Majuli, Sivasagar, Charaideo and Golaghat districts. The purpose of the

exhibition-cum-exposure visit was to create awareness on different activities of APART and technical know-how on technologies introduced for rice value-chain. Major emphasis was on showcasing the necessity and way for mechanization in rice production system of Assam.



Showcasing of technologies to the farmers

The exhibition included live demonstrations of different crop establishment methods including wet direct-seeding of rice, dry direct-seeding of rice and mechanical transplanting of rice combined with selected frontline farm as well as postharvest technologies including solar bubble dryer and dry grinding machine. In the outset, Mr. Madharam Patiri, Nodal officer, APART, Department of Agriculture welcomed all the participants and elaborated the purpose of the event,

and how it would be helpful to the farmers. Dr. Kanwar Singh, Resident Consultant, IRRI for APART, highlighted the advantages of these technologies in increasing productivity, profitability and improving the quality of paddy produce. He also expressed his gratitude to the implementing partners, Assam Agricultural University and Department of Agriculture for popularizing BINA Dhan 11 during Boro (summer season) and Sali (winter season) in Assam.

Dr. Rupam Borgohain briefed about the role of AAU in implementing the APART activities through KVKs/RARSs/HRS. He also appealed the farmers to take the advantage of the project through custom hiring centre. Dr. Virendar Kumar, Dr. Suryakanta Khandai, Vipin Kumar, Vivek Kumar, Jyoti Bikash Nath, Saurojyoti Baishya, Ankita Sahu and Urmil Borthakur from IRRI demonstrated the machines and described

their operational process, use and benefits in rice production system to the delegates and farmers. The technologies namely Battery-operated Sprayer, Mechanical Transplanter, Drum-seeder, Axial Flow Thresher, Portable Rice mill, Crop Harvester, Power Weeder and Solar Bubble Dryer were displayed and live demonstration of each technology was carried out in front of the farmers.

JOINT MEETING OF GRANT THORNTON AND AAPIAM

A joint meeting of Grant Thornton (GT)- Morigaon, the Cluster Development Technical Agency (CDTA) with the Agriculture and Allied Processors Industrial Association of Morigaon (AAPIAM) was held in Morigaon to discuss on the importance of FSSAI for taking up food processing entrepreneurship, during November-December 2019. A ten member sub-committee under fruit processing sector was formed among the members of AAPIAM to identify the problems and issues related to this sector.

This sub-committee will be responsible for mobilizing the entire fruit processing sector of Morigaon District and work as first contact point relating to the problems and issues faced by the fruit processing units in the district. The subcommittee will further take up the matter with the President, AAPIAM for further solution. Till date, GT have started facilitating 6 nos of FSSAI Certificates for fruit processing units, which are on process.

ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFICATION FOR FRUIT PROCESSING UNITS UNDER AAPIAM

Grant Thornton (GT)-the Cluster Development Technical Agency (CDTA) under Industries Department along with the Agriculture and Allied Processors Industrial Association of Morigaon (AAPIAM) undertook the process of obtaining ISO 9001:2015 certifications for various fruit processing units.

entrepreneurs, and around 6 units came forward to apply for the certification of their units.

The ISO 9001:2015 standard is a certification issued to organizations/firms/units to demonstrate their ability to consistently provide products and services that meet customer and regulatory requirements and also demonstrate a continuous improvement. The importance of the certification was explained to the

The following units which their received ISO certifications from the International Accurate Certification and UASL:

- Ramkrishna Food Products, Fruit Processor
- Choudhury Food Industry, Spice Unit
- Gharuwa Food Processing Centre, Fruit Processor
- ADP Enterprises, Fruit Processor
- SM Agro Feeds Industry, Animal Feed Unit
- H M S Animal & Fish Feed Industry, Animal Feed Unit



AAPIAM members receiving ISO Certificates



AAPIAM members with their ISO Certificates

NORTH EAST FOOD SHOW 2019

A nine member team from Agriculture and Allied Processors Industrial Association of Morigaon (AAPIAM) participated in the North East Food Show 2019 held at Shillong from 4th– 6th Dec 2019. The following participants displayed their products in individual stalls allocated to them:

- H M S Animal & Fish Feed Industry for Animal Feed Unit
- Choudhury Food Industry for Masala.

- Jeuti Food Product Industry for Fruit Processing.

The participants got the opportunity to interact with different industry leaders and service providers and also acquired ideas on new products and their packaging. They have also felt their need to have exposure visit relating to new product manufacturing and packaging for fruit processing including training with CFTRI Mysuru.



The participants in their stalls during North East Food Show 2019

APART ACTIVITIES



Hon'ble Minister of Fisheries, Assam distributing inputs under Polyculture in Cachar District



Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture, Assam visiting the FPGs under APART in Golaghat district



Awareness program on APART conducted by Dept of Handloom & Textiles at Saru Tezpur, Rampur Dev Block



Chipsona 4 and K.Suriya Variety planted in Zero Tillage plots in APART districts

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