

Minutes of the meeting held under the Chairmanship of Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Balyan, Hon'ble Minister of State, Agriculture, in Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi, on 19.10.2016 to review the activities undertaken by the National Horticulture Research Foundation (NHRDF), under MIDH.

A meeting was held on 19.10.15 under the Chairmanship of Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Balyan, Hon'ble Minister of State, Agriculture, in his chamber, to review the activities undertaken by NHRDF, a National Level Agency under MIDH. Dr. R.P. Gupta, Director, made a brief presentation on the programmatic interventions being undertaken by NHRDF.

The following officials participated in the meeting :

1. Mr. Shakil P. Ahammed, Joint Secretary (MIDH)
2. Dr. S.K. Malhotra, Horticulture Commissioner
3. Dr. T. Jankiram, ADG (Hort.), ICAR
4. Ms. Anuradha Vemuri, Additional Commissioner (CDB & NHB)
5. Dr Bijender Singh, President, NHRDF
6. Dr. R.P. Gupta, Director, NHRDF

Initiating the discussion, Dr. R.P. Gupta outlined the Vision and Mission of the organization and explained the organisational framework established with NAFED sponsorship. He elaborated on the available infrastructure, R&D setup, including R&D work on onion and garlic. The activities pertaining to production of seed and planting material of onion and garlic through its registered growers and supply to various state governments, R&D institutions and farmers was also highlighted.

Hon. MOS queried about the strategy to be adopted for avoiding recurrent seasonal shortage of onion and resulting price volatility across the country. Chairman, NHRDF explained the need to expand area under onion cultivation, especially in non-traditional areas and to increase onion storage structures in major onion producing states.

JS (MIDH) mentioned that about 40 lakh tons of onion crop was stored and most of the onion stored was Rabi onion and it would be useful for states to increase production in kharif and late kharif seasons.

Horticulture Commissioner explained the economics related to onion production and stated that as per available statistics, about 14 lakh tonnes were consumed in a month. He mentioned that long day onion production was picking up in H.P., Uttarakhand and J&K.

Following detailed discussions, following points for action are summarised as under :

- More emphasis be given to areas expansion programme under kharif and rabi onion in UP, Bihar, West Bengal and Jharkhand, the non-traditional onion growing states.
 - Kharif onion production technology bulbets should be widely demonstrated and popularised.
 - The improved onion storage structures to be popularised in MP, UP, Haryana, Bihar and Rajasthan, the non-traditional states.
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- ICAR institutes like CIPHET, CIAE, IIHR etc. and state/central agricultural universities should carry out work on standardising parameters for long term storage of onion in refrigerated cold store.
 - Since only 05 months are left for financial year, 2015-16, outlay for NLA may be revised, as per availability of budget under MIDH.

The meeting ended with thanks to the Chair.