

ICAR-INDIAN INSTITUTE OF WATER MANAGEMENT, BHUBANESWAR

Agro-Advisory to farmers under prevailing COVID-19 situation for the month of May, 2021

Maintenance of Personal Health & Hygiene

- ❖ Social distancing of at least 2 meter to be maintained among the farm workers during all agricultural operations.
- ❖ Always wear mask during farm operations. If you are using N95 mask, one is sufficient, but if you are using cloth mask, use double mask covering entire nose and mouth. The masks once used should be cleaned and sanitized for next wear.
- ❖ All farm equipment and accessories used for harvesting, threshing and other activities to be sanitized by keeping in 3% bleaching powder solution for 30 minutes before, after and during farm operations.
- ❖ Maintenance of personal hygiene and frequent washing of hands up to elbow, feet and face with soap is advisable during every farm operations like harvesting, threshing, etc. and eating.
- ❖ Do not touch eyes, mouth and nose with dirty hands.
- ❖ Immediately take a bath with soap after reaching home before meeting with family members.
- ❖ Restrict your movement as much possible and try to stay home.
- ❖ Don't share your food and drinking water with friends.
- ❖ While selling products ensure social distancing of all customers.
- ❖ During summer, farmers should wear gamuchha or pagadi or turban on their head and should take sufficient drinking water and umbrella along with them to avoid sunstroke casualty.
- ❖ National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) Platform can be used for marketing agricultural produce along with mandis and local markets.
- ❖ Download 'Aarogyasetu mobile app' for essential health services / information.
- ❖ Get yourself vaccinated by registering in Aarogyasetu or in www.cowin.gov.in portal.

Water Management advisory

- ❖ Follow weather forecasting of IMD for all the districts of Odisha from TV, radio and newspapers during this month and act accordingly.

Irrigation Infrastructure development and maintenance

- ❖ Immediately repair the damages in various soil water conservation structures to store water before arrival of monsoon.
- ❖ Desilt drainage channels to maintain its carrying and drainage capacity.
- ❖ Desiltation of the ponds or other water bodies should be carried out for enhancing their storage capacity.

- ❖ WUAs are advised to prepare the irrigation schedule for *Kharif* crops based on the cropping pattern and water requirement of the crops grown in the command area in consultation with the farmers to deliver water equally to head, medium and tail region and to monitor the canal water delivery schedule as prepared.

Field management

- ❖ Utilize paddy straw for mulching of crops during *summer* season. Paddy straw will help to conserve moisture, weed control and soil temperature control.
- ❖ Avoid burning paddy straw/farm wastes as it deteriorates soil health by reducing soil moisture, soil organic carbon, and evolves green-house-gases.
- ❖ Avoid using raw urban wastewater for irrigating *summer* crops during dry spell. If it is the only water source, then do not use directly from wastewater channels or source. Allow to settle for at least 48 hours after using bleaching powder at the rate of 4-5 gram per 1000 litre water.
- ❖ Collect farm wastes and paddy straw and leftover fodder after feeding animals for composting/vermicomposting.
- ❖ Deep summer ploughing should be done to expose the rhizomes of perennial weeds and microbes to sunlight for their destruction.
- ❖ Farmers should practice summer ploughing and levelling off the field.
- ❖ The field bunds should be repaired for rainwater harvesting.

Crop management

- ❖ It is optimum time for sowing of tosa jute or Olitorious jute.
- ❖ Both paddy and wheat grains after threshing should be sun dried to a moisture level of less than 14% before storage.
- ❖ Rice crop should be harvested at physiological maturity to minimize shattering loss of grains.
- ❖ Never heap the grains with high moisture content to avoid storage pathogens and reduce quality grains.
- ❖ Green manuring with *Sesbania* in lowlands and sunhemp in uplands helps in saving chemical fertilizers and improving soil health. Green manure crops can be sown in areas that received more than 40 mm rainfall.

Horticultural crop management

- ❖ To avoid incidence of mango fruit borer, farmers are advised to spray with Dimethoate @ 2.0 ml/litre of water at marble stage(30-40 days after fruit set) of fruit and repeat a spray after 15 days if needed.
- ❖ Apply recommended dose of fertiliser in perennial fruit orchard (mango, guava, sapota, custard apple, coconut) in the month of May and mulching should be done in the fruit tree basin with dry leaves/ paddy straw.

- ❖ For establishment of new fruit orchard field layout and pit digging should be completed in the month of May so that soil solarisation helps to kill harmful micro-organism and weeds from soil.

Livestock and Aquaculture Management

- ❖ No or minimal water exchange should be followed in carp polyculture / low-density shrimp monoculture.
- ❖ Periodic application of liming material helps in maintaining water quality.
- ❖ Preferably avoid over-feeding, over-fertilization and over-medication in aquaculture.
- ❖ Keeping consumer demand during COVID-19 pandemic, phased harvesting of fish involving minimal work force is recommended.
- ❖ Provide ample quantity of clean and cool drinking water to animals during the day time.
- ❖ Tethered animals (animals tied with rope for grazing) should be tied under shade during the day and free-ranging animals should be allowed to graze during the cool hours of morning and afternoon.
- ❖ The animals should be vaccinated for Haemorrhagic Septicemia and Black Quarter diseases.
- ❖ Get your sheep and goats vaccinated with Enterotoxemia.
- ❖ In case of animal health issues, contact the mobile veterinary clinic in your area.
- ❖ The grazer of community herd should be tested for COVID-19 symptoms. If any symptom found, He/She should be changed.