

Agro-Advisory to farmers under prevailing COVID-19 situation (June, 2020)

Maintaining Personal Hygiene

- Social distancing of at least 1 to 2 meter to be maintained among the farm workers during all agricultural operations.
- Always wear mask during farm operations. Chunni, gamcha, towel, rumal or any other cloth can be used as mask to cover nose and mouth. The masks once worn may be cleaned in soap for next use.
- 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.
- All farm equipment and accessories used for harvesting, threshing and other activities are to be kept in hot sun for their disinfection.
- Frequently wash your hands with soap and don't touch your nose, eyes & mouth with fingers.
- When coming to home from outside, keep your dress materials outside of your room. Touch other items only after washing your hands in soap thoroughly.
- Restrict your movement as much possible and try to stay home.
- Download 'Aarogyasetu mobile app' and install in your mobile phone for getting various information relating to Covid-19.
- All should bring their food and water individually, should eat separately, and should not share.
- While working in the field, farmers are advised to put cap and gamucha in their head to avoid sunstroke causality.

Weather advisory

- Follow the advisory of IMD with respect to occurrence of rain as well as other weather parameters through TV/Radio/Newspaper.

Irrigation Infrastructure development and maintenance

- For conservation of rain water, the farmers should repair and reshape the field bunds and contour bunds with suitable heights, excavate farm ponds, remove sediments (desiltation) and weeds from existing ponds, lining of ponds to be done.
- Clean and maintain pond-dykes, apply organic manures for successful on-dyke horticulture; and clean approach channel and/ or inlet-pipe to ensure diversion of excess water delivered through canal to water storage pond.
- Strengthen contour bund and field bunds by putting soil over it or by grass sodding. Repair all the damages in the field bunds before onset of monsoon.
- WUAs are advised to participate in the maintenance of canals and associated irrigation infrastructures; cleaning of weeds, repairing of canals and field channels in canal command areas

- All the types of wells need to be cleaned to enhance capacity and to store good quality water.
- All drainage channels where siltation has occurred, needs to be desilted before the onset of monsoon, to maintain its carrying and drainage capacity

Land preparation

- Harvest paddy, groundnut and store the farm produce in a covered place and collect farm wastes and remaining paddy straw after feeding animals for composting/vermicomposting.
- Burning paddy straw/farm wastes is not advisable as it deteriorates soil health by reducing soil moisture and soil organic carbon and evolves green-house-gases.
- Summer ploughing is advised using the current rainfall to increase soil profile moisture storage. Apply organic manure and compost and thoroughly mix with the soil.
- Apply lime in furrow @ 250-500 kg/ha or mix paper mill sludge @ 2t/ha under upland condition in acid soils.
- Sow green manuring crop sesbania/sunhemp till 10th June to improve soil nutrient status. Use 10 kg seeds of sesbania/ sunhemp per acre.
- Prepare nursery beds for transplanted paddy and excavate pits for fruit and tree species. Apply farmyard manure or compost and basal doses of fertilizers.
- Avoid using urban wastewater for land preparation. 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.

Crop management

- Collect good quality seeds, sow direct seeded rice in lowland before the onset of monsoon.
- Grow nursery for transplanted rice immediately after occurrence of monsoon in a well-prepared nursery bed.
- Sow non-paddy crops viz., maize, cowpea, pulses (arhar, blackgram,) ragi, groundnut, sesame, ricebean, castor, pumpkin and sweet potato in upland.
- On occurrence of root rot in vegetables, spray Metalaxil +Mancozeb. Staking to be done in banana plants to avoid lodging.

Aquaculture management

- Avoid (4-O's): over stocking, over feeding, over fertilization and over medication; this will help in aquaculture water management.
- Avoid water exchange and prefer water top-up to minimize water loss and pumping cost. Use aerators if available to avoid oxygen depletion problem.
- Reduce feeding to slow the growth rate of the fish to delay harvesting. Produce fish feed using locally available ingredients (rice bran, groundnut oil cake, mustard oil cake).
- Harvest phase wise and sell at local market is advisable. Farmers must explore the option of 'off-market' sale or what they call it as 'sell-from-farm'.

Locust infestation

- Drive away the locust from the field by creating noise using tin or any metal. Collect the locusts and kill by burning, dipping in kerosene solution or burying in trenches.
- Spray 5 % Neem seed Kernel extract (NSKE) or 300 ppm neem-based insecticides in the afternoon.