

Celebration of WORLD SOIL DAY

A Special function to celebrate **World Soil Day** and distribution of **Soil Health Card** was organized at ICAR-Indian Institute of Pulse Research, Kanpur on December 5, 2015. On this auspicious occasion, Shri Devendra Singh Bhole, Hon'ble member of Parliament, Akbarpur Parliamentary Constituency, Uttar Pradesh acted as Chief Guest while Dr N.P. Singh, Director, ICAR-Indian Institute of Kanpur, Kanpur acted as Chairman. Besides the ICAR-IIPR family, around 250 farmers belonging to 7 districts of Uttar Pradesh participated in this function.

While welcoming the participants, **Dr N.P. Singh**, Director, ICAR-IIPR, Kanpur stressed the importance of soil, water and air for the very existence of life. On the eve of celebration of World Soil Day worldwide, he stressed the importance of soils as a building block for sustaining both crop and human/animal life on a long term basis. Referring to many confirmed sources and scientific experiments, he revealed that besides three primary nutrients (nitrogen, phosphorus and potash), secondary and micronutrients such as S, Zn, Fe, B and Mo are also becoming deficient in many soil. It is attributed to both soil nutrient imbalances (NPK at 8.2:3.2:1 is applied instead of an optimum of 4:2:1) in terms of fertilization to crops (which varies with state/districts/subdivision/village/farm or holding level) and little or no application of fertilizers or nutrients in many areas. Therefore, there is a need for large scale soil/plant testing and development of soil health card (SHC) so as to provide a boost to both production and productivity of staple crops. In this direction, he reiterated the need for concerted efforts of all the stake holders right from farmers to different Government bodies. He strategically sought an action plan for the next three years with the support and cooperation of all the concerned so as to distribute SHCs to all the farmers/villages in every tehsils/districts. He advocated on large scale adoption of balanced fertilization and INM, enhancing efficiency of fertilizer use, and use of soil health cards for enhancing soil health and overall crop production in the country.

Shri Devendra Singh Bhole, hon'ble Member of Parliament, Akbarpur Parliamentary Constituency, Uttar Pradesh in his special remarks, said that farmers are the sole of a nation. He reiterated that farmers are the owner of his land and the country. They should be self-sustained and should not be in distress so that our country remains self sufficient. Since farmers and industry are interrelated, everything is dependent on farmers for foods and agricultural raw materials as agriculture still continues as a major livelihood to a significant portion of population in the country. This is possible when we extend all our support and cooperation to his development especially that of his land. Since the productivity of soil is diminishing because of one reason or others, every efforts should be made to restore the productivity and profitability of his land and soil. He suggested that during lean season or vacation time (may-June), the village school can be acted as a hub for such noble activity viz., development of Soil Health Cards at the village level itself. He thanked IIPR for inviting him on this occasion and promised to extend all his support and cooperation for soil health improvement of our soils.

Earlier in the function, **Dr Ummed Singh**, Coordinator for development of soil health card welcomed all the participants and highlighted the importance of World Soil Day and Soil Health Cards. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by Dr S.K. Singh, HOD (Agriculture Extension), ICAR-IIPR, Kanpur.



Dr. N.P. Singh, Director, IIPR addressing the gathering on World Soil Day



A cross section of participants attending the Function on World Soil Day



Distribution of Soil Health Cards by the Chief Guest and Address by **Shri Devendra Singh Bhole**, hon'ble Member of Parliament, Akbarpur Constituency, U.P.