Agricultural Research Scheme

Technical Committees of the Indian Council of Agricultural Rerearch had reviewed the progress of research schemes under operation and determined the scope of schemes to be taken up in the current financial year. Among the schemes which have been extended for further work are those relating to the treatment of saline water for irrigation purposes, distribution of micro-nutrients in the Punjab soils and reclamation of alkaline soils in Kerala.

Detailed discussions had been held on research schemes relating to soil fertility; maximisation of phosphate potentials in soils and developmet of Usar land ; application of Ammonium Sulphate to paddy lands; comparative value of organic and inorganic nutrient sprays; and assessment of the physical and chemical characteristics of soils with defective structures.

Stress was laid on another scheme for developing new methods of reclamation of saline and alkaline soils with high water table to determine their economics. There are large stretches of saline and alkaline soils in several States of India, notably in the Punjab and U.P., and the success of this scheme would have a great impact on agricultural prospects in these States. This scheme was sponsored by the I.C.A.R. in 1956. Experiments are now being carried on at the College of Agriculture, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana.

The Committee also discussed the progress of biological and physico-chemical studies in paddy soils in Madras State during 1962-63. Work on the scheme for finding out suitable green manuring crop planted for increasing or maintaining the fertility of the soil was reviewed by experts. This scheme was sanctioned by the I.C.A.R. in 1960. The Institute of Agriculture, Anand, in Gujarat State, is conducting studies on the subject.

Another scheme financed by the I.C.A.R. which the Technical Committee examined relates to the behaviour of certain chemical fertilizers under storage conditions. Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Sindri and Alwaye were selected for conducting experiments on storage trials under different climatic conditions.

The Scientific and Commodity Committees of the I.C.A.R. continued to meet up to November 16, 1963 for discussing various schemes relating to different departments of agriculture, like agronomy, entomology, horticulture, poultry etc.

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Fertilizing Linseed

Linseed gives higher yields when given nitrogen in the form of ammonium sulphate. This was seen in experiments conducted at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi.

Nitrogen at 30 and 60 pounds per acre was tried on *R.R 9* variety of linseed. When 30 pounds of nitrogen was applied the crop gave a net increased return of about Rs. 90 and with 60 pounds of nitrogen of about Rs. 120 per acre over the plots which received no fertilizer.

With irrigation at 60 pounds per acre was found to be the most economic and profitable dosé in the alluvium tract, where double-cropping is practiced When, however, linseed preceded a fallow, application of a high dose of nitrogen was not found profitable. Under such conditions 30 pounds of nitrogen per acre was found to be the best dose that cbuld be applied.

Better Yield of Gram

A new variety of gram, *Type. 1* is a higher yielder than the local veriety *Banda* gram and *Type 87*, researches in Uttar Pradesh reveal.

Type 1 has a good spread and plenty of pods. It flowers in 54 to 58 days, which is a week earlier than *Banda* gram and two weeks earlier than *Type 87*, It matures in 145 to 150 days, and even earlier under drier condition of Bundelkhand.

Type 1 has bold, plum seeds of brown colour. The average yield is over 18 maunds per acre, going up to 30 maunds under good soil conditions.

Type 1 is being distributed to farmers in the Bundelkhand area for which it has been found to be the most suitable.

DDT Spray Found Effective

Grapevine flea beetle, *Scelodonta strigicollis* can now be controlled, say the Experts from the Agricultural College and Research Instiute, Coimbatore.

The adult beetle bores into the sprouting bud and feed on the young leaf inside the bud. In addition to the young buds, the older leaves are also eaten by the beetles.

To control the insect, one pound of DDT (50 per cent W.P.) in 25 gallons of water (0.2 per cent strength) should be sprayed. The DDT sprayed against the flea beetle also checks the thrips which feed on leaves by scrapping the surface.

Ways to Avoid Loss in Sugar Cane

According to sugarcane Experts, frost injury to sugarcane can be avoided and the loss to the crop minimised if irrigation is resorted to at the right time.

To avoid frost injury to the sugarcane crop, growers should try to get a good stand of crop. They should irrigate the crop liberally. Irrigation should be given before and during the frost period as it is highly beneficial to the cane crop.

In frost-affected cane fields care should be taken to select only the lower portions of erect canes for seed purposes.

(*Contd. from previous page*)

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