

Interactive Workshops on Key Technologies For Boosting Production in Coffee



Prof. K. P. Thomas, Member, Coffee Board distributing the clones to the indented grower at TEC, Kalpetta

With an objective of creating ideal platform for frequent interactions between scientists and coffee growers and transfer the technology in key areas directly to the growers and build their capacity for adoption of technology, the Central Coffee Research Institute launched interactive workshops to be organised in different zones at regular intervals. For every workshop, one or two key technologies are selected as theme topics for focused deliberations and hands on training. The one day workshops are structured in such a way that both technical presentations as well as practical demonstration are given equal emphasis. To ensure hands-on



Sri. C. P. Varghese, Member, Coffee Board distributing the clones to the indented grower at TEC, Kalpetta

training for all the participants, the number of participants is limited 30-40 growers per workshop.

The CCRI organised two such workshops one each at CCRI, Balehonnur and RCRS, Chundale, Wayanad, Kerala during the month of May 2014.

Workshop at CCRI, Balehonnur

The first in the series was organized at Central Coffee Research Institute (CCRI), Balehonnur on 7th May 2014 on the topic 'Bush Management and Clonal Propagation in Coffee' for the benefit of coffee growers of Chikmagalur and Hassan districts. The main objective of the workshop was to highlight the underlying concepts and benefits of these technologies for production improvement in coffee. The major coffee growers associations such as Karnataka Planters Association (KPA) and Karnataka Growers Federation (KGF) were requested to depute the interested growers accordingly. In all, 30 growers covering the Chikmagalur and Hassan district attended the workshop. Sri. B. S. Jairam, Member, Coffee Board and President, Karnataka Growers Federation and Sri.D.Govindappa Jayaram, Chairman, Karnataka Planters Association also participated. The senior Extension officers of the Board

from Chikmagalur district also participated in the deliberations.

In the morning session, Dr. N. Surya Prakash Rao, Divisional Head, Plant Breeding and Genetics made a detailed presentation on 'Clonal propagation in coffee highlighting the advantages of clonal propagation for robusta. The presentation cleared the various apprehensions of the growers on performance of clones *vis a vis* seedlings, development of tap root system & anchorage, longevity of production etc. each substantiated with supporting experimental data. The technique of raising clones covering all important steps, starting from identification of elite mother plants, characters to be considered for selecting the mother plants, need for maintaining variability by selecting as many mother plants as possible, collection of ideal sucker material, preparation of single node cuttings, dis-infection & hormone treatment, method of planting in trenches & after care, key aspects in hardening were explained in detail. Further, the Divisional Head emphasized some of the recent leads obtained in scaling up of clonal production, critical factors responsible for achieving high rooting success, use of root trainers that facilitates proper training of growing roots besides economizing the nursery space as well as rooting media/soil mixture required for filling

the root trainer, planting of cuttings in sand beds for initial response etc. The participants were very responsive and deliberated on all important aspects. In spite of the proven advantages, the reasons for low adoption of the technology at estate level and scope for on-farm production of clones were clearly analysed and presented. Stressing the need to take up on estate clonal production, the Divisional Head informed that all necessary technical support will be extended to the interested growers to start the clonal propagation activity on their estates. The success stories of the estates that have already started the clonal propagation activity with the support of CCRI were briefed to motivate some more interested growers.

The second topic on 'Bush Management' was presented by Dr. Y. Raghuramulu, Director of Research, Coffee Board covering the concepts and importance of bush management practices for realizing consistent yields in coffee. Highlighting that a strong framework with healthy cropping branches is a primary requisite to obtain profitable crop year after year, the Director of Research stressed that maintaining a proper balance between vegetative and reproductive phases can be achieved by apt bush management that involves training, pruning,



Demonstration on bush management at CCRI by Director of Research



Hands-on training on bush management at CCRI



Demonstration of clonal propagation in clonal nursery at CCRI



Explaining the participants about the use of root trainers for scaling up the clonal production at CCRI

handling and desuckering. Further, a detailed account was given on single stem and multiple stem training, Cyclic and Rock-n-Roll Pruning, topping, handling, centering and desuckering. In the light of mechanisation of farm operations, the use of new Planting designs was also deliberated upon in detail.

On completion of the technical presentations, the participants were taken round the experimental plots of CCRI and were shown the ongoing trial 'Modified Planting Design and Pruning Method for Improving Coffee Productivity' using 'Chandragiri' variety. The concept and rationale of the various treatments imposed and yield data of different type of planting/pruning designs, Hedge Row and Paired Row systems of planting coupled with 'Rock and Roll' and 'Cyclic' Pruning methods were detailed and discussed. An exclusive practical session was organized wherein the various aspects of bush management were demonstrated both in Arabica and Robusta. Further, the participants were made to practice bush handling to acquire hands-on training.

During the afternoon session, the participants were taken to the clonal nursery and demonstrated the technique of clonal propagation. To facilitate clear understanding of the procedure, the group was divided into batches and the participants were asked to practice the preparation and planting of single node cuttings.

Further, the planters showed keen interest on recent leads obtained in scaling up of the clonal propagation by using root trainers and use of sand bed for quick development of callus etc. and sought clarifications from the scientists.

The concluding session was chaired by Sri. B.S.Jairam, Member, Coffee Board and President, KGF and moderated by the Director of Research, CCRI. Both the topics attracted interest among the participants. During the session, clarifications were provided by the experts to the queries raised by the participating growers. Expressing their views, several participants felt that the programme was very useful in understanding the technical concepts as well as practical know how, especially the key practical tips of the two technologies. The Board member and the representatives of the Grower's Associations appreciated the timely initiative of the CCRI and wanted the Director of Research to continue the initiative and organize similar workshops in other regions.

Workshop at RCRS, Chundale

The second Workshop was organised at RCRS, Chundale on 30th May 2014 and keeping in view of the priority area, 'Clonal propagation of robusta' was the theme of the workshop. The workshop was well attended by about 70 coffee planters from Wayanad, Idukki and Gudalur liaison zones. The

members of Coffee Board, Prof. K.P.Thomas and Sri. C.P.Varghese, representing Wayanad, office bearers of Wayanad Coffee Grower's Association, Scientists from Regional Agricultural Research Station, Ambalavayal and the Extension officers in Kerala region and Gudalur liaison zone, also attended the workshop and participated in the deliberations.

The workshop started with formal welcome address by Sri.C.B.Prakasan, Deputy Director (Research) followed by the introductory remarks by the Director of Research, Dr. Y. Raghuramulu, who emphasized the scope and advantages of planting clonally propagated robusta plants in Kerala region. Subsequently, Dr.George Daniel, Assistant Plant Breeder made a detailed presentation on clonal propagation technique using single node cuttings and also by top grafting.

After the deliberations, the participants were taken to clonal nursery of RCRS, Chundale and demonstrated the preparation, treatment and planting and aftercare of single node sucker cutting. A hands-on training was also



Participants observing the use of sand bed for clonal propagation at CCRI



Demonstration of clonal propagation in clonal nursery at RCRC, Chundale

arranged for interested growers and Dr.Suryaprakash Rao, Divisional Head, Plant Breeding and Genetics, CCRI, Coffee Board clarified the doubts raised by the growers during the practical session and emphasized

the critical steps that need to be given importance for good rooting success.

To commemorate the occasion and to formally begin the clonal distribution to the Wayanad coffee growers under the pilot programme initiated during

2013-14 season, the Board members distributed clones of CxR variety raised at Technology Evaluation Centre, Coffee Board, Kalpetta, to some of the indented coffee growers. Sri.Gokuldas Kumar, SLO, TEC, Kalpetta organized the clonal distribution. The Director of Research, Dy.Director (Research), RCRC, Chundale, Dy.Director (Extn), Kalpetta, Divisional Head, Plant Breeding & Genetics and other research and extension officials of the Board were present on the occasion.

The response of the growers towards these workshops was very positive and they very enthusiastic to start the production of clones on their estates during current season itself.

*Contributed by
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Shri Rajani Ranjan Rashmi

Shri Rajani Ranjan Rashmi a senior member of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) has taken over charge as the New Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India. His responsibilities in the Ministry include, among others, the supervision and guidance of the Plantation sector and Export Inspection regime.

SHRI RAJANI RANJAN RASHMI TAKES OVER CHARGE AS ADDITIONAL SECRETARY (PLANTATIONS)

Shri Rashmi has worked extensively in the field of environment and trade. As Joint Secretary in the Ministry Environment & Forests till 2013, he was India's focal point for climate change-related multilateral negotiation under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In this position, he played a key role in shaping India's domestic and international response to climate change for five years.

Before joining the Government of India in his current stint, Shri Rashmi was working as Additional Chief Secretary (Finance & Planning) in the State Government of Manipur. In the state, Shri Rashmi has had a record of outstanding public service, particularly in the area of financial administration. He received, in 2008,

the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration for his work.

Earlier, as Director (FT-Europe) in the Development of Commerce, Government of India from 1998 to 2001, Shri Rashmi looked after export infrastructure and India's trade with Europe. Later, he moved to Brussels as Adviser (Information & Engineering) where he served India's Mission to European Union in the area of trade and economic relations till 2005.

Shri R.R Rashmi is a graduate in Economics from Patna University and holds a degree in MBA from the Free University (Vriet Universities) of Brussels.

'Indian Coffee' wishes him all the best in his new assignment