

Agriculture Technology Information Center (ATIC)

The importance of an appropriate information package and its dissemination as an input has assumed added emphasis in this “information age”. The kind of information and the way it is to be used are critical factor to the growth of agriculture. It is also worth noting that it is no longer enough for research to generate information alone. The required information is also to be delivered to the end user at one place. This information must be direct, clear and easily understandable and without any room for distortion.

There is a greater need for coordination between researchers and technology users. A higher degree of integration needs to be achieved by having a formal management mechanism linking scientists or department in charges of different disciplines (though engaged in interdependent tasks) on the one hand to the technology users on the other. The linkage mechanism should be with formal, permanent, mandated, facilitated and designated function. The establishment of an agricultural Technology Information Centre will provide such a mechanism beyond the individual unit of a research institution to contribute to the dissemination of the information. This will serve as a single window delivery system for services and products of research for the areas in which the concerned institute is involved.

The cornerstone of India’s agricultural revolution has been the availability of improved varieties of cereals, oilseeds, pulses, etc. breed of livestock including poultry and fisheries; horticultural plant materials, and improve management practice for increase productivity, sustainability and stability of various crops and livestock enterprises. This has raised the search by farmers for future availability of seed, planting materials and other materials, easy accessibility to diagnostic services for soil fertility and plant protection, availability of appropriate information through leaflets and pamphlets and increased scope in sale of consultancy services. Often the farmers are not aware as to whom and where to approach for field problems. It is felt that the facility of a ‘**single window**’ approach at the entrance of the ICAR Institute/State Agricultural Universities will enable the farmers to have the required information for the solution to their problems related to the areas in which the concerned institute is involved. Because of the dominance of small and resource poor farmers and concentration of poor people in several sectors, public institutions like ICAR institutes and SAU’s will continue to play a vital role in supply of information for increasing the overall productivity in agriculture.

The rationale for establishment of ATIC are

1. To provide diagnostic services for soil and water testing, plant and livestock health.
2. To supply research products such as seeds and other planning materials, poultry strains, livestock breeds, fish seed, processed products, etc, emerging from the institution for testing and adaptation by various clientele.
3. Providing information through published literature and communication materials as well as audio—visual aids.
4. Providing an opportunity to the institutes/SAU/s to generate some resource through the sale of their technologies.

The important criteria of Agricultural Technology Information are

1. Availability (or accessibility) of new technologies,
2. Relevance of new technologies;
3. Responsiveness of new technologies to the needs of different categories of farmers; and
4. Sustainability of such unit within the overall institutional system

Objectives:

The objectives for establishment of such centers as a single window system are as follows:

1. To provide a 'single window' delivery system for the products and species available from an institution to the farmers and other interested groups as process of innovativeness in Technology Dissemination at the institute level.
2. To facilitate direct the farmers access to the institutional resources available in terms of technology, advice, technology products, etc. for reducing technology dissemination losses; and
3. To provide mechanism for feedback from the users to the institute

Institution Village Linkage Programme (I V L P) (1995-96)

It is an innovative programme initiated by the Indian council of Agricultural Research (ICRA) on a pilot basis from 1995-96 which was later brought under World Bank funded National Agricultural Technology project (NATP) since 1999. It is different from the earlier first line extension efforts of ICAR, in sense that it lays emphasis on the research aspect through the participation of farmers to be carried out by the multidisciplinary team of scientists. Moreover, IVLP is a production system oriented project with agro-ecosystem analysis of the adopted villages as the basis of identify problems, priorities them and final out technological intervention point which are further developed into action plans to overcome the problems through assessment and refinement of technologies.

Objectives:

The significance of client oriented projects received higher attention among had policy makers, which led to the concept, Technology Assessment and Refinement through IVLP. The specific objectives of Technology Assessment and Refinement programme are as under:

1. To introduce technological interventions with emphasis on stability and sustainability along with productivity of small farm production system.

2. To introduce and integrate the appropriate technologies to sustain technological interventions and their integration to maintain productivity and profitability taking environmental issues into consideration in a comparatively well defined farm production systems.
3. To introduce and integrate the appropriate technologies to increase the agricultural productivity with marketable surplus in commercial on and off farm production system.
4. To facilitate adoption of appropriate post-harvest technologies for conservation and on-farm value addition of agricultural products, by products and wastes for greater economic dividend and national priorities.
5. To facilitate adoption of appropriate technologies for removal of drudgery increased efficiency and higher income of farm women.
6. To monitor socio-economic impact of the technology intervention for different farm production system.
7. To identify extrapolation domains for new technology modules based on environmental characterization at meso and mega level.

Front Line Demonstration

The Front-line demonstrations is to demonstrate newly released crop production and protection technologies and its management practices in the farmers' field under different agro-climatic regions and farming situation. While demonstrating the technologies in the farmers' fields, the scientists are required to study the factors contributing higher crop production, field constraints of production and thereby generate production data and feedback information. Front line demonstrations are conducted in a block of two to four hectares land in order to have better impact of the demonstrated technologies on the farmers and field level extension functionaries.

The front-line demonstrations are different than the normal demonstrations conducted by the extension functionaries. The special features of FLD are;

- FLD are conducted under the close supervision of the scientists
- Only newly released technologies or those likely to be released in near future are selected
- FLDs are organized in a block of two to four hectares involving all those farmers whose plots fall in the identified demonstration block.

- Only critical inputs and training are provided from the scheme budget, remaining inputs are supplied by the farmers themselves
- Training of the farmers associated with the frontline demonstration is a pre-requisite for conducting such demonstrations
- The target audience of FLDs is both farmers and the extension officers. The purpose is to be convince extension functionaries and farmers together about the potentialities of technologies for further wide scale diffusion
- FLDs are used as a source of generating data on factors contributing higher crop yields and constraints of production under various farming situations.