

Union Agriculture Minister Visits IFS Models at ICAR–RCER, Patna; Calls for Wider Adoption among Small and Marginal Farmers

Hon'ble Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, along with Hon'ble Agriculture Minister, Government of Bihar, Shri Vijay Kumar Sinha, visited the Integrated Farming System models established at ICAR–Research Complex for Eastern Region, Patna. The Hon'ble Ministers were welcomed by Dr Rajbir Singh, Deputy Director General (Agricultural Extension), ICAR, New Delhi.



During the visit, the Hon'ble Union Agriculture Minister interacted with scientists and practicing farmers and discussed the potential of Integrated Farming Systems for enhancing farm income, improving resource-use efficiency and reducing production risks. He appreciated the one- and two-acre IFS models developed by ICAR–RCER, particularly their relevance to small and marginal farmers.

The Hon'ble Minister visited the two-acre IFS model, which integrates field crops such as rice, wheat, chickpea, mustard and lentil with fruits, vegetables, dairy, fisheries and duck farming. The model includes two milch cows and a calf, 35 ducks, and a floating poultry unit, demonstrating how multiple enterprises can be integrated within a small area to enhance farm income and reduce risks associated with dependence on only crop based systems. The use of pond dykes for growing fruit crops such as mango, banana, lemon and guava was also showcased. Innovative cultivation of climber and creeper vegetables over water bodies, including ponds and Azolla tanks, demonstrated the productive use of otherwise underutilized spaces. Resource-recycling units, including a biogas plant and vermicomposting, were also demonstrated as integral components of the IFS models. The Hon'ble Minister appreciated these innovations for their potential to generate additional income from every available piece of the farm by efficiently utilizing available land, water and vertical space.



He was also happy to note about the development of Nano (125 sq. m/one katha) and Micro (250 sq. m/two katha) homestead farming models by the Institute for very small and landless households to provide year-round income and nutritional security while reducing dependence on external inputs.



Practicing IFS Farmers shared their success stories with the Hon'ble Minister and informed that their income has increased three to five times by adoption of IFS technology. The Hon'ble Minister called for wider adoption of these diversified IFS models according to farmers' landholding size and resources availability.

Dr Anup Das, Director, ICAR–RCER, apprised the Hon'ble Minister of the ecosystem-specific IFS models and other system-based technologies developed by the Institute, particularly for small and marginal farmers of the Eastern Region, with special relevance to Bihar. Dr Sanjeev Kumar, Principal Investigator, AICRP–IFS, and Head, Division of Crop Production, explained the technical features and functioning of the IFS models.

Dr Ranjay Kumar Singh, ADG (Extension), ICAR, New Delhi and Dr Bikas Das, Director, ICAR–National Research Centre on Litchi, were also present during the visit. The Hon'ble Ministers also planted a mango sapling at the IFS unit in the Institute campus.

Source: ICAR–Research Complex for Eastern Region, Patna