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Alternative Seed System for Enhanced Availability of Quality Seeds and Seed/Varietal Replacement Rate - An Experience

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Abstract : Quality seed plays an important role in enhancing the crop productivity. It was reported and confirmed by large scale verification research trials that by use of quality seeds alone, the crop yield can be enhanced by 15 to 20 per cent. At present, the quality seed production and distribution through organised sectors comprising both public and private seed sector was only 20-25% of the requirement and the remaining quantity is met through unorganised sector which include the farmer to farmers saved seeds. With an objective of developing an alternative seed system, the University of Agricultural Sciences, Raichur in Karnataka state has implemented Seed Village Programme in more than 100 villages covering around 5000 farmers every year since 2009-10 and in the selected seed villages, a group of 50-150 farmers were supplied the foundation seeds of new varieties to an extent of 0.4 ha at 50 % subsidy. And two to three training programmes were conducted in the targeted villages for quality seed production and the seed produced in the target group was processed locally in the university seed processing units and arranged for distribution in the local villages by the seed growers themselves. By this new innovative and modified seed system, the university can able to replace old varieties of pigeon pea and green gram by producing 1482, 2978, 2729, 2560, and 4581 tonnes of seeds of new varieties on large scale under farmers and scientists participatory seed village programmes respectively during 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14. From this new alternate model of seed system, there should be large scale promotion of regional seed system involving farmers, NGO and voluntary organisation for quick and effective replacement of old, low yielding, disease susceptible varieties with new high yielding, disease resistant for enhanced food production and food security.

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