



ISS Newsletter

NEWSLETTER OF THE INDIAN SOCIETY FOR SPICES

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

VANILLA - A MOST SOUGHT AFTER SPICE

Among the food flavours, vanilla has a prime position. It is the second most expensive spice traded in the world market next only to saffron. Vanilla beans are primarily used as flavourants in the food industry. The dairy industry is the largest consumer of vanilla extracts followed by the confectionery, baking and beverage industries. There is an alarming demand for natural vanillin. The total area under vanilla in the world during the year 2001 was 40,846 ha with production of 5,583 MT. The major vanilla producing countries are Madagascar, Comoro, Indonesia, Mexico and the Reunion. Among these countries, Madagascar holds prominent position with an area of 25,550 ha under vanilla. Of late, Indonesia has started to promote vanilla with a production of 2,102 MT from 9,700 ha. The world market for vanilla beans is highly concentrated in a few developed countries. USA, France and Germany alone account for about 80% of world imports.

There has been no appreciable increase in area under vanilla cultivation in the traditional vanilla growing countries. Recent report is that in Madagascar, the vanilla crop was severely damaged by cyclone and the world's biggest producer thus sent the global prices of the flavouring agent, vanilla sky high. It is noticed that the area expansion in major vanilla producing countries during the past five years has been marginal, 40,020 ha in 1998 to only 40,846 ha in 2002). Hence, there is great scope for area expansion, production and export of vanilla in India.

The import of vanillin and ethyl vanillin together to India during 2000-01 was 404 tonnes. Even if only 10% of import of these synthetic substitutes is to be replaced with natural product, the requirement of vanilla beans would be 2020 tonnes @ 2% vanillin content. This is almost one half of the entire global production of vanilla beans. The present Indian production is only 65 tonnes. This indicates the great potential for vanilla development in India.

Spices Board, is currently implementing various schemes for the benefit of the interested growers which include

- Vanilla new planting programme
- Vanilla Certified Nursery scheme
- Scheme for setting up of processing units
- Vanilla Award Scheme and
- Scheme for assisting producers for promoting exports of organic spices (including vanilla).

Thus, efforts to propagate and popularize vanilla in India have resulted in large number of farmers taking up vanilla cultivation particularly in Karnataka and Kerala. Research and Development activities of the Spices Board have given the required impetus and boost in promoting vanilla cultivation. As a result, the

area under vanilla cultivation in India was about 1,800 ha with production of about 6 to 8 tonnes during 1999-2000, 20 tonnes during 2000-2001 and about 65 tonnes during 2001-02 season.

It is estimated that about 3,500 ha of area under vanilla will come under full bearing by 2009-10 in India, if the current rate of expansion continues. They will yield on an average about 300 kg/ha of processed beans. At the prevailing international market prices of US \$ 200/kg, the produce will fetch foreign exchange of Rs. 987 crores or US \$ 210 million annually.

Vanilla has become an alternative/companion crop in arecanut, coconut and coffee based cropping systems. At times when the market price of most of these plantation crops crashes with no prospects of their stabilization in the near future, this crop will support the growers.

As vanilla cultivation is gaining momentum, the Indian Society for Spices has proposed to organize an exclusive seminar on **Problems and Prospects of Cultivation of Vanilla in India**, at Sirsi, Uttar Kannada District in Karnataka sometime during April/May, 2004. The exact modalities of the programme are being worked out and the same will be intimated shortly.



(V. S. Korikanthimath)

National Seminar on New Perspectives in Spices, Medicinal and Aromatic Plants – A report

Indian Society for Spices in collaboration with ICAR Research Complex for Goa, Indian Institute of Spices Research, Calicut and Spices Board, Kochi organized the National Seminar on New Perspectives in Spices, Medicinal and Aromatic Plants at ICAR Research Complex Goa, during 27-29 November 2003.

The seminar was inaugurated by Sri. Sripad Nayak, Union Minister of State for Finance. The Hon'ble Minister launched the Society website www.spicesociety.org. Sri. Dayanand Mandrekar, Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture, Govt. of Goa presided over the function. Keynote address was delivered by Dr. J S Samra, DDG (NRM), ICAR. Over 200 delegates attended the Seminar in three days.

Two publications of the Society, the Abstract of papers of National Seminar on 'New Perspectives in Spices, Medicinal and Aromatic Plants' and the Proceedings of the National Seminar held at Calicut during 24-26 October 2002 on 'Strategies for Increasing Production and Export of Spices' were released during the occasion.

This was followed by the farmers interactive session. Dr. P N Ravindran, Former President, ISS and Founder Secretary of the Society chaired the session.

The session on Crop Improvement and Biotechnology was held under the chairmanship of Dr. V A Parthasarathy, Director, IISR.

The session on Crop Production and Post Harvest Technology was chaired by Dr. D G Dhandar, Director, Central Institute of Arid Horticulture, Bikaner, Rajasthan.

The session on Crop Protection was chaired by Dr. S Maiti, Director, NRCMAP, Boriabi, Anand. Dr. Maiti delivered a special talk on the Prospects of Medicinal Plants Cultivation in India.

The session on Transfer of Technology and Marketing was chaired by Dr. N B Jambhale, Director of Research, Dr. BS Konkan Krishi Vidyapeth, Dapoli, Maharashtra. Dr. P N Ravindran, Director, Research & Development, Aryavaidyasala, Kottakal delivered a lecture on the Role of Centre for Medicinal Plants Research in Medicinal Plant Research and Utilization in India.

Dr. V Krishnakumar, CPCRI, Kasaragod briefed about the Problems and Prospects of Vanilla cultivation.

The valedictory session was presided over by Dr. Ajit Shirodkar, President, Western Ghats, Kokum Foundation, Goa. Dr. V S Korikanthimath welcomed the gathering. Dr. M Anandaraj, Vice President, Indian Society for Spices delivered a special talk on Spice Production Scenario in the world.

AWARDS

The following awards were presented during the National Seminar on New Perspectives in Spices, Medicinal and Aromatic Plants held at ICAR Research Complex for Goa, during 27-29 November 2003.

Dr. J S Pruthi Award for the best research article published in the Journal of Spices and Aromatic Crops Volume 11 was bagged by **Ajay Pratap Singh, Samresh Dwivedi, Sudhakar Bharati, Maneesha Singh, Vandana Singh, Archana Srivastava, A A Naqvi & Suman Preet Singh Khanuja** for the paper entitled '**Variations in morphology, phenology and essential oil composition of sweet basil (*Ocimum basilicum* L.) germplasm accessions**'.

H. S. Mehta Memorial Award for the best oral presentation in the National Seminar was bagged by **T D Babu, P A Nazeem, R Keshavachandran, C R Achuthan, D Girija and K V Peter** for their paper entitled '**Detection of genetic diversity in *Piper* species using RAPD and AFLP markers**'.

Dr. Alapatti Prasada Rao Award for the best poster exhibited in the National Seminar has gone to the poster entitled '**Biodiversity of large cardamom in Sikkim Himalaya**' authored by **U Gupta, K M Kuruvilla, K J Madhusoodanan and J Thomas**.

ISS ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING

The annual general body meeting of the Indian Society for Spices was held on 27th November 2003 at the Seminar hall of ICAR Research Complex for Goa. Dr. V S Korikanthimath, President and Director of ICAR Research Complex for Goa presided over the function. In his introductory remarks, the President highlighted the urgent need for enhancing the production of various spices, medicinal and aromatic plants to keep pace with international trade.

Dr. John Zachariah, Secretary, ISS highlighted the various activities of the society during the year. He reported that life membership of the society is nearing 400. He informed that a computer has been purchased for the society through ICAR grants.

Dr. R Ramakrishnan Nair presented the audited accounts of the society on behalf of the treasurer. He noted that journal printing charges was the major expenditure during the year.

General Body also approved the conduct of a Brain Storming Session on Vanilla Cultivation at SIRSI during April/May 2004.

Dr. R Ramakrishnan Nair, Asst. editor of JOSAC presented the detailed report of the editorial board. He said that at present 59 articles were pending at various stages of processing.

Dr. B Sasikumar, Executive Member proposed vote of thanks.

FORTH COMING EVENTS

Indian Society for Spices will be organizing a **National Seminar on Problems and Prospects of Cultivation of Vanilla in India** at Sirsi, Uttar Kannada in Karnataka during April-May 2004.

THE ISS FAMILY - KNOW YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS (Continued from previous issue)

Life members

Mr. Devaiah, C. B., P.O. Box 17, Matadakad Estate, Sunkoppa, Kodagu

Mr. Devaiah, K. S., Laxmijala, Old Siddapur Road, Madikeri, Kodagu, Pin - 571 201

Mr. Devaiah, T. M., Bolamudi Estate, Kargunda P.O., Madikeri Kodagu Dist.

Dr. Devasahayam, S., Principal scientist, Indian Institute of Spices Research, P.B.No.1701, Calicut, Pin-673 012

Dr. Dhamayanthi, K.P.M., Scientist (SS), Crop Improvement Division, Central Institute for Cotton Research, Regional Station, Lawly Road, Coimbatore - 641 003.

Ms. Dhanya Subbaiah, K., Chamundikad Estate, Birunani P.O., Karnataka, Pin - 571 249

Mr. Dharendra Manu Thakker, Thakker House, Opp. to St. Andrews Church, Swatantra Path, Vasco, Goa

Mr. Dhiren H. Malani, Nividh, 1102, (Old) 1609, Trichy Road, Coimbatore - 641 018

Dr. Dhoroo, N. P., Department of Mycology & Plant Pathology, University of Horticulture & Forestry, Nauli, Solan, H.P., Pin - 173 230

Dr. Digvijay Singh, Deputy Director & Head, Division of Soil Science & Water Technology, Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, CIMAP (P.O.), Lucknow, Pin - 226 015.

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