

ICAR-Indian Institute of Soil Science, Bhopal celebrated 32nd Foundation Day

The ICAR-Indian Institute of Soil Science (IISS), Nabibagh, Bhopal celebrated its 32nd Foundation Day on 16 April 2019. In the Program, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Barkatullah University, Dr. R. J. Rao graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. In his address, he emphasized on different ecosystem functions of soil and underlined the role of soil in the survival of mankind, animal and plant kingdom. He equated soil health with human and animal health and stressed on the fact that if the soil becomes poor in nutrients and minerals, then the food chain gets affected.

Dr. Pankaj Srivastava, Director, Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM), Bhopal ; Dr. P. C. Sharma, Director, Central Soil Salinity Research Institute (CSSRI), Karnal and Dr. Nachiketa Kotwaliwale, I/c Director, Central Institute of Agricultural Engineering (CIAE), Bhopal graced the program as Guests of Honour. At the outset, Dr. Ashok K. Patra, Director, ICAR-IISS welcomed the guests and dignitaries and briefed about the mission of the Institute to improve soil productivity with minimal environmental degradation. He highlighted different achievements of the Institute, viz. soil testing kit (*Mridaparikshak*), soil fertility maps for 536 districts, rapid composting unit and use of nanotechnology for soil nutrients from waste mica and rock phosphate. He briefed the audience that presently micronutrient deficiency in the country is increasing and the extent of zinc deficiency is to the extent of 37% and boron in 23% of cultivated area.

Dr. Pankaj Srivastava, Director, IIFM underlined the fact that soil is a finite resource and our first emphasis should be to ***Save Soil***, then everything else including forest and agriculture ecosystem will be taken care of. Referring a report of ICAR, he informed that 20% productivity increase can be ensured by arresting soil erosion. Dr. P.C. Sharma, Director, CSSRI highlighted about the Soil Health Mission and contribution of the Institute to the Government's initiative in soil health card (SHC) scheme.

Progressive farmers from villages adopted under *Mera Gaon Mera Gaurav* (MGMG), Farmers' First and CRP on Conservation Agriculture schemes and the National and State level award winning farmers were felicitated on the occasion. A farmers-scientists interaction was held on the theme "***Site specific soil and water management technologies***" in which

farmers put forth problems being faced related to crop residue management and conservation agriculture, which were elaborately discussed among the participants.

During foundation day celebration, chief guest and dignitaries released various publications such as institute's newsletters, IISS profiles and also launched e-magazine 'HARIT DHARA'.

Later, in the afternoon, the Foundation Day lecture was delivered by Dr. P. C. Sharma, Director, CSSRI, Karnal. In the foundation day lecture, he briefed upon the growing problem of soil degradation and suggested policy and technology options for conserving soil and natural resources. The program was coordinated by Dr. R. Elanchezhian, Principal scientist and I/c PME cell.





Chief Guest, Prof. R.J. Rao addressing on the Occasion



Progressive farmer being felicitated by Chief Guest