FPARP - Test your irrigation campaign

28-29 March 2011
Erode district,
Tamil Nadu

“Test your Irrigation water” campaign held

An “FPARP-Test your irrigation water” campaign was organized as part of the World Water Day celebrations in Erodedistrict during March 28-29, 2011.

Events

The following events marked the programme:

1. Field visits to sensitize cane growers on water conservation issues
2. Inauguration of FPARP at Sakthi Sugars, Appakudal, Erode district
3. Talk on ‘the why and how of FPARP in Erode district’
4. Administration of “Water conservation Pledge”
5. Talk on benefits of testing irrigation water
6. Collection of water samples from sugarcane growers of Erode district for detailed analysis
7. Demonstration of Tensiometer and Soil Moisture Indicator
8. Question – answer session

On 28.3.2011, the FPARP team visited the FPARP plots in Akkarakodiveri and Vaanipudur villages. They monitored the crop stand and sensitized the farmers on the merits of irrigation scheduling and on using SMI (Soil Moisture Indicators) to assess the water status in the field. The team also discussed with them on how to collect an irrigation water sample from the irrigation water source.

The next day, (29.03.2011), World water day was celebrated in Sakthi Sugar factory premises by organizing the “Test your irrigation water” campaign.
**Programme at Sakthi Sugars Ltd.,**

Shri. N. Sezhian, Deputy General Manager (Cane), Sakthi Sugars Ltd., welcomed the gathering. This was followed by an Inaugural address by Shri. P. Natarajan, Senior President who formally inaugurated FPARP in Erode district with the lighting of ‘kuthuvilakku’. He mentioned that this programme is fortunate to have a good number of learned scientists from SBI and added that the farmers should effectively make use of them.

Dr. D. Puthira Prathap, Senior Scientist & PI, FPARP highlighted the genesis of FPARP, gave a brief introduction about the programme and what was expected of the FPARP participants. He mentioned that four technologies viz., Trash mulching, micro-irrigation, Tensiometer—driven irrigation scheduling and Soil Moisture Indicator-driven irrigation scheduling have been identified for experimentation in Erode district. He called upon the farmers to go for effective water management practices.

At the end of his address, he administered the ‘Water conservation pledge’ to the sugarcane growers.

**Irrigation water testing**

Shri. K. Murugesan, Agricultural Officer, Govt. of Tamil Nadu elaborated on the benefits of testing the irrigation water. He also discussed on the standards that determine the quality of irrigation water, management of poor quality water and other water related issues. He cautioned the sugarcane farmers on the hazards of irrigating with poor quality water. His address was followed by the collection of water samples from the sugarcane growers.

Altogether, 63 samples were received for carrying out detailed analysis.

**Demonstration of Soil Moisture Indicator and Tensiometer**

Dr. K. Hari, Senior Scientist demonstrated two devices that are to be used predominantly by FPARP participants of the II Phase viz., Tensiometer and Soil Moisture Indicator. Discussing the merits of using these devices for irrigation scheduling, Dr. Hari informed that Sugarcane Breeding Institute has been granted a design patent for Soil Moisture Indicator. He then went on to give a detailed demonstration on how to use both these devices in sugarcane fields.
Dr. P. Rakkiyappan, Head, Division of Crop Production, who initiated the “Question-Answer” session, described the importance of maintaining soil health for increased yields in sugarcane. All scientists including Dr. K. Sivaraman, Principal Scientist (Agronomy), Dr. C. Karpagam, Scientist and Dr. P. Murali, Scientist and other scientists from SBI participated in this Q&A session. While answering the queries put forth by the farmers, Dr. R. Viswanathan, Head, Division of Crop Protection highlighted on issues relating to identification and management of Yellow Leaf Disease and its effect on yield and quality. He requested the farmers and the factory to go for tissue-culture seed materials to contain the disease. He also cautioned against bringing in a large area under red rot susceptible varieties

After this, the farmers offered their feedback. They appreciated the role played by SBI in the development of varieties and in sustaining cane yields in the county.

All the farmers who participated in the programme were given sugarcane literature and FPARP participants were given vermicompost, as an incentive for participation. Shri. Ashok Kumar Senior Manager (Cane), Sakthi Sugars Ltd., proposed a formal vote of thanks.

After this programme, the FPARP team conducted field visits in plots of Koogalur and Nathipalayam in Gobi East division and discussed with the farmers on implementing FPARP. Over 120 farmers participated and benefited from the campaign.