

## **Safe and judicious use of pesticides in India**

### ***APG conducts workshop for Journalists***

New Delhi, November 19: Agrochemical Policy Group (APG) conducted a one-day workshop for media to emphasize the importance of pesticides in sustainable agriculture and to address the concerns of the consumers and farmers on the judicious use of pesticides. Lack of knowledge about the right use of pesticide not only results in negative public perception but it also has its adverse impact on farmers' economy and agricultural growth.

Mr. R G Agarwal, Chairman, Crop Care Federation of India, in his key note address, stated that Indian Agricultural productivity is very low compared to China because of very low use of scientific inputs, including pesticides. Quoting from the report of Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, headed by Dr. C Rangarajan said that China with less cultivated area than India produces crop output, more than twice of India. He appealed to the Govt. to launch a nationwide communication drive to increase pesticides usage by farmers and the pesticides industry, on its part, has taken several measures to educate farmers on the right use of pesticides

Ministry of Fertilizers is spending over Rs 1, 00,000 crore by way of subsidy on fertilizers every year. Most of this amount is going waste because the crops, produced with the use of fertilizers, are not adequately protected from pests, diseases and weeds, by using right pesticides.

Addressing the media, Kumarasamy informed, "We are losing around Rs.1, 40,000 crores worth agriculture produce every year to pests, due to none and inadequate use of pesticides. This is enough to feed one-fifth of the population of the country for one full year."

If we don't take advantage of technological inputs like pesticides, we will be pushed back, in our efforts to attain National Food Security" – stated Mr. S Kumarasamy.

Concerned about the food crisis, Mr. Salil Singhal, MD PI Industries reasons, “Our food production is not keeping pace with population growth, causing serious concerns about National food security. If pesticide usage can be increased from the current 20% of the cropped area, we will save this huge economic loss (Rs 1, 40,000 crore), and increase farmers’ income through higher yields, as the cost benefit ratio of pesticides is about 1:5.”

Dr. R.B. Singh, renowned Agrl. Scientist informed “India, with 16% of global population and the cultivated area, accounts only for 3% of the global consumption of pesticides. If pesticides usage is increased, we will not only save these losses, but additional income could be generated through higher yields.”

Since there is less awareness among farmers about the usage of pesticides, APG conducted a field visit. Dr Rajveer Singh Sharma of IARI, while interacting with farmers and media, gave demonstration in the fields on the use of pesticides.

### **About APG**

APG is an industry body that represents over 200 crop protection companies in India. It comprises of members from three associations: Crop Care Federation of India (CCFI), Crop Life India (CLI) and Pesticides Manufactures and Formulators Association of India (PMFAI). The objective of the group is to promote, propagate and provide support for the safe use of pesticides and create a positive public perception about pesticides, by highlighting their contributory role in agriculture and public health.