

Status Report of Field Survey(s) Conducted for Crop Health of Wheat and Barley Crops in Hanumangarh and Sri Ganganagar Districts of Rajasthan

In accordance with telephonic communication from the council, ICAR-Indian Institute of Wheat and Barley Research, Karnal conducted on spot field survey in the two districts (Hanumangarh and Sri Ganganagar) of Rajasthan for the sporadic infestation of pink stem borer in wheat crop. Joint team(s) of scientists from ICAR-IIWBR, Karnal and SKNAU, RARI, Durgapura surveyed wheat fields in both the districts; however, infestation of pink stem borer is sporadic and negligible. This problem is observed in Rice-Wheat cropping system. However, as the dip in temperature has helped in reducing the problem of pink / Yellow stem borer and cease to exist. The state department officials, research institutions and farmers informed that this problem was seen only up to 15th December, 2023 and chemicals available were very effective in managing the pest. Still for remote possibility, management options, infestation of pink /yellow stem borer in wheat is noticed, farmers were advised for the application of Fipronil 0.3% G @ 15 to 20 kg per ha or Chlorantraniliprole 18.5% SC @ 60-80 ml per ha or Quinalphos 25 EC @ 1.5- 2.0 liter to effectively control the pest.

Team also had meetings with private seed companies in Sri Ganganagar & Hanumangarh districts and discussed the various aspects for faster adoption of recently released climate resilient and biofortified varieties of wheat. The team(s) were informed that looking into potential and performance of IIWBR varieties of Barley particularly DWRB137, also explored the possibility of promotion of Barley in the Hanumangarh and Sri Ganganagar districts of Rajasthan. The demand for quality seed of DWRB 137 is great in these two districts. Dr. Gyanendra Singh underlined that the area holds the immense potential for barley production (malt, feed and fodder) and strategies for faster multiplication by local stakeholders including private partners has good scope for accelerating adoption of new barley varieties in the region.

The RARI, Durgapura team visited the wheat growing areas in Sriganganagarh, Hanumangarh and Bikaner districts between January 3 and 4, 2023. Extensive and accurate survey helped in assessing the problem and prospects of wheat and barley cultivation in both the districts. On January 3rd, 2024, team surveyed various areas and found that the infestation of Pink Stem Borer was very negligible in the regions visited and there is no reason to be panic for wheat crop as of now. The most of farmers informed that PSB was not observed.

On January 4th, 2024, our team visited the rice-wheat cropping system area and were accompanied by the Head Farm, State Seed Farm (NSC) from Suratgarh. During our visit, we were informed that in certain pockets, 0 to 1% PSB infestation in fields sown in early October 2023. The infestation was not observed in crops that were sown on time or late. During their visit, the team also traveled to the Maler, Udaser Lodera, Beer Fathepur, Narsara of Suratgarh, Bikaner, and Sikar districts. No infestation of PSB was found in the wheat crops sown early, timely, and late in these areas. The team concluded that wheat crop as of now is very good and has high potential.

The joint team(s) led by Dr. Gyanendra Singh, Director, ICAR-IIWBR, Karnal; included members namely Dr. Amit Sharma, Principal Scientist and Nodal officer (Seeds), Dr. Joginder Singh, Principal Scientist (Barley Improvement), Dr. Ravindra Kumar, Sr. Scientist and Dr. Umesh Kamble, Sr. Scientist, ICAR-IIWBR, Karnal. Further, team of Scientist from SKNAU, RARI, Dugapura; Dr. BN Sharma, Dr. SS Poonia, Dr. PS Shekhawat and Dr. SS Rajput also conducted the survey. The condition of wheat and barley crop in this area is very good and lowering of temperature will further boost the potential of production.

Meeting with State Government functionaries Dr BR Bakolia, Assistant Director Agriculture Extension, District Hanumangarh, Govt. of Rajasthan and discussed about infestation the pink and yellow stem borer in wheat crop in Hanumangarh area.





Conclusion(s):

In about two and half day's survey making rigorous field visits and interaction with other stakeholder, the team would like to submit that:

1. All the wheat crop fields as of now were free from the pink stem borer, regardless of whether the crop was sown early, timely or late.
2. The infestation range in Suratgarh State Seed Farm (NSC field) for October sown crops or Rice Wheat system was found to be between 0 to 1 percent, however, it was well managed and did not cause any panic.
3. The farmers informed about infestation and probable losses in cotton crop in these two districts of Rajasthan is the main reasons for saving wheat crop and also cotton crop in next season.

In nutshell, it can be safely concluded that as of now, wheat and barley crops in these districts are very safe and have promise for high productivity and overall, more production.