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Functions

The ATIC at IISR started functioning in the year 1999. As per mandate, the centre is involved in technology dissemination functions through various divisions of IISR. The major activities of centre are summarized below.

Production Of Quality Planting Material

There is a high demand for quality planting material of improved varieties of spices released by the research institutes especially for rooted cuttings of black pepper and seed rhizomes of ginger and turmeric. The projected demand for seed or planting material during the 10th five year plan is furnished in table 1. A nursery for the production of rooted pepper cuttings using rapid multiplication method with an annual target of 20000 rooted cuttings has been established in IISR main campus at Chelavoor, in addition to nurseries at IISR farm, Peruvannamuzhi. This unit is set up with the twin objectives of demonstrating the cost effective method to the visiting farmers and field extension officials and also for hygienic production of nuclear planting materials for improved varieties to be distributed to extension agencies and farmers. Besides, the sale of

seed rhizomes of ginger and turmeric, nutmeg grafts, seedlings of cinnamon and clove, garcinia grafts, vanilla cuttings and bush pepper produced at experimental farm at Peruvannamuzhi is being facilitated through ATIC as per demand received at the centre.

Farm Advisory Services

The queries of farmers in person or through post and also farmers' visits are being systematically monitored by ATIC. There is an increased demand from the farming community for diagnosis of various pests and diseases affecting the crops. Farmers often visit the centre with samples to get quick identification to take appropriate control measures. Scientists from various divisions render advisory services by providing appropriate technology packages for pests and disease control. Consultancy services are also provided on various aspects of crop varieties, nursery management, integrated nutrient management and post harvest technology. ATIC also arranges field visits of subject matter specialists whenever needed.

Information Technology

Print literature plays a dominant role in timely dissemination of scientific information to a broad spectrum of technology users. Pamphlets on scientific crop management of seven major spices, namely, black pepper, ginger, turmeric, cinnamon, nutmeg, clove and vanilla have been brought out by ATIC and are available at low price. These pamphlets are aimed at disseminating the package of practices of high production technology evolved by the institute. Eleven folders covering specific technologies and crop management problems are under preparation. A technical bulletin on spices production technology detailing all aspects of spices crop improvement, crop production, crop protection and post harvest processing is also available at ATIC. Besides, institute publications and publications of Indian Society of Spices are also sold at this centre.

In view of ever increasing volume of scientific information, preparation and use of database, information and expert systems is in progress as a key function of ATIC. The centre is collaborating with project on Integrated National Agricultural Resource Information System (INARIS) for the preparation of digitized database and information system incorporating data on scientific crop management, economic and market statistics and details of service providers for farmers.

Audio visual aids are indispensable for facilitating effective communication of information. ATIC plays a lead role in providing audio visual aid support to the educational activities of the institute. Preparation of video films for use in training and other extension functions is in progress. The centre also coordinates the extension activities like exhibitions, kisanmelas and field days in collaboration with various divisions, experimental farms and the Krishi Vigyan Kendra. Facilities are available for photography and art works like preparation of posters, design of cover pages for publications and preparation of other aids making use of computer software.

