

Share of Bt Cotton Rises to 88 Per Cent of Total in 2010-11

Latest data obtained from the Directorate of Cotton Development indicate that both the total cotton area and that under Bt cottons have gone up in 2010-11. The total cotton area is now estimated at 107.55 lakh hectares, a record. The area covered by Bt cottons is placed at 94.95 lakh hectares or about 88 per cent of the total. The State-wise details are given below:

			(in lakh ha)			
	2010)-11	2009-10			
State	Area	Under				
	Bt. Cotton	Non-Bt. Cotton	Total	Total Area		
Punjab	5.10	0.20	5.30	5.36		
Haryana	4.13	0.32	4.45	5.07		
Rajasthan	2.60	0.30	2.90	4.44		
North Zone	11.83	0.82	12.65	14.87		
Gujarat	20.88	5.23	26.11	26.24		
Maharashtra	35.43	4.30	39.73	35.04		
M. Pradesh	6.00	0.40	6.40	6.04		
Central Zone	62.31	9.93	72.24	67.32		
A. Pradesh	17.01	0.09	17.10	14.83		
Karnataka	3.50	0.60	4.10	4.27		
Tamil Nadu	0.30	0.19	0.49	1.14		
South Zone	20.81	0.88	21.69	20.24		
Other States	-	0.97	0.97	0.86		
All-India	94.95	12.60	107.55	103.29		

It will be seen that most of the increase in area is accounted for Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. There has been some fall in area in Haryana and Rajasthan which was due to inadequacy of canal water at the cotton sowing period.

Andhra Pradesh leads in coverage by Bt cottons with 99 per cent of the total area under it. In all the three States of North Zone, the share of Bt cottons is 90 per cent or above. So also in Madhya Pradesh with a coverage of 94 per cent. With such high coverage by the high yielding Bt cottons and the increase in total cotton area, the total production in 2010-11 would expectedly be substantially higher than in 2009-10.

(Source : Directorate of Cotton Development)

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We solicit your co-operation.

CAI Wishes All Our Readers A Happy Cotton Year 2010-11

Cotton Breeding in the USA

Breeding has played a greater role in cotton development, bigger than any other discipline in many countries as well as in USA. Breeding can rightly be called the Snub around which all other disciplines revolve in order to enable cotton to progress. In its September 2010 issue of the Recorder, the International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC) covers the topic of cotton breeding in the USA. Some of the details contained therein are mentioned below:

It is stated that cotton breeding reached maturity in the US earlier than in other countries and breeding in the US experienced many stages before reaching the current level. One reason why US has led in cotton breeding is that a large share of world production had been in the US. In fact, according to published literature, it was estimated that in the first decade of the 20th century, US crop was around 3 million tonnes while all other countries accounted for about 1.8 million tonnes, US's share being 62 per cent of the world total. About 70 per cent of US production was exported then, this providing raw material to almost half of the textile industries outside the US.

In the US, as in all other countries, cotton breeding started conventionally without taking into consideration the hereditary basis of specific traits. Although early breeders knew that heredity was more important than environment in affecting plant growth and yields, they still relied on phenotypic breeding depending on the external plant characters. It was only after the science of genetics was developed by the middle of the 20th century that the breeding switched over to more scientific methodology. Meanwhile, people brought to US cotton from different parts of the world and grew them for domestic use. The development of saw gin and textile machinery opened the way for huge increase in demand for cotton. Moreover, the development of instruments to quantitatively measure cotton fibre properties spurred breeders to develop varieties with length, strength and fineness, characteristics that are more amendable to textile processing.

It is stated that over 100 cotton varieties are planted every year in USA. Most of the varieties are biotech and almost all of them are from private sector. Earlier, the Delta and Pineland company dominated the scene while Fibre Max varieties became popular during the last 7-8 years. The favourable trait of these is their superior fibre strength. In recent years, Fibre Max and Stoneville together dominate the varietal scene.

One interesting feature in US is that every alternate year a cotton breeder's tour is organised by Cotton Incorporated, a private company owned by US cotton farmers and importers of cotton products. During the tour researchers visit cotton variety trials, farmers' fields, University and the private sector research labs. Besides researchers from US, researches from other countries also participate in the tour. In a recent tour programme, close to 60 scientists from Australia, Brazil, China, Colombia, India and the US are said to have participated. Such cotton breeders' tours are stated to provide a unique opportunity for breeders to meet and discuss their programmes face to face, a key to the success of variety development in the USA.

There are said to be atleast 20 strong cotton breeding teams in US - 15 at State Universities and 5 from the USDA at four different locations. The approaches and methods used by cotton breeders differ with specific breeding objectives, available equipment and facilities and the level of personnel and financial support. Each breeder follows his/her own methodology to induct heterozygosity, screen segregating generations, select desirable plants, develop a hemozygons population, test promising genotypes/lines/strains against standard varieties, and decide which genotype to put forward for registration as germplasm or release as a variety in the case of private breeders.

Private seed companies currently own almost all the cotton varieties planted commercially in the USA. The private seed companies own all the biotech genes that have been identified for use in cotton so far and neither the USDA breeders nor State University breeders are legally entitled to insert biotech genes into their germplasm. Thus, the main purpose of public sector breeders in the USA is to develop genotypes that are liked by seed companies. Breeders, whether State or USDA Agl. Res. Service, are not usually involved in releasing varieties since the commercial cultivation of biotech varieties in the country.

To sum up, the main objectives of cotton breeding by State and USDA breeders are -

- to extend the science of cotton breeding via enhanced technology, selection criteria, genetic diversity and understanding of inheritance and interaction of traits
- to participate in cooperative research with other disciplines, which extends knowledge about the cotton plant

- to hire trained breeders who then train new cotton breeders and influence students
- to develop germplasm for the furtherance of a wider genetic base through release of new germplasm lines
- to fill niches / alternatives not covered by private companies, and
- to enhance the profitability of cotton production within a State or region.

(Source : ICAC Recorder September 2010)

Scientific Basis for Natural Fibres Being Better than Synthetics for Clothing

Ever since their advent a few decades ago, synthetic fibres have been offering stiff competition to cotton. Initially, they proved to be attractive because of their easy care and wash and wear properties. Subsequently, quite a number of new synthetic fibres came to be developed through research which entailed huge amounts of investments by chemical industries. Cotton came to lose ground and its market share in the global use of fibres for clothing came down substantially.

However, later on, cotton could regain some lost ground as some of the problems with clothing made of synthetic fibres came to light. It was noticed that they caused skin allergies to some people besides some other minor ailments. Also, cotton's superiority over synthetic came to be better appreciated because of its unique properties such as moisture absorption and weaving comfort. It was the preferred fibre for inner wear garments, kids' clothes, sports wear, etc. More recently, cotton also entered the fashion wear market. Fashion designers came to use cotton, especially finer cottons, for some of their creations. All these enabled cotton to withstand further onslaught from synthetic and could even regain some of the lost market share. It is estimated that presently cotton's market share in the global use of fibres for clothing is around 40 per cent.

It now appears that research undertaken at different centres in countries like Poland and Japan has established the scientific basis why natural fibres are better than synthetic fibres in clothing. The ICAC Recorder of September 2010 carries a detailed article on the subject. Some of the highlights of this article are mentioned below for information.

One of the results from the study of the reactions to human body from the use of synthetic fibres is said to have been that they may lead to a higher tendency to fatigue. Due to the use of considerable amounts of man-made fibres in clothes and bed, bed linen, there are said to have been more allergies observed among people who use different textile products made from them. Studies conducted in everyday conditions reportedly showed that garments made of natural cellulosic fibres like cotton or linen have a positive influence on physiological parameters of the human body level of immunoglobulin. The lowest level of body temperature and increase of immunoglobia during sleeping in cotton or linen bedding is said to have proved that such raw materials have a positive influence on human rest and steep quality. Further, wearing cotton paijamas positively influenced the activity of setacions glands that improve resistance to skin allergies. It is also stated that wearing polyester clothes can be a reason for desynchronisation of muscle motor units and thus, an increase in fatigue among users. Clothing made of natural cellulosic fibres is said to have been found to positively influence the human body ensuring well being without causing fatigue.

(Source : ICAC Recorder September 2010)

SNIPPETS

In a setback to exporters in different sectors including textiles, the Government is reported to have decided to reduce duty drawback by upto 30 per cent. The new rates are to be effective from September 20, according to the Central Board of Excise and Customs Notification. Duty drawback refund of import duties on raw materials used in exports - for cotton garments is stated to have been reduced to 7.5 per cent against the present 8.8 per cent while that on blended garments containing cotton and man-made fibre has been revised to 8.6 per cent from the prevalent 9.8 per cent.

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UPCOUNTRY SPOT RATES (Rs./Candy)											
Official quotations for standard descriptions with basic grade and staple in Millimetres based on Upper						SPOT RATES (UPCOUNTRY) 2009-10 CROP September - October 2010					
Half mean Length under By-law 66 (A)(a)(4)				25^{th}	27^{th}	28 th	29 th	30 th	1 st		
01.	ICS-101	Below 22mm	Bengal Deshi (RG)	5.0-7.0	15	Η	27000	27000	27000	27000	26700
02.	ICS-201	Below 22mm	Bengal Deshi (SG)	5.0-7.0	15	0	27500	27500	27500	27500	27200
03.	ICS-102	22mm	V-797	4.5-5.9	19		25700	25700	25200	25200	25200
04.	ICS-103	23mm	Jayadhar	4.0-5	19		26200	26200	26000	26000	26000
05.	ICS-104	24mm	Y-1	4.0-5.5	20	L	31000	31000	31000	31000	31000
06.	ICS-202	25mm	J-34	3.5-4.9	23		35500	35500	35500	35500	35200
07.	ICS-105	25mm	NHH-44	3.5-4.9	22		N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
08.	ICS-105	27mm	LRA-5166	3.5-4.9	24	Ι	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
09.	ICS-105	28mm	H-4/ MECH-1	3.5-4.9	25		36500	36500	36500	36500	36500
10.	ICS-105	29mm	S-6	3.5-4.9	26	D	37700	37700	37700	37700	37700
11.	ICS-105	31mm	Bunny/ Brahma	3.5-4.9	27		38500	38500	38500	38500	38500
12.	ICS-106	33mm	MCU-5/ Surabhi	3.3-4.5	28	А	41000	41000	41000	41000	40500
13.	ICS-107	35mm	DCH-32	2.8-3.6	31		45500	45500	45500	45500	45500
14.	ICS-301	26mm	ICC	3.7-4.3	25	Y	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A