

Prospects of Growing Soybean in South Punjab

Seminar on “Prospects of Growing Soybean in South Punjab’ held on 20 June 2023

A seminar on growing and promotion of soybean cultivation was organized by Institute of Plant breeding and genetics MNS-University of Agriculture, Multan. In this seminar different scientists/researchers, academia, seed industries, FAO and extension workers from different organizations were participated. Dr. Umar Farooq, Dean of Food and Home Sciences, MNS-University of Agriculture, Multan welcomed all the participants and described the importance of soybean to grow in the country. He proposed that soybean is a good source of protein and can meet the demands of poultry sector as a protein source. Prof. Dr. Hammad Nadeem Tahir, Director, MNS-University of Agriculture, Multan also explained the need for cultivation and promotion of soybean in Pakistan. He also elaborated the challenges related to the production of soybean in South Punjab region. Dr. Hammad Nadeem elaborated that there is the need of the time to educate and guide the farming community for cultivation of the soybean. He described that a PARB-funded project is running in the University to develop the new varieties and to solve the challenges of soybean cultivation in the country. Mr. Hafiz Saad Bin Mustafa, Oilseed scientist, Oilseed Research Institute, Faisalabad elaborated the importance of soybean in the food security. He focussed that environmental factors drastically can drastically affect the soybean cultivation in the Pakistan. There is a need to optimize the proper management practice to grow the soybean. Mr. Saad suggested that proper irrigation and nutrition is very essential for the production of soybean. He proposed that cultivation spring season for soybean growing is very suitable than autumn season. He also elaborated the suitable areas for cultivation of soybean in Pakistan. Dr. Ahmad Din, Associate Professor, NIFSAT, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad elaborated the nutritional profile and food products of soybean. He described that soybean contains 18-22% healthy oil, 40-42% protein, vitamins and minerals especially calcium, potassium, sodium, zinc and iron. He also proposed that soybean also contains fiber contents that is effective to lower the cholesterol level. Dr. Ahmad Din proposed that soybean is very essential to increase the immunity system in humans. Dr. Ghulam Raza, Principal Scientist, NIBGE, Faisalabad elaborated the biotechnological approaches for genetic improvement in soybean. He described that under changing climate scenarios, this is the need of the time to develop climate resilient varieties of soybean especially those varieties that could performed better under salinity, drought and heat stress. He further elaborated that development of high yielding, high oil and protein content varieties in Pakistan is very essential. He described that soybean has potential to meet the protein the requirements for humans and poultry. Dr. Sajad Hussain, Deputy Director, NRCI, Islamia University Bahawalpur discussed the potential of soybean in intercropping. He elaborated that intercropping of soybean could be effective in enhancing the productivity of soybean. He suggested that the best option for selection of crop for intercropping of soybean is the maize than other food crop. Dr. Baseer Ahmad Khan, Assistant Professor, MNS-University of Agriculture, Multan described the importance of soybean in animal and poultry feed. He proposed that soybean is enriched in essential amino acids, selenium, calcium, protein and iron contents that is more essential for healthy feed of poultry. Prof. Dr. Asif Ali, Vice Chancellor, MNS-University of

Agriculture, Multan concluded the seminar and appreciated the efforts to conduct the seminar on growing and promotion of soybean in Pakistan. He deliberated that soybean is very effective to increase the organic matter and fertility status of the soils. He discussed that soybean is the best option as a plant based food and we should add in our daily diet. He demonstrated that production of crops under changing climatic conditions is a big challenge to fulfil the food requirements for humans. Prof. Dr. Asif Ali proposed that there is a need to introduce new varieties of soybean to provide better production than other food crops. Hence, he suggested that sustainability, profitability and productivity of food crops could be enhanced through soybean cultivation in Pakistan. At the end, the souvenirs were distributed to invited speakers