

Training for Madhubani farmers underway

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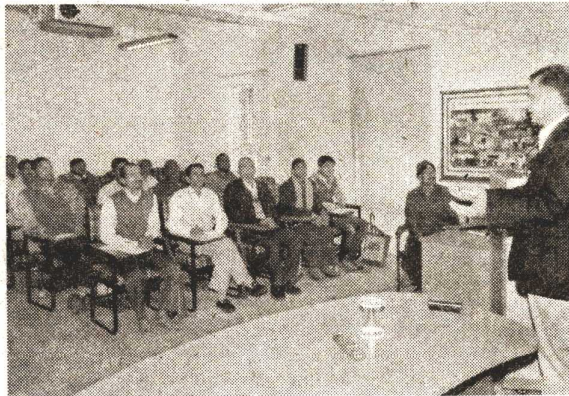
A five-day training for the farmers of Madhubani, Bihar, being organised at Indian Institute of Sugarcane Research (IISR) which will conclude on Friday.

Training coordinator and senior scientist (IISR) AK Sah said that during the five days of learning, the participating farmers gained theoretical and practical knowledge in scientific cultivation of sugarcane and different inter-crops such as pulses, oilseeds, cereals, vegetables, spices with autumn and spring-planted sugarcane crops.

Scientists discussed that about five-odd decades ago, Bihar was considered as the sugar bowl of India. "Sugarcane cultivation and

sugar processing was the main source of revenue and income generating business for lakhs of farmers and for sugar industry in the state. But, at present, sugarcane and sugar industry is in a poor condition and cane yield harvested by majority of farmers in Bihar is about 40-50 tonne per hectare against the potential of about 70 tonne per hectare," the scientists said.

"Sugar recovery in the state is hovering around 8 per cent due to which every year revenue loss to the tune of lakhs is being incurred by the industry in the state. Despite all effort put in by the Bihar Government, the yield has not improved much, at the same time the area under Sugarcane and sugar recovery is not improving in Bihar. This situation is a matter of concern for



agricultural economy in the state," said IISR, Lucknow, director, S Solomon.

The training programme is moduled in such a way that participating farmers may have sufficient knowledge to venture

out in cane-enterprise which can provide them economic security with added income from sugarcane cultivation.

Different techniques like improved cane varieties, planting methods, integrated nutri-

ent management, seed cane production technique, crop options, irrigation management, remunerative intercrops with sugarcane, machines for sugarcane cultivation, integrated pests management and integrated disease management in sugarcane based cropping systems, value added products from sugarcane juice are major topics of learning in this training programme.

The farmers will learn the skill to grow more crop per unit of land by hands-on exercises and 'seeing is believing' sessions. IISR is organising trainings, demonstrations, visits, interactions, symposiums and other extension programmes for benefit of the farmers in more concerted manner under its outreach schemes.