

## CropLife India's participation in 'Kapashicha Chakravyuh'

CropLife India participated in a Cotton Technologies Workshop 'Kapashicha Chakravyuh' organized by 'Shetkari Nyay Hakka Andolan Samiti' (Farmers' Justice Movement Committee of Nagpur) on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2018 at Yavatmal, Maharashtra.

Former MLA **Wamanrao Kasasar** presided over the workshop and Mr. Nanasahab Patole (Ex.MP) was the Chief Guest. Mr. Wamanrao Kasasar is now trying to get a hold on Yavatmal and its issues, so that he can secure a ticket and win in the next election. (As per ground information, Mr. Kasasar's contribution in the Paddy growing areas in the State was far from satisfactory, which did not run well within the ruling party.)

Other speakers present were –

- Sharad Nimbalkar, former Vice Chancellor of Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh Agricultural University
- Dr. V. N. Waghmare, Director of Cotton Research Institute
- Dr. D. Narasimha Reddy, Director - Pesticide Action Network (PAN) India
- Dr. V. S. Nagarare
- Dr. Shaligram Wankhede
- T. V. Kathane
- Dilip Kumar, A researcher from Kerala
- Vijaytai Dhote, former MLA
- Gajanan Amadabadkar, Farmer Leader
- Milind Raut, Shetkari Nyay Hakka Andolan Samiti
- Prakash Dosh, Senior Journalist
- Dr. Basweshwar Ghodki, CropLife India

The workshop began with an introductory remark from Moderator/Organizer Devanand Pawar mentioning the current situation of Yavatmal where farmers are being hospitalized in the current year and not to forget the large number of farmer deaths in the past year in the contrast of newer technologies being introduced in the agriculture sector. The lamp lighting



ceremony was done and tribute was offered to late progressive farmer Mehandi Seeth Gilani.

The speakers spoke on the various problems being faced by the farmer –

- Increasing usage of pesticides year on year yet devastation by Pink Bollworm attack
- Resistance of pests from pesticides
- Bt Cotton Seeds' poor performance
- The burden of seeds on farmers' life
- No benefit of technology to farmer
- Minimum Sale Price of Cotton
- Impact of less rainfall

The theme of the discussion was that the problems faced by the farmers and how farmers' lives have been changed and impacted by the various policy decisions and companies. The companies Monsanto and pesticides were on the receiving end.



**Dr. D. Narasimha Reddy, Director - Pesticide Action Network (PAN) India** presented his analogy of how pesticide organizations are controlling numerous factors for their vested interests. Factors like changing the literature from 'Poison' to 'Dawai' (medicine); positive image of pesticides; etc. He argued that the entire pesticide industry is being controlled by few major companies (primarily

CropLife member companies) and further consolidation of the market is happening. There is absence of knowledge with Medical Doctors about treatment of pesticide poisoning and absence of antidotes for most of the molecules. He shared several data points from various sources of how the sales of pesticides have spiked over the years. He thrust upon the fact that pesticides are the reason behind Cancer in Punjab, under-weight babies in Andhra Pradesh, deaths in Yavatmal, etc.

Farmer representatives from 'Shetkari Sanghatna' were also present and some of them supported GM technology and raised a question "why further improved GM technology is not being introduced in India when world is moving to 'BG-VII'". Director CICR, Dr. Waghmare touched on current situation of pink bollworm on cotton in state and suggested a long term strategy to mitigate the problem. Dr. Nimbalker, Ex VC, PDKV, Akola also shared few tactics to tackle pink bollworm issue. Dr. Nagrare from CICR shared video to clarify doubts of farmers to handle pink bollworm. Both the scientist from CICR discouraged pre-monsoon sowing of cotton and strongly recommended early removal of crop, before January. They also suggested growing

short duration varieties. They also shared that, they are going to market BG-I straight variety for Indian farmers through government channel.

Mr. Nanasaheb Patole (Ex MP) stressed upon the need of Government to educate the farmers on the technology of both seeds and pesticides and the increase of MSP.

**Dr. Basweshwar Ghodki, Corteva represented CropLife India** on this platform. He spoke on the issue of Responsible Use of Pesticides, proper reading of Label and anti-counterfeit messages. Apart from the presentation, an Anti-Counterfeit film was screened and Leaflets on '9 Steps Responsible Use' and Farmer Education Messages were distributed at the venue.



Representatives from BASF and FMC were also present in the workshop.

At the end of the day, 'Samiti' finalized a list of action items, which needs to be taken forward. CropLife India suggested initiating awareness campaign about Responsible Use of pesticides in collaboration with government agencies.

**Conclusion:** As the bewildered farmer looks around for help, all he gets is that he is deeply inside the conundrum. People around him are supposedly involved for their interests and finally he will be in disdain. Pesticide companies / Association should surely be present in such workshops / seminars as the farmer should certainly be educated about responsible use of pesticides. The entire workshop was in Marathi and our Speaker should always be (like this time) fluent in the same language as of the audience.

**The above experience exhorts us to widely participate in the Nagpur Seminar – [AgroVision](#) so that we can actively respond to propaganda which suppresses all the good work being done by member companies and tends to highlight unnecessary blame for political gains by vested interests.**