



Initiatives Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic and National Lockdown

ICAR-National Institute of Abiotic Stress Management
Malegaon (Kd), Baramati, Pune

1. **Prepared a document on impacts and remedies of national lockdown on agriculture:** Based on the information collected from stakeholders and the local sources a document was prepared by ICAR-NIASM scientists to brief about the status of agriculture after lockdown imposed by the Government. It highlights the problem being faced by the farmers due to impact on transport and labour. In addition it also provides recommendations and safety measures to make the purpose of lockdown successful without hindering the food supply chain from crop, livestock and fisheries sectors.
2. **Contributed 1 day salary by all staff:** Nearly Rs 1.5 lakh has been contributed by NIASM staff to support Hon'ble Prime Ministers initiative to check COVID 19.
3. **Created awareness among the farm labourers, security staff and others by involving authorised Medical Doctor:** Taking into consideration the urgency for enhancing awareness about COVID-19 and Government decision on lockdown contractual staff and security persons working for NIASM were briefed about the status and precautions to be taken by them and arrangements were made to provide them necessary protection items like mask and sanitizers. Security persons were informed about preventing unknown persons or persons with likely symptoms of disease by Medical Doctor employed on contract. Number of security persons has also been brought down to comply with Government orders.
4. **Providing advisories to the farmers telephonically:** Scientists are interacting with farmers and other stakeholders to collect the on the farm status and also to inform them about the possibilities of abiding the Lock Down rules which exempt agricultural operations. However, both labour and transport issues are some time beyond the control of farmers who have to harvest their crops and send it to the market. Government of Maharashtra is now encouraging Producers to Vendor link by passing middleman to solve this problem.
5. **Organizing video conferencing** with the scientists, technical and other staff on almost daily basis.
6. **Director, Heads of the Schools, Head of the Administration and Finance** are in constant touch with scientists and other staff through online means including video conferencing and cell phone to accomplish the time bound and essential works of the Institute.
7. The institute has also offered its **guest house facilities** if needed for accomplishing the task of checking community spread of COVID-19.
8. **Helping poor migrant labourers stuck amid COVID 19 and national lockdown:** ICAR-National Institute of Abiotic Stress Management, Baramati, came forward to help the migrant labourers who stuck amid COVID 19 lockdown situation. Monetary contribution was made by all the staff of ICAR-NIASM to buy and distribute the grocery items to the poor migrant labourers. A kit consisting of grocery items like, wheat (5 kg), chick pea (1 kg), tur (0.5 kg), rice (3 kg), tur dal (1 kg), cooking oil (1 Litre), turmeric (100 g), salt (250 g), chilli powder (250 g), jeera (100 g), onion (2 kg), potato (2 kg) and parle biscuits (2 pkt) were prepared. 86 kits were handed over to the village accountant of Malegaon (Bk), Baramati for its distribution to the needy migrant labour families. Director, ICAR-NIASM, Dr. Himanshu Pathak interacted with the concerned person to understand the situation amid lockdown and promised in extending further help in future.



Grocery kits



Director ICAR-NIASM interacting with Village Accountant and handover of grocery kit