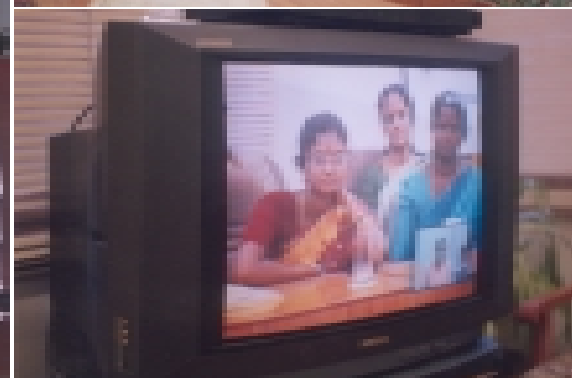


MANAGE

Bulletin

From the National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management



Cyber Extension: Changing the face of Indian Agriculture

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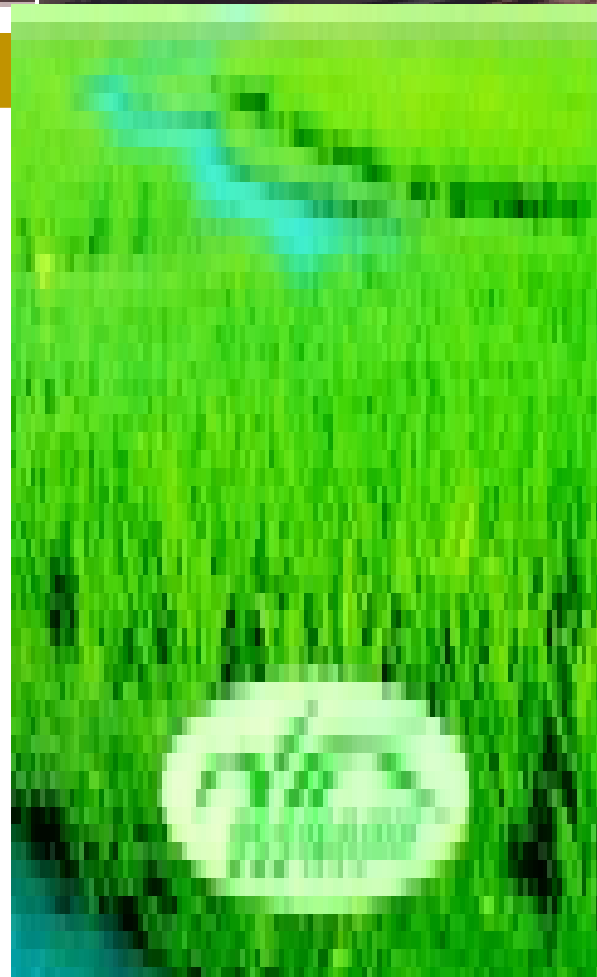
A silent revolution is taking place in the communication systems in Rural India. The National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management, MANAGE, Hyderabad, has taken-up a number of "Cyber Extension" initiatives, across the country. District level Web Sites are being hosted, Information Kiosks are being established at block/ Mandal and village levels and technical and other need based information is being collected, digitized and hosted on the Internet.

Quick dissemination of Technological information from the Agricultural Research System to the Farmers in the field and reporting of farmers' feedback to the research system is one of the critical inputs in Transfer of Agricultural Technology. To reach over

110 million farmers, spread over 500 districts and over 6000 blocks is an up hill task. The diversity of agro-ecological situations adds to this challenge further. Farmers' needs are much more diversified and the knowledge required to address them is beyond the capacity of the grass root level extension functionaries.

Today it is possible to find a solution to this situation by using the potential of Internet based technologies to meet the location specific information needs of the Farmers. Information and communication networks are expanding very fast. Internet connectivity has touched almost all the districts in the country and is moving down to the block and Mandal levels. Pilot projects to

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connect rural community to cyber-space are underway at various locations. The initial response of the rural people, particularly women, has been very encouraging.

MANAGE has established Internet connectivity in 24 Districts in 7 States, namely Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Orissa and Punjab under National Agricultural Technology Project (NATP). MANAGE has also connected over 75 blocks in the 6 pilot districts under NATP. To test the efficacy of reaching the last mile MANAGE connected 10 villages in Andhra Pradesh. MANAGE selected successful Mutually Aided Co-operative Thrift and Credit Societies (MACTCS), organised by DW CRA groups in 10 villages of Rangareddy District. One multimedia computer system, with UPS, Printer and Internet connectivity was provided to each MACTCS. 4 members identified by the group were trained in basic computer operations and Internet browsing. Multimedia CDs on Agriculture- The Interactive Self Learning Package on Watershed Management, The Vyavasaya Panchangam (Encyclopedia of Agricultural Practices), Paddy, Cotton, Mango and Coconut Cultivation, Expert Systems on selected crops and Rural Development - Pickle Making, Child Labour, Child Education, Nutrition and Health Education, etc. were given to all the Groups. A user-friendly accounting package was given to all the MACTCS to maintain their accounts.

The experiences of these groups have shown that they

have been using the Internet in innovative ways. They are browsing DRDA websites for Government Programmes and schemes. They are looking for Weather forecasts, market prices, job opportunities, and news on the Net regularly. They have also started to charge for some of these services selectively. Farmers are also using the Net for getting technical advice online from various sources. Rural people have created their own e-mail accounts and are using this facility for faster communication. They are sending mails to DRDA, District Collector, other district and State officials, and MANAGE.

The Agricultural Information Base on the Net is building up slowly but surely. MANAGE has taken the initiative to provide linkages to the technical and other farmer friendly information through its Web-Site. MANAGE is also supporting a number of Agricultural Universities to digitize their technical information and host the same on the Web. MANAGE is also supporting other research and training organisations, both in public, and voluntary sector in building their capacity to digitize the Agricultural Information and make it available on the WWW. The web-sites of 4 Regional Extension Education Institutes (EEIs), 6 State level Management and Extension Training Institutes (SAMETIs), one State Agricultural University (Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University), 24 Districts, and many other organisations have been designed, developed and

hosted by MANAGE. The web-sites of 24 Districts (Agricultural Technology Management Agency, ATMAs), contain very important information on District Profile, Land Use Pattern, District Agriculture scenario, Strategic Research and Extension Plans (SREPs), replicable success stories, and information on important contact persons with their telephone numbers and e-mail -ids. These web sites have improved the information dissemination of these institutions significantly.

MANAGE will be connecting over 350 blocks in 28 districts on Internet, by the end of this year. MANAGE will also establish call centres at two universities within next 6 months, where the farmers can get their technical queries answered on toll-free telephone numbers. All the technical information - the package of practices for all the crops, the seed varieties recommended for the area, fertilizer and pesticide recommendations etc. will be hosted on their Web-Site. These web-sites will have FAQs and feedbacks. Director General MANAGE Shri A.K. Goel, I.A.S. is taking personal interest in ensuring proper incubation of this initiative. As an apex national institution, MANAGE through its various projects and programmes is working towards providing the Cyber Connectivity to all Indian Villages, to make available the benefits of Information and Communication technology to the Indian Farmer and change the face of Indian Agriculture.

Seminar on WTO



Implications of the World Trade Agreement on Indian Agriculture are beginning to show impact though marginally, especially after the removal of quantities restriction on agricultural commodities. As this agreement has a broader perspective with different interpretations, it is important on the part of those organisations, which are directly working in agriculture, to clarify doubts.

MANAGE, in this direction started its awareness campaign last year. In

continuation, on August 6, 2001 Institute organized a one-day awareness campaign at Patna, Bihar in cooperation with the Govt. of Bihar. The need for the seminar was very apparent with the heated debate. The Cabinet Minister of Agriculture, Govt. of Bihar Shri Gulam Sarwar, inaugurated the seminar. Keynote was delivered by Shri Shiv Shankar Yadav, State Minister of Agriculture, Govt. of Bihar. In toto 128 delegates attended the seminar. Among them were bureaucrats, State Heads,

Academicians, and line department officials, farmers and farmer leaders. The objective of the seminar was to present a broad picture on World Trade Organisation and its functioning. During the deliberations open trade policy and its implications, Agreement on Agriculture and related issues, sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures, trade related intellectual property rights, current trends in domestic and international trade were discussed. The seminar was strengthened by the presence of Additional Secretary, Minister of Agriculture, Govt. of India Shri R.C.A. Jain who also participated in the deliberations. Apart from MANAGE faculty, experts like Dr. Rajeev Mehta, Additional Statistical Advisor, Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India, Shri Abihijit Das, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Commerce GOI, deliberated in the seminar.

MANAGE has been selected as the 4th Best sectoral business school in India by a survey conducted by Outlook, MDRA. The survey conducted to rank the top 50 business schools in the country evaluated the institutes on four broad parameters viz. Placements (38%); Academic environment (37%); Industry Interface (15%) and Infrastructure (10%).

On this achievement, Mr. A.K. Goel, Director General, MANAGE said, "All of us at MANAGE are elated at this recognition. It has been a constant endeavor at MANAGE to produce competent and proficient personnel who will augment the growth of agri-business in the country." The validation exercise was carried out by a special team which cross-checked the data given by various management institutes, from

secondary sources available, field visits and also through interviews with recruiters. To get a truly fair picture, the B-schools were ranked based on the rating they received from the students and faculty of other B-schools. The recruiters were asked to evaluate B-schools on the quality of students, the quality of industry-related research and the innovativeness of management development programmes.



In order to upgrade the skills of secretarial staff of MANAGE a two week training programme was organised on Budget, Finance, Accounts and Service matters during July 2001. Sri C.B. Sankaranarayana, IA & AS, Senior Deputy Accountant General (Retd.) conducted the training programme in association with senior faculty from Accountant General's office, Hyderabad. The need for qualitative effectiveness rather than quantitative efficiency was stressed upon.



Strategic Research and Extension Plan for Hamirpur District. (SREP series). Hyderabad, MANAGE, 2001. pages.

Strategic Research and Extension Plan for Koraput District. (SREP series). Hyderabad, MANAGE, 2001. pages.

Strategic Research and Extension Plan for Kangra District. (SREP series). Hyderabad, MANAGE, 2001. pages

MANAGE Series on WTO and Agriculture: Number 3, August 2001. Focus: Oilseeds

MANAGE Extension Research review v2 no 1 Jan-Jun 2001 published!

This issue concentrates on aspects like entrepreneurial behaviour of farmers, socio-logical and extension management techniques in farming situation specific production, capacity building, poverty estimation, tribal extension, empowerment of women, food security and agricultural exports.

Knowledge series guest lectures

MANAGE has started a Knowledge series Guest Lecture in Sept 2001. Shri Sharu Ranganekar, the Management guru started with his presentation on Facing Challenges of 21st Century.

“The mantra in the new era of success is Innovation, Loyalty to self, quality and productivity. In order to achieve this a manager should navigate like a fish against the currents and not sway along like a cork”. said Sharu Ranganekar. Time Discipline, Method Discipline and Motivation Discipline need emphasis as these are the three work related problems for productivity. He spoke how team building through Ego, Envy and Expectation can bring medical changes. For successful sense of Mission, sense of Action, and sense of Loyalty is of prime importance. Managers of the 21st Century should imbibe in them involvement, commitment and ownership. They should have freedom to interact, sense of belongingness and a sense of responsibility.