

Proposal: Training on Bio-control Measures for Healthy Planting Material and Diagnosing Virus

Since inception of the IPC over 40 years before, the pepper industry has undergone many changes and faced many challenges. Currently the outlook of the pepper industry is entirely different. Each pepper producing countries have their own problems. However, for the global shortage of supply of pepper, the main reason is the problem of Pest & Disease which have made a substantial yield loss in pepper gardens in almost all pepper producing countries.

Since, the current price of pepper is attractive to farmers; in general farmers are showing interest in re-planting / new planting. However, availability of certified healthy planting material at required level is the issue. Though there are enough information available on foot rot & slow diseases of pepper & their management, efforts for large scale development of bio-control agents for re-planting is not adequate.

Since the consumption of pepper and pepper products are growing both in consuming and producing countries, attempts to increase the pepper production is required to be taken on priority. Unless large scale production of healthy planting material by applying bio-control agents in nursery mixture for rising rooted cuttings are made, it will be difficult to increase the production and bridge the gap between the supply and demand.

In view of the above and considering the need for re-planting / new planting, it is suggested to disseminate the technology on production and application of bio-control agents by educating the farmers in the field on selection of right mother plant, developing nurseries, preparing the land for re-planting / new planting etc.

The above may be implemented by conducting national level workshops in association with the concerned agencies in the respective member countries. During the workshop the research findings on R & D kit for diagnosing the virus may also be familiarized. Major areas for the training / demonstration are:

1. Education on the usefulness of the bio-control agents.
2. Demonstrating productions of bio-control agents for large scale multiplications & distribution by farmers associations.
3. Importing training on developing healthy planting material.
4. Proposing a plan of action for implementing in the field.

Dissemination of information on control of pest & diseases, demonstration of technology in the field, farm visits by experts and explaining the need for on-farm-practices are considered as important. Hence, the IPC would like to take it forward with the member countries for achieving better results. Each member country is requested to conduct such programs in the major producing centers.

The proposed training program on bio-control is largely to train the scientists of the member countries on the techniques and screening efficient bio-control agents as a part of bio-control technology. Hence it is suggested to involve the scientists, agricultural / extensions officers who are working for Black Pepper.

In view of the above, it is proposed to conduct the above program in association with the participating member countries on cost sharing basis. If considered further details on conduct of the program, deciding on the participants, right locations for the field demonstration will be discussed with the participating member country. The support proposed by the IPC for this program to share the cost of resource persons, training materials, local transport etc. is up to US\$ 5,000.00 per member country for the year 2012

This proposal is submitted for consideration and approval.