

## ASEAN-India Working Group discusses agribiotech cooperation

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The third meeting of the ASEAN-India Working Group on Agriculture and Forestry (AIWGAF) began at NASC Complex, New Delhi on May 6, 2013. Dr S Ayyappan, secretary, DARE and director general, Indian Council for Agricultural Research, ICAR and co-chair of the meeting emphasized upon the cooperation in agriculture and allied sectors between the India and ASEAN member states in his opening remark. He also presented the overview of the meeting and discussed issues of common concern. Dr Ayyappan gave a glimpse of project proposals scheduled for discussion in the meeting.

Among the proposals that were discussed included the ASEAN-India Fellowships for higher education in the field of agriculture and allied sciences. The exchange of scientists between agricultural education, research and extension institutions of ASEAN member states and India Information technology applications for agricultural extension (e-Extension), organic certification for fruit and vegetables organizing and implementing an effective national seed quality control system, Spatial and temporal dynamics of avian influenza viruses in wild and aquatic migratory birds of India, and managing food security and price volatility.

In his remark, Dr Linkham Douangsavanh, deputy director general, National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute, Lao-PDR and co-chair of the meeting focused on the major concerns in the region like food security, enhancement of productivity, advancement of technology and human resource development. He hoped that the deliberations of this meeting will provide greater help to the India and ASEAN member states in agriculture and allied sectors. Dr Douangsavanh also released the 2nd issue of "India-ASEAN News on Agriculture and Forestry".

Mr Arvind Kaushal, additional secretary, DARE and secretary, ICAR and Ms Renu Pall, joint secretary (ASEAN-ML), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India also presented their remarks on importance of the meeting.

Earlier, Dr Arvind Kumar, deputy director general (Education), ICAR welcomed the dignitaries and presented a brief note on ASEAN-India cooperation. Delegates from ASEAN member states, deputy directors general, assistant directors general and scientists and officials of ICAR are participating in this 2-day (May 6-7, 2013) meeting organized by DARE/ICAR.