

Accentuating innovation through Summer Tomato

Tomato is one of the most widely grown vegetable crops and has got versatile use in various foods. It is mainly a winter crop. However, tomato is cultivated in summer season to some extent. Mainly, most of the tomatoes are imported from India in summer season due to lack of sufficient supply. Cultivation of tomato in summer is a new concept in Bangladesh and ACI Agribusinesses is striving to excel at cultivating the variety.

Recently, ACI seed has launched a summer tomato variety called Summer King. The variety is heat tolerant and high yielding; and triple resistance to three devastating diseases of tomato namely bacterial wilt, leaf curl virus and early blight. Our variety of summer tomato is high yielding compared to BARI-4 variety.

ACI Seed has arranged a demonstration program on 22 July, 2013 at Rajshahi. Various research institutes, Government Officials and NGO personnel were present to observe the result. Furthermore, about 400 farmers from rural and remote areas of Godagari and Paba participated in the event. They complimented ACI for working with climate resilient and heat tolerant tomato varieties and arranging field days to increase the productivity and farm income.

In the demonstration, ACI seed has seen that around eight thousand to ten thousand taka per decimal is spent in total by farmers for cultivating Summer King. But from a decimal of land farmers have got a return of TK.100,000 (200plant*10kg yield/plant*Tk50/kg) on an average. That means Tk. 90,000 per decimal has been the profit from this variety.

This is how ACI Agribusinesses is making strides to ensure financial solvency for the farmers. Through the countrywide dissemination of technology, we strive to make the farmers acquainted with new technology and thus, improve their economic condition.



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ACI Seed organizes Farmers Meetings on Hybrid Cotton at Jessore

ACI Seed had arranged a Farmers Meeting on 29 July 2013 with around 120 participants on Hybrid Cotton, Shuvro at Jikorgacha in the Jessore region. The meeting was presided by Mr. Hasanul Hoque Panna, ex Director General of DAE, Mr. Jafor Ali, Deputy Director, CDB, Jessore Region and Dr. Abdusalam, Chief Cotton Development Officer, Jessore Region. The Sales Manager, Assistant, Product Manager, Area Sales Executive, Jessore of ACI Seed were also present and delivered their speech for motivating cotton farmers to cultivate ACI Hybrid cotton.

Mr. Hasanul Hoque Panna, the newly appointed advisor for ACI Agribusinesses praised the products of ACI Seed, especially hybrid cotton. He said cotton is an economically important crop due to the large gap existing between demand and supply. He mentioned that the government is also giving importance to the development of cotton in Bangladesh. He requested the farmers to source their cotton seeds from good companies such as ACI and also highly recommended ACI's variety Shuvro.

The Deputy Director, CDB, Jessore Region and CCDO, Jessore Region praised ACI's variety of hybrid cotton based on last year's performance. They also gave a few agronomic tips for improving the cotton yield. Moreover, the business had arranged another

9 farmers meeting at different Cotton Unit offices of the Jessore Region, where around 400 cotton farmers were present and shared their opinions while expressing their eagerness to cultivate Shuvro.



ACI Fertilizer promotes Bioferti for increased tea production

ACI Fertilizer is promoting their new product Bioferti, which is a natural humus based product (97% liquid humus) to tea garden managers by carrying out demonstrations. The demand of Tea is increasing rapidly locally & internationally; but the production in our country is not increasing at the desired rate. The production has been hampered significantly due to droughts this year. Hence the tea garden managers are trying to increase the production of tea through more nursing and Bioferti is the perfect product for it. It is a matrix of plant nutrients, amino acids, carbohydrates and vitamins necessary for overall plant health, growth, nutrition and quality. The trials in the tea gardens have shown positive results till date.



ACI Seed organizes field day on Tomato: Summer King- a climate resilient technology at Rajshahi

ACI Seed organized a field day on 22 July 2013 on hybrid tomato called Summer King, which is a new technology introduced for climate resilient adaptation in Rajshahi. The new hybrid is heat tolerant, high yielding and triple resistance to 3 devastating diseases of tomato namely bacterial wilt, leaf curl virus and early blight. The tomatoes were grown under transparent polyethylene shed tunnel. Demonstrations were made under the supervision of staff from ACI Seed and ACI-IFC cooperation supported project. More than 400 tomato growing farmers from Godagari and Paba rural and remote areas participated in the event. Officials from the DAE and BADC, scientists from research institutes, teachers and students from university of Rajshahi also participated in the event.

The program was conducted on the 0.15 acre plot of Nur Azhar Babu of Mohonpor, Godagari who had adopted the new tomato hybrid seed provided by ACI. He was satisfied with the performance of the hybrid and expects a yield of more than 12 tonnes per acre, which is one of the highest yields under summer cultivation. The produce is being

taken directly from his field by the local outlets and transported to other distant markets. This is being facilitated by the firmness of the fruit along with its longer shelf life.

The program was inaugurated by Dr. Shafiqul Aktar, Business Manager of ACI Seed, who highlighted the summer tomato production and promotion programs by the business. He also promised to supply sample seeds to interested farmers. The participating farmers were convinced about the technology. Mr. Nurul Amin, Deputy Director, DAE along with Upazilla Agricultural Officers of Godagari and Rajshahi shared their experiences on this new technology. They complimented ACI for working with climate resilient and heat tolerant tomato varieties and arranging field days to increase the productivity as well as farmers income. They also outlined that though summer tomato cultivation is an expensive technology, but farmers can minimize cost by involving their own family in the production process and using the excess cheap labor available in the village during June to September.



ACI Fertilizer launches the complete solution for cotton production

ACI Fertilizer is promoting the complete solution for cotton production including Organic Fertilizer, Gypsar, Boron, Excel Gold & Bioferti. Cotton is a promising cash crop in Bangladesh generating higher ROI for farmers. ACI Fertilizer conducted several discussion programs with Cotton Development Officers in July for promoting their products among the farmers. The programs were held in Kushtia, Meherpur, Jessore, Rangamati & Dinajpur. After the information provided during the meetings the officers agreed to prescribe ACI Fertilizer's products to increase the production of cotton.



Business Stories

ACI Fertilizer provides Liquid Products for Vegetables

Summer vegetables are in harvesting stage at this moment. In this stage, farmers use different liquid products to enhance the life cycle of the plants and get more yield. **ACI Fertilizer** conducted timely promotional activities such as farmer training programs, personal communication and demonstration of the results after utilizing their liquid products on the vegetables. The liquid products being promoted are Excel Gold, Bioferti & Bumper Folon. The major programs were held in Jessore, Jhenaidah, Pabna, Rangpur, Thakurgaon, Tangail and Laxmipur.



ACI Fertilizer introduces the Fruit Picker

ACI Fertilizer imported the Fruit Picker from Taiwan and is promoting it in fruit orchards for motivating the retailers and farmers to use the new technology. The aim of promoting Fruit Picker is to build strong relationship with traders and farmers by giving them a new technology. The key benefit of the product is that the fruits can be picked easily without any damage.



ACI Fertilizer introduces new technology for soil testing

ACI Fertilizer has given a soil tester named "Fertometer" to their Field Force for promoting the business' products more accurately. The Fertometer measures the level of nutrients in the soil and indicated the soil status through glowing lights. The green light indicates that soil fertility is okay, the red light indicates lack of fertilizer in the soil and the yellow light indicates that fertilizer should be added as early as possible.



ACI-Syngenta signs MoU on transplanting service

ACI Agribusinesses signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the world's leading multination agro business company, Syngenta Bangladesh Limited on 23 July 2013 with an aim to support mechanized transplanting services in Syngenta's rice integrated solution program 'TEGRA'. Dr F H Ansarey, Executive Director of ACI Agribusinesses and Md. Sazzadul Hassan, Managing Director of Syngenta Bangladesh Limited signed the agreement on behalf of their respective organizations at Syngenta's corporate office in Dhaka. Mr. Subrata Ranjan Das, Business Director of ACI Motors, Mr. Ziaur Rahman, TEGRA Rice Program Leader from Syngenta, Bangladesh and Engr. Asif Uddin, General Manager, S&PD were also present in the ceremony. Through this project, ACI Motors will enter into a new business segment of Contract Farming through full mechanization support from Cultivation – transplanting – harvesting and post harvest processing.



FH Ansarey, executive director of ACI Agribusiness, and Md Sazzadul Hassan, managing director of Syngenta Bangladesh Ltd, sign a deal at Syngenta's corporate office in Dhaka yesterday. ACI Motors will provide mechanical transplanting service in Syngenta's TEGRAM programme in Natore.

ACI Motors held training programs on tractor operation

ACI Motors arranged a "Tractor Operation" training program on 16 July 2013 at four locations across the country including Manikganj, Jamalpur, Chuadanga & Laxmipur. Knowledge on tractor operation and maintenance was disseminated to around 200 participants such as Tractor Operators, Spare Parts Dealers, Commission Agents and other prospective clients. Information was also given on the use of original spare parts and regular maintenance. Through this training program the Sonalika tractor along with other products of ACI Motors were highlighted. This further enhanced the business' brand image.



ACI Motors promote R24 Power Tiller through innovative communication

ACI Motors participated at the "Distributors' Halkhata" program at Dinajpur and Thakurgaon on 26 June 2013 to promote the newly launched R24 Power Tiller. Videos were shown to provide demonstration and training on the unique features of the Power Tiller. An inspirational video called "Naser Amader Ahankar" was also featured. Around 4000 participants including mechanics, farmers and retailers were present in the program. On behalf of ACI Motors they were presented with T-shirts and gift boxes. The large scale promotional activities created a positive buzz in the market and as a result 200 units of Power Tiller was sold during June-July 2013. Further promotion was carried out at a mechanics conference arranged in Netrokona on 8 July 2013 as a result of which the highest number of power tiller was sold in this location. ACI Motors awarded Mr. Motin Mia, a mechanic for selling the most. This conference was also followed by the local media and inspired the participants to carry out promotions more aggressively.



ACI Animal Health is continuously bringing innovative products

ACI Animal Health is continuously bringing new innovative products to the market. On 1st July 2013 it launched **Cocci-Tol Plus**. ACI was the first to launch this Anti-coccidial drug in Bangladesh after importing it from Eagle Vet Tech Co; Ltd. Seol, Korea . Plans have been made to launch a special campaign in order to introduce the product widely throughout the country. The major advantage of **Cocci-Tol Plus** is that it is effective at all stages of Eimeria spp. growth, which causes Coccidiosis in Poultry. The business aims to rescue farmers from the devastation of Coccidia and contribute towards their profit margin.

Another new product which hit the market is in the dairy sector known as **Acilac Plus Bolus**. It is a combination of Prebiotics, Probiotics, Minerals & Enzymes. The product improves gut flora & overall metabolism, to increase the animal productivity and reproduction and ensures minerals for livestock.



ACI Cropex wholesale point

ACI Cropex started a wholesale point at Karwan Bazar and sold a variety of vegetables such as sweet pumpkin, gourd, cauliflower, cabbage, lemon, cucumber, etc. In July Cropex sold about 35,000 kg of vegetables, which is a 50% increase in comparison with the previous month.



ACI Cropex successfully organized a mango fair in Niketon

With a mission to brand ACI Cropex, a chemical free mango fair was organized in Niketon which ended on 27 July 2013. About 5300 kg mangoes were sold in this fair and more than 21,000 piece of mangoes were branded. There was a strong response to the fair which was visited by more than 750 customers. Most of them demanded other seasonal fruits as well.

Cardamom being cultivated commercially in Bangladesh

Commercial cultivation of cardamom has begun in Benapole, Bangladesh stirring interests of many even at the research level. Shahjahan Ali, amateur farmer first planted cardamom in 2011 and then went into commercial farming. A group of scientists from the Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute visited the farm and collected samples for research work.

The locally produced spice resembles that of the imported one from India in terms of look and smell. It is thought that this costly spice will help Bangladesh have economic gain substantially.



Global crop yields fail to keep pace with demand

The world is not increasing yields of major crops quickly enough to meet future food demands from an expanding population, presenting a "looming and growing agricultural crisis", according to a study. Yields of maize, rice, wheat and soybean — responsible for providing 43 per cent of global dietary energy and 40 per cent of protein — must increase between 60 and 110 per cent by 2050 to satisfy projected food consumption. But yields will increase only by between 38 and 67 per cent at the current pace of improvement in yields, according to research published in PLOS ONE last month (19 June).

Deepak Ray and colleagues from the Institute on the Environment at the University of Minnesota, United States performed a study, which mapped agricultural statistics around the world and tracked how yields are changing in each country. They have reported that demands will not be met especially, from a growing population keen on meat and dairy products that must also share its agricultural land with biofuels

The findings are valuable because they look at specific regions and countries, says Hans Braun, director of the Global Wheat Program at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT) in Mexico. Braun also suggested significant increase in agricultural research to bring about changes. These changes include boosting of crop yields by spreading best management practices and closing yield gaps across the globe, as well as clearing more land for agriculture, but also reducing food waste and eating less meat.



New tire roll-out uses soyoil

From solvents to plastics to paints and to, of course, biodiesel, soybean oil has displayed a diversity of uses that astound the farmers who produce the crop. The string of successful new uses of soybeans was extended when farmers discovered at the Commodity Classic this year that even farm tires can be made from soyoil. And not just any tire, but massive tractor rubber! Bridgestone Americas, whose Firestone brand tires are found in use in fields around the world, revealed they are testing a tractor tire that contains 10% soybean oil. Each 900-pound tire contains about 90 pounds of soybean oil. That's the equivalent of about eight bushels of soybeans and is enough product to completely replace the petroleum-based oils now employed to produce tires, according to the company. "We put two and two together, and making ag tires out of soybeans is a natural fit to start some of those efforts," adds Tom Rodgers of Firestone. The company expects that the first soy-based tires could hit the market yet this winter. Bridgestone wants to use soyoil in its entire line of farm tires by the end of this year.



Kenyan team leads plans for livestock genebank

Researchers in Kenya are working towards setting up the world's first genebank for livestock. The genebank could help protect the biodiversity of threatened breeds and be a useful research tool, says the team, based at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) in Nairobi, Kenya.

In Africa about a billion people depend on livestock for their livelihoods, and animal-sourced food makes an important contribution to nutrition, yet livestock biodiversity is being eroded as fast as crop biodiversity. In the short term the genebank will prevent loss of biodiversity and in the long run it can be used to eradicate livestock diseases. The researchers plan to use two different preserving techniques, cryopreservation, which would involve freezing animal cells at low temperatures using liquid nitrogen, and in vivo preservation.



DuPont Pioneer launches new crop software

DuPont Pioneer is bringing the next generation of powerful Web-based field management tools to growers with the introduction of Pioneer Field360 Select software. This new subscription service combines field-by-field data with real-time agronomic and weather information to help growers make informed management decisions. "Pioneer Field360 Select software guides growers to better use the field data they have collected, currently and in prior years, to increase farm productivity and profitability," says Justin Heath, DuPont Pioneer new services manager.

Pioneer Field360 Select software can provide growers substantial information about a field without the grower ever setting foot on the ground. This program is backed by soil, weather and precipitation data spanning many decades. It is also supported by Pioneer Agronomy Sciences data trials to determine growth stages of Pioneer® brand corn hybrids. When used with the compatible Pioneer Field360 Notes app, a grower can take notes and photos with GPS tags to track field-by-field agronomic status. The app gives growers the option to confidentially share information in real time with DuPont Pioneer agronomists and Pioneer sales professionals. The Pioneer Field360 Select software runs on any Web-accessible electronic device and is compatible with data cards from most planting and harvest monitor systems.

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Creating Wealth for Farmers

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