

Reaping Highest Level of Profit from Niche Market

Niche market means the untapped market where there is specified demand but lack of adequate supply. Many of the crops in Bangladesh are area and season specific. But, there is a year-round demand for that particular crop. The best example of filling the needs of niche market is getting winter crops in summer season and summer crops in winter season. Tomato, cauliflower, cabbage, radish, bottle gourd, pumpkin, brinjal etc. are now available all year round even though they are basically winter vegetables. Again, vegetables like okra, ridge gourd, snake gourd etc were considered as summer vegetables. But now, these are available all through the year.

The advantage of cultivating of these vegetables is they have high demand with limited supply in the market. On top of it, the farmers can reap a higher profit from cultivating these vegetables. Even though there is a high cost of production, higher profit compensates for that cost.



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ACI Agribusinesses to initiate collaborative research with University of Rajshahi

Delegates from University of Rajshahi- Dr. Tanzima Yeasmin, Director of the Institute of Biological Sciences (IBS) and Prof. Dr. Bari Miah, Professor of IBS visited the Advanced Seed Research and Biotech Centre (ASRBC). The ASRBC is ACI Agribusinesses' initiative towards molecular breeding related R&D. A MoU has been signed with IBS and under it virus free, high yielding and heat tolerant tomatoes will be developed through genetic marker assisted selection.

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ACI Seed Boosts sales by holding dealer motivation program

ACI Seed arranged seven dealer training programs in September 2013 at Barisal, Jessore, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Bogra, Mymensingh and Hobigonj areas in order to motivate dealers through training and guidance. The program was organized with the support of SEDF and IFC. Around 220-230 seed dealers were present and shared their views with ACI Seed. The dealers enjoyed the program and conveyed their gratitude to ACI authority for arranging such a program.

Since Boro season is approaching very soon, motivating the hybrid rice seed dealer is essential. Such programs help to motivate the channel members to strengthen hybrid rice sales. Deputy Director, Assistant Director and Agricultural Extension Officer of Department of Agricultural extension were also present in the program and shared their views.



Product Development Services of ACI Seed

Product Development Services (PDF) of **ACI Seed** is a bridge between R&D and farmers. The key function is to test products coming out from the R&D breeding program in different agro climatic conditions in comparison with benchmark hybrids of competition. PDS conducts the field trials to test the performance of products before recommending them to appropriate for national launch. At present PDS is conducting trials, demonstrations and field days from 11 PDS sites across the country. The PDS sites are located at Dhaka, Mymensingh, Comilla, Chittagong, Coxbazar, Bogra, Rangpur, Jessore, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barishal, and Bhola. ACI Seed is coordinating and monitoring at each level to ensure and select the good products for the farmers at each phase. Our team- Product Development Services, R&D, Marketing and Sales-is constantly in touch with the demonstrations, field days, farmers meetings and trainings; while sharing and promoting technical information on the products and services to get optimum yield and results.

The PDS carries out on-farm demonstrations, which are effective tools for crop variety extension and promotion. But complete demonstrations require considerable time and effort. The payback comes when producers more readily adapt practices they perceive to be appropriate under local conditions. Side by side, field days conducted by PDS were found to be effective. 68 demonstrations, 34 farmers meeting, 17 cut fruit display and 17 field days were held during the month of September 2013. These activities reached 1600 participants.



ACI Fertilizer promotes “Bioferti-Tea Special”

The demand for tea is increasing rapidly locally & internationally; but the production in our country is not increasing at desired level. So the tea garden managers are trying to increase the production of tea through more nursing. Bioferti is a natural humus based product (97% liquid humus). It is a matrix of plant nutrients, amino acids, carbohydrates and vitamins necessary for overall plant health, growth, nutrition and quality. Considering the opportunity of penetrating Bioferti in the tea market, **ACI Fertilizer** launched Bioferti under the brand name “**Bioferti – Tea Special**”. The tea garden managers are giving positive feedback and taking the product on trial basis. In September the sales volume was 1500 Liter. The Business expects that the sales of the product will grow rapidly in the coming months.



Business Stories

ACI Fertilizer promotes Bumper Folon (4-CPA) for Summer Tomato

Summer Tomato is a very specialized crop for this season. Farmers invest more on cultivation with an expectation to get higher returns. **ACI Fertilizer** launched **Bumper Folon (4-CPA)** as a specialized product for Summer Tomato which is used on new flowers for preventing flower drop and ensuring fruits from each flower. So considering the potentiality of the product, ACI Fertilizer has taken an integrated effort through retailer and farmer training programs, engaging temporary promotional staff and conducting several result demonstrations in the field. The farmers of Bagarpara, Jessore have enjoyed tremendous success after using Bumper Folon and they are overjoyed with the quality of the product.



ACI Fertilizer promotes Sulphur 90% (Granular) for Aman rice

Aman rice is the main crop this season and considering the opportunity, **ACI Fertilizer** organized major promotional activities such as farmers' meetings, retailers training programs and DAE meetings in September on Aman rice. ACI Fertilizer is giving more focus on **Sulphur 90%** for Aman Rice. More than 100 result demonstrations of Sulphur 90% applied on Aman rice was carried out, replacing Sulphur 80%. The key benefit of Sulphur 90% is that the crop can uptake Sulphur throughout the entire life cycle as per need due to the product's chemical compound.



ACI Motors reputed as the best spot service team in Bangladesh

ACI Motors service team is reputed to be the first rate spot service provider in the market. At the moment, Sonalika is being branded as the “Country’s Best Quality Tractor” by adding exclusive and extraordinary features to them. For further promotion, interactions took place with 400 tractor operators and 100 commission agents in Natore, Manda, Mohadevpur, Rajshahi, Charirbandor, Fulbary, Bergong, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamary and Thakurgaon. Friendly football matches were held among the areas as well. Such initiatives added a new dimension towards marketing and product promotion. As a result the special features of Sonalika- diesel saver unit, maximum ground clearance, wheel base, exhaust gas circulation, etc were successfully communicated. After such positive, dynamic steps, the business is now looking towards a successful completion of the fourth quarter of 2013.



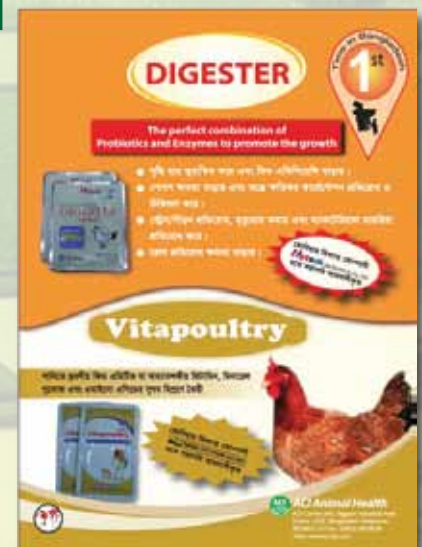
ACI Animal Health Launches 4 new products in September 2013

ACI Animal Health launched **Bovi Plus**, a powder for oral use which regulates the biochemical functions of the rumen in ruminants. This product is being manufactured at the ACI Factory in Narayongonj under strict manufacturing compliance. This is available in pack sizes of 125g. The product is highly effective for gastric and metabolic disorders in cattle, sheep and goat.

In September 2013, the business also launched a new pack size of **Betamune** (100ml), which is an addition to the existing pack sizes of 50ml and 250ml. Betamune is an effective immune stimulant which instigates both specific and non-specific immune responses in poultry. It is directly imported from Kanzy Medipharm Inc, Canada.

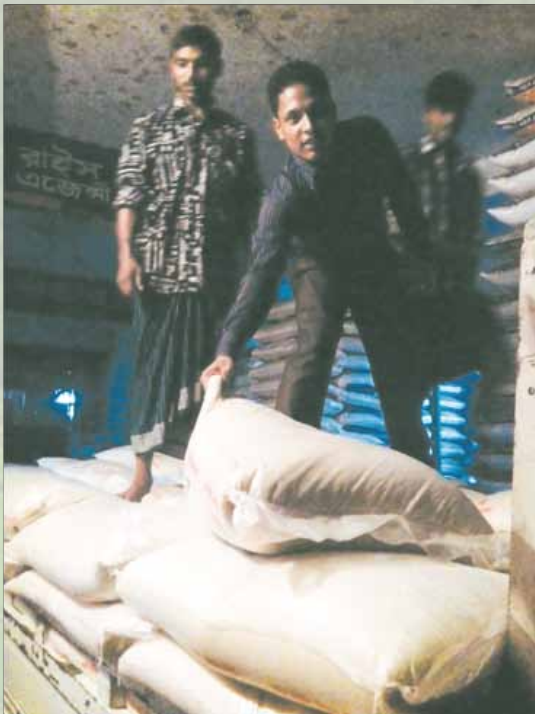
Vitapoultry is water soluble feed additive which is a well balanced combination of essential vitamins, minerals, glucose and amino acids. It is used to prevent stress, increase body weight of Broilers & enhance production of Layers in the poultry industry. The product is imported from Eagle Vet. Tech Co., Ltd., Korea and launched in a 100g pack size.

Amino Plus is an animal feed premix which is enriched with amino acids. It contains 51.15% protein, 1.30% fat and 5.90% fiber. The mix acts as a performance enhancer and alternative protein source for poultry. In case of Dairy, amino plus increases milk production up to 10%. At the moment 25kg pack size is available while a 1kg pack will be offered very soon.



ACI Cropex boosting sales with quality assurance

ACI Cropex has promoted the sales of commodity products like rice, lentil, vegetables, local fruits etc. Rice and vegetables have been supplied to Shwapno as well as PRAN RFL canteen. In order to maintain quality supply of products Cropex has ensured a strong backward linkage. In this connection Cropex has ensured the source of paddy for maintaining the quality of rice. Cropex also ensured the originality of local fruits and vegetables to get the real taste while overcoming hygiene issue concerns. Automated rice millers have shown interest to nominate ACI Cropex as their agent to collect paddy for their rice production.



Agri-tech and Communication

BIRRI develops four new paddy varieties

4 new high yielding varieties have been developed by the scientists of the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BIRRI). The newly developed varieties are BIRRI 59, BIRRI 60, BIRRI 61 and BIRRI 62. Among them, BIRRI 62 is for Aman season and remaining three are for Boro season.

Among all the four varieties, BIRRI 62 is the most talked about since it is zinc enriched through the bio-fortified system and is also a short duration variety which can be harvested in 100 days. The average production of the variety is 3.5 tonnes per hectare. With proper nourishment, the variety can yield up to 4.5 to 5 tonnes per hectare. The variety has been developed by mixing local rice Zira Katari and BIRRI 39 through traditional breeding system. It is thought that the zinc enriched rice will help remove malnutrition and contribute towards protection of child health.

BIRRI has so far developed 65 high yielding varieties of paddy including the recently developed four.



Philippines thriving through agricultural innovations

The Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD) has come up with several innovative technologies and world class products. These innovations are aimed at improving agricultural productivity and industry competitiveness.

One of these innovations are producing high quality banana for export. The banana shoot-tip culture is a rapid micro-propagation technique that produces disease free plantlets at minimum costs. One banana sucker can produce a maximum of 1,500 plantlets in eight months. It is a reliable mean of mass-producing planting materials for commercial banana farms. Tissue culture helps to mass produce superior planting materials resistant to diseases like banana bunchy top disease and Fusarium wilt.

Another agriculture-led innovation is for the coconut industry. Two tall coconut varieties such as San Simon Tall and Baybay Tall have been developed by the scientists of the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA)-Zamboanga Coconut Research Center. San Simon Tall is a superior and prolific coconut breeding variety and can bear 60-150 nuts/tree/year and copra per nut of 280-440 grams. The Baybay Tall is another outstanding local tall coconut variety which bears medium to large nuts with a potential of 108 nuts/tree/year and copra per nut of 295 grams.

One more notable innovation took place in the aqua sector where the Loop-mediated Isothermal Amplification (Lamp) was developed. It is a novel tool for detecting the White-spot Syndrome Virus (WSSV) in shrimps. Lamp is a new molecular technique which can equal the PCR in detecting WSSV in shrimps. It is 10 times more sensitive for the detection of WSSV than the conventional PCR and test results can be obtained within one hour. Lamp is convenient to use compared to PCR since it does not require complicated and expensive equipment like a thermocycler. Reaction can be detected within one hour and results can be seen by the naked eye. Because of its convenience, simplicity and speed of detection, Lamp can be used for on-site detection of WSSV in shrimp.



SmartVet's VetGun adding Verve into antiparasitic market

Earlier this year SmartVet launched its paintball-styled VetGun technology in the US. The company claims the product could change the landscape of parasite management in cattle, as it is the only precise dosage system that does not require animal handling, herding, yarding and the running of cattle through a chute.

The VetGun allows dosing to take place swiftly in the field from a safe distance (it fires from an ideal range of 15-30ft), thereby reducing stress and the chance of injuries to cattle and ranchers alike.

The product is a precision-engineered CO2-powered device that delivers a dose of a pour-on formulation of parasiticide through a device called an AiM VetCap. The VetCap bursts on hitting the animal, releasing its contents, which leaves an orange mark on the cow for 30 minutes. This allows the farmer to distinguish which cows have already been treated. Consistent treatment on the same side of each animal further aids in identifying those that have already been treated.

VetGun may startle cattle momentarily but if the cow is situated near a feed source as the company recommends, then it is soon distracted from the VetGun and returns to feeding. Over time, cattle have been shown to become conditioned to the sound of the VetGun and associate it with being fed. The VetCaps are biodegradable, so if any shots miss – just like this reporter's efforts – they cause no harm to the environment.



Sensors allow efficient irrigation, more control over plant growth

As water use and runoff regulations become more stringent and concerns about dwindling water supplies become more of an issue, finding ways to increase the efficiency of water use for horticultural operations is crucial. Soil moisture sensors can be used along with an automated irrigation system to irrigate when substrate volumetric water content drops below a set threshold, allowing for precise irrigation control and improved water conservation.

Research has revealed that the effect of substrate volumetric water content threshold on dry weight, plant height, and compactness shows the potential for commercial nurseries to utilize sensor-controlled irrigation systems to control plant growth, and potentially to reduce the need for pruning. Along with reduced water use and growth control, more efficient soil moisture sensor-controlled irrigation could greatly reduce leaching, allowing for reductions in fertilizer applications.



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