

Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Sh. Giriraj Singh, Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, and Sh. Kailash Choudhary, Minister of State, Agriculture & Farmers Welfare visit CAZRI, Jodhpur

Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Sh. Giriraj Singh, Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj and Sh. Kailash Choudhary, Minister of State, Agriculture & Farmers Welfare visited ICAR-CAZRI, Jodhpur on 17-18 October, 2021. While reviewing various research activities of the institute, the Hon'ble ministers applauded the efforts of CAZRI for addressing the relevant issues in one of the most difficult production environment of the world. Given that water is a very scarce commodity and soils are sandy with low organic matter and less water holding capacity, the strategic and innovative research of the institute has led to the development of effective soil and water management strategies.

Sh. Tomar highlighted that the introduction of new food and fodder crops by the institute and development of their new climate resilient cultivars has helped the community to make profitable farming for the last several decades in the Thar Desert. Sh Giriraj Singh appreciated the institute role in developing climate smart farming models, cheaper polyhouses, new models of integrated farming and round-the-year fodder production. Sh. Kailash Choudhary underlined the need of use of new types of agro-forestry trees, drought tolerant horticultural crops, new interventions in water harvesting and use of solar energy for agricultural operations. Ministers expressed satisfaction for efforts of CAZRI in promoting the integrated crop-livestock-tree based farming that have an in-built capacity to adapt to harsh climatic conditions.



The Ministers visited various research units of institute that included precision farming and polyhouse cultivation, gum garden, pearl millet breeding block, grass production system, dairy unit, horticulture, water harvesting and fodder production, agri-voltaic system and solar yard. Scientists explained about systematic practice of growing vegetables under protected cultivation using the technology of grafting for high value vegetable crops on local or wild root stocks that would be of great benefit to the Self Help Groups.

Ministers also witnessed effort of Institute in the production of several grass species like *Lasiurus indicus*, *Cenchrus ciliaris* etc and their potential to serve the high livestock in the desert districts. The year round fodder production system having the hybrid napier, legume, Moringa and thornless cactus system was lauded.

Minister took keen interest in the development of OMF (Organo Mineral Fertilizer) by the institute to reduce the import dependency of our country on both phosphatic and potassium fertilizer. The ministers had their great satisfaction witnessing the value added pearl millet products like biscuits, Kurkure and chocolates.

Earlier, Dr. O.P. Yadav, Director of the institute welcomed the guests and presented a detailed account of work undertaken by the institute and also shared the future plans in view of forthcoming challenges and opportunities.