



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NUTRIENT EXPERT™ DECISION SUPPORT TOOLS FOR MAIZE AND WHEAT LAUNCHED IN INDIA

July 16, 2013 – Norcross, Georgia, U.S. – The International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI) is pleased to announce that the Nutrient Expert™ decision support tools for maize and wheat were officially launched for public use in India on June 20, 2013 at the National Agricultural Science Center (NASC) Complex in New Delhi during a meeting organized jointly by IPNI and the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT).

Nutrient Expert™ is an easy-to-use, interactive, and computer-based decision support tool that can rapidly provide nutrient recommendations for individual farmers' field in the presence or absence of soil testing data.

“Beginning in 2009, under the umbrella of the Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia (CSISA), Nutrient Expert™ for maize and wheat were developed and extensively tested in real farm conditions with the objective of easy implementation of improved nutrient management practices in smallholder systems of India,” said Dr. Adrian Johnston, Vice-President, IPNI Asia & Africa Programs.

The development of Nutrient Expert™ for a specific crop and geography was done in collaboration with target users and local stakeholders from both public and private sectors. The approach integrated site-specific nutrient management (SSNM) principles, developed over the last two decades, into a user-friendly nutrient decision support tool to help Indian farmers achieve higher yield and profitability.

“Nutrient Expert™ addresses the resource constraints of the smallholder farmers, lack of access to soil testing, and absence of tillage-specific nutrient management strategies in India, making it a truly location-specific tool capable of spatial and temporal management of nutrients,” said Dr. Kaushik Majumdar, Director, IPNI South Asia Program.

The tool has been validated for three consecutive years across large number of locations, in collaboration with Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), State Agricultural Universities, State Agriculture Departments, Fertilizer and Seed Industry, to assess their efficacy under contrasting management scenarios and have shown improved productivity, profitability, efficiency and reduced environmental footprints over existing fertilizer management practices.”

Nutrient Expert™ was released in the presence of Dr. Tom Lumpkin, Director General, CIMMYT, Dr. Swapan K. Datta, Deputy Director General (Crop Sciences), Dr. J.S. Sandhu, Agricultural Commissioner, Govt. of India, Dr. Adrian M. Johnston, Vice President, IPNI, Dr. Bruno Gerard, Director, Global Conservation Agriculture Program (GCAP), CIMMYT, and Dr. B. Mohankumar, Additional Director General (Natural Resource Management), ICAR, and directors and scientists of several ICAR Institutes. A large number of development and validation partners of Nutrient Expert™, representing State Agricultural Universities, State Agriculture Departments, Fertilizer and Seed Industry, and NGOs participated in the inaugural session and panel discussions on the future course of action for large-scale dissemination of Nutrient Expert™ towards the public good.

In the face of India's many challenges to feed its growing population with changing food habits, Dr. Lumpkin emphasized the need for new tools: "We need to apply precision agriculture on each square meter; we need tools like the Nutrient Expert™ and remote-sensing technology to be able to do so."

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For more information:

See IPNI's website: <http://www.ipni.net/article/IPNI-3335>

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