Ashwagandha stakeholders meet held
(20.05.2020, ICAR-DMAPR, Anand)

The Ashwagandha stakeholders meet: Opportunities & Challenges in the wake of COVID-19 pandemics in India was held with video conferencing facility here today. The meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Dr. Anand Kumar Singh, Deputy Director General (Horticultural Sciences), Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). Dr. P. K. Trivedi, Director, CSIR-CIMAP, Lucknow, Dr. T. Janakiram, Assistant Director General (Horticultural Sciences), ICAR, Dr. Satyajit Roy, Director, ICAR-DMAPR, Anand, Dr. H.S. Gupta, Formerly Director, IARI, New Delhi, Dr. S.K. Srivastava, CSIR-NBRI, Lucknow, Dr. K. N. Dwivedi Professor, BHU and Dr. Vidhi Bapana, Ayurvedic college, Nadiad were present.

Dr. AK Singh, in his address said suggested to harness the potential of medicinal and aromatic plants to double the income of farmers as well as to retain the migrant laborer’s under COVID-19 pandemics. He advised to develop research programs for application of space technologies for accurate estimation of acreage of ashwagandha and use of sensors for quality assessment.

Dr. Trivedi, his address highlighted on overview of the research achievements in Ashwagandha of CSIR-CIMAP, Lucknow. He opined that, there is need for quality certification of raw drugs and scientific validation of therapeutic potential of ashwagandha.

Dr. Janakiram, in his address said that, there is gap in the demand and supply of Ashwagandha in the country which needs to be addressed by strengthening seed chain and value addition in this crop.

Dr. Gupta, in his address said that, crop diversification using medicinal and aromatic plants will ensure income security to the farmers in the country. He suggested to set up a certification agency for ensuring the best quality planting materials for cultivation. He also suggested to have farmer producer organizations (FPO) in ashwagandha to ascertain best market price to the farmers.

Dr. Srivastava, in his address said that, there is need for exploration of role of eco-geography on chemotypic variation available in ashwagandha.

Dr. Dwivedi, said that, there is a greater demand for ashwagandha due to COVID-19 pandemics worldwide. Collaborative efforts are needed to establish its therapeutic potential of ashwagandha.

Dr. Bapana in her address, highlighted the importance of ashwagandha in Ayurveda. She suggested to develop various ayurvedic drugs from ashwagandha to cure various human ailments.

Earlier, Dr. Roy presented the genesis and research achievements of the ICAR-DMAPR. He said that, ashwagandha play important role in ensuring the primary healthcare.

Dr. P. Manivel, Principal Scientist, presented a brief outline of research achievements in genetic resources, varietal development, phytochemistry and other aspects of ashwagandha at the Directorate.
The main purpose of the meeting is to garner the opportunities and challenges in Ashwagandha in the wake of COVID-19 pandemics in India. Ashwagandha is a popular medicinal plant cultivated in India and widely used as immunity booster. Over 100 participants from the academia, researchers, vaidyas, farmers, traders, exporters, extractors and policy makers were participated in the online meeting.

In the end, Dr. P. Manivel, organizing secretary proposed Vote of Thanks.

(Source: ICAR-Directorate of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Research, Anand)