

NEWS LETTER

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Year 2023 L. M. Patel Preliminary form Scrutiny Meeting

Against the announcement made for Aspee L.M.Patel Farmer of the Year Award 2023, the Scrutiny Committee on 5th & 6th January 2024 at the ASPEE head office Malad to shortlist the award preliminary Performa forms. The Committee consisted of Dr. D. J. Patel, Dr. B. N. Patel and Dr. R. D. Bhandari. There was a good response as far as Horticulture Category - Pineapple and Rainfed Farming - Cumin was concerned. We received 96 preliminary Performa in Pineapple in Horticulture category and 74 preliminary Performa under winter farming category - Cumin crop. The Committee shortlisted 31 and 38 respectively to send the nomination forms. Under woman farming category the response was very poor, only 4 preliminary Performa were received and therefore the committee decided to drop this category.

Paddy Seed selling start



This year selling of paddy seed started from 5th February 2024. A total of 50 tons paddy seeds were produced consisting of different varieties namely, GR-11, GR-4, GAR-13, Jaya, Karjat-. A new variety namely GR-21 was also tried at the farm. Each year there is a demand of farmers from the surrounding villages, they visit the farm and purchase their requirement for the coming Kharif season. The rate fixed this year for all varieties was Rs. 30/- per kg.

Avocado Planting

There is a demand for Avocado and looking to the requirement, the ASPEE Foundation has purchased 40 grafts of exotic plants Avocado from Shloka Agro, Pune. On 20th February 2024 the grafts were planted in the field. We are awaiting the results of the same, to set an example that such type of international fruit can also be grown here looking to the suitability of the climatic condition.



Selection Committee meeting

The announcement for the year 2022 was made after Covid, and also after dropping the awards for 2 years i.e. 2020 and 2021. After completing all the procedures and video shootings of shortlisted 4 farmers each from the following categories, the Selection committee meeting was held on 24th February, 2024. The members screened the videos for the ASPEE L. M. Patel Farmer of the Year Award 2022. Dr. Tapas Bhattacharya, Ex. Vice Chancellor of Dr. Balasaheb Sawant KKV, Dapoli chaired the meeting. After unanimous discussion the Committee shortlisted the following 2 farmers from each category for further recommendation to the Governing Council. The list of shortlisted farmers are as follows:

- I. Horticulture Category - Papaya Cultivation**
 - Shri. Shivraj B. Mahagaon, Karnataka
 - Shri. Chidanand Parsappa Pawar, Karnataka

II. Rainfed Farming Category- Castor
 - Shri. Hariram, Rajasthan
 - Shri. Ghemarbhai Kesarbhai Patel, Gujarat
- III. Woman Farmer Category- North East Region (Vegetable Grower)**
 - Smt. Lalrinpuii, Mizoram
 - Kum. Nabanita Das, Jorhat, Assam



L. M. Patel 28th Death Anniversary



On March 12th, 2024 was the 28th Death Anniversary of our esteemed Founder, Shri L. M. Patel. As a gesture of respect and remembrance, we humbly honor his legacy by lighting candle, agarbatis and placing flowers at Shri L. M. Patel's photograph displayed in Aspee R&D Farm office.

All the staff at the farm, gathered at 9:00 am to pay homage by observing a solemn 2-minute silence in honor to this great soul.

Rabi Farmers' Day in Tansa Farm

On March 14, 2024, a Farmers' Day was held at Tansa Farm for the current *Rabi* weather season. The event focused on "Horticulture-Based Integrated Farming System and Nursery Raising- A viable source for doubling farmers income". All these years the ASPEE Foundation's efforts to introduce modern agricultural technologies to small farmers in the Tansa Farm vicinity, invited Dr. Rishabh Makwana, Assistant Professor from Seth D. M. Polytechnic (Horticulture) College, Vadodara, Anand Agricultural University, Gujarat as the guest speaker. Dr. Swapnil Dekhane, a Senior Scientist welcomed the guests and provided introductory remarks to the attendees. He also explained the activities of the Aspee Agricultural Research and Development Foundation.

Initially, the farmers were taken around the farm and showed them the different Rabi crops that are grown. Different ASPEE spray products were displayed and information about its performance was given to the farmers. The technical staff explained to the farmers about the research projects being conducted on the farm. The Chief Guest delivered a concise yet informative presentation on various horticulture crops and nursery. Horticulture crops offer a wide range of options such as fruits, vegetables, herbs, spices, and ornamental plants. Integrating these crops with nursery raising diversifies income sources, reducing dependency on a single crop

and mitigating risks associated with market fluctuations and climatic variations. Horticulture crops generally have higher market value compared to traditional crops. By focusing on high-value crops and quality nursery stock, farmers can fetch better prices in the market, thereby increasing their income. Many horticulture crops require comparatively lower inputs in terms of water, fertilizers, and pesticides compared to conventional crops like rice or wheat. This can lead to cost savings for farmers, contributing to increased profitability. Nursery raising can also provide a steady income stream as farmers can sell seedlings, saplings, or young plants throughout the year. Horticulture crops offer opportunities for value addition through processing into jams, pickles, juices, or dried products. Additionally, nursery plants can be sold at various stages of growth, providing opportunities for value addition.

In this program one of invitee Smt. Asmita Mahale, Agri. Assistant from Govt. of Maharashtra also explained different schemes useful for farmers benefits. Opportunity was also given to Progressive farmer Shri. Kishor Chaudhary who spoke on his vermicompost business which he is doing and challenged farmers to do as per his guideline for earning money.

Near about 100 farmers from the adjoining villages participated in the event. After clearing all doubts of farmers, the farmers' day ended after lunch.



The chief guest Dr. Rishabh Makwana welcomed by ASPEE Foundation advisor, Dr. D. J. Patel.



President of the function Dr. D. J. Patel welcomed by Progressive farmer Shri. Narendra Patil.



Cucumber plot visit of the farmers.



Farmers visit to ASPEE Sprayers stall.



Progressive farmer Shri. Kishor Chaudhary addressing to the farmers.



Dr. Rishabh Makwana addressing to the farmers.



Smt. Asmita Mahale, Agri. Assistant, Govt. of Maharashtra addressing to the farmers.



A token of love gave to chief guest by the hands of Dr. D. J. Patel.

Big Basket Chiku



It has been observed that the production and quality of Chiku has increased and becoming better. Big Basket paid visit to the farm and approved the quality and size of the fruits. Aspee Foundation registered its name with Big Basket and twice a lot of 150 and 200 has been delivered to Big Basket. We are of the opinion that each year the association shall grow.