Endoparasitoid Bracon lefroyi effectively contain the field population of Pink bollworm
(V. Chinna Babu Naik, S. Kranthi and K.R.Kranthi)
Endoparasitoid Bracon lefroyi Dudgeon & Gough (Braconidae: Hymenoptera) was recorded to effectively contain the field population of Pink bollworm (Pectinophora gossypiella Saundrs) infestation ranging from 25-81%. Parasitism was noticed on dissection of green bolls collected from various genotypes of non Bt cotton during last week of November to first week of December, 2013 at CICR Nagpur. During November parasitism was 81% while in December it was 25.71 %. Dead larvae were observed inside a large number of green bolls dissected. Early season pink bollworm populations suffered more larval mortality as compared to later season pink bollworm populations although pink bollworm infestation was higher later in the season. Collected larvae placed in vials showed braconid parasitoid developing to pupae and then adult. Few dead larvae of pink bollworm did not record parasitoids. This might be attributed to emergence of parasitoids prior to collection of pink bollworm larvae or mortality due to natural or other factors. Use of braconids has promise in biocontrol of pink bollworm. It has also been reported from Iran on Earias insulana in 1976.

Farm India heads for Nagpur

‘Biggest ever’ agri expo has Rs 45 cr budget, 50-acre stage, 65,000 farmers a day for 5 days

VIVEK DESHPANDE
NAGPUR

IT’s being tagged India’s, possibly the world’s, biggest and most ambitious farm expo ever. With a budget of about Rs 45 crore, Kshetra Vasant is being staged on the premises of Central Institute for Cotton Research, Nagpur, for five days beginning January 9.

The 50-acre expo will include 20 acres for 747 stalls, 10 acres for live demonstration farms showcasing the 304 best varieties of 52 crops, and about five acres for demonstration of farm machines and implements. Staying and food arrangements are being made for about 65,000 farmers every day. Special farmers’ trains are being run from various parts of the country to Nagpur. The who’s who of the farm industry will display their technologies to farmers.

President Panab Mukherjee will inaugurate the expo, organised in partnership by the Maharashtra government and CII, which has expertise in holding such events.

The head of Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar, Kshitri Vasant coincides with the 50th anniversary of late Maharashtrat CM Vasantdada Naik. Pawar had floated the idea at a press conference in Nagpur after visiting BJP leader Nitin Gadkari’s annual Agrovision Expo, currently under way. The visit had raised political speculations.

HIGHLIGHTS

THE EXPO:

- Kshetra Vasant at Central Institute for Cotton Research, Nagpur, February 9-13
- TOTAL AREA:
  - 50 acres
- FARMERS EXPECTED:
  - 10,000 every day
- BUDGET:
  - Rs 45 cr, excluding Rs 20 cr on overtime operation and the rest on farmers’ mobilisation and other expenses
- SEMINARS:
  - All 5 days, 2 lectures a day, 754 participants in each
- LIVE CROP DEMONSTRATION:
  - More than 300 crops

OTHER FEATURES:

- Farmer-ground interaction each day
- Showcase of best practices and success stories of farmers
- Cattle show in a pavilion of exhibition
- Livestock demonstration
- Cultural programmes for 5,000 visitors, each day

Under the Centre’s A. MA programme, farmers are taken to various places to be shown agriculture practices and technologies. This event will bring lakhs of them from across the country under one roof to learn about all the best technologies and practices in the country in crops and livestock, not just from static displays but from live demos,” says Sanjay Gupta, Joint Secretary, Agriculture, Government of India.

“This is on a massive scale, something not known to have taken place anywhere else in the world in agriculture.

“All wedding venues and other lodges facilities in Nagpur have been booked for the five days,” says CICR director Keshav Kranthi, who volunteered to host the expo on the campus.

“The idea is to bring in farmers daily from all over the country with 50 per cent subsidised railway travel. They will stay for two days, making visits to preferred demos and talk sessions with experts and other stakeholders, both private and government, in their own language;” Gupta says. Railways are being requested for special trains and boggies, apart from the travel charges subsidy.

Over 30 agriculture universities and institutions, about 80 Indian Council of Agriculture research institutions and national and international agriculture companies will be participating.

The government will be spending about Rs 22 crore on travel, lodging and food for farmers. The rest of the budget is earmarked for raising the infrastructure and other agicultural arrangements. The Maharashtra government is pitching in with Rs 3 crore.

“All events will be webcast live. Farmers will be assembled at various places across the country to see the event on LD screens. This way, an additional 50,000 farmers per day will benefit from the event,” says Sudhir Kumar Goel, principal secretary (agriculture), Maharashtra.

There will be 91 stalls of “farmer success stories”. Special awards will be given to those with extraordinary achievements.

Farmers will be given printed and electronic contents on micro SD cards to carry home for future reference.

“We have grown 394 varieties of 52 crops on 10 acres on our premises for the farmers to see,” says Kranthi.

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