

Farm Management



Demo Plots: Nutrients & Pest Management

Seeing is believing and this applies most to the marginal farmers for whom everything hangs in the balance with their farming's success or failure. Recognising it as one of the best tools to demonstrate best practices, Spectrum International developed a number of demonstrations or demo plots, one in every village to combat different challenges faced in the particular area. Demo plots are essentially operated on by hand-picked, forward thinking farmers, however, in strict adherence to and constant supervision of the program's recommendation of best practices and the project team.



29 villages were chosen for Border crop trials, which acts as primary barrier to various insect-pests and a total of 622 farmers visited the plot and understood the importance and use of a Border crop as barrier.

17 villages had Hybrid and Spacing Evaluation trials (as per the recommendations of CICR, Nagpur) to evaluate the best suitable hybrid under the specific spacing in terms of yield, earliness and resistance to insect-pests whereas 613 farmers visited these fields and evaluated the best suitable hybrid and spacing for them.

25 villages had Mulching Evaluation trials with Cow pea, Black gram and Green gram to showcase the effectiveness of mulch in conserving the soil moisture (as most of the area under cotton cultivation is rainfed), saving cost on weeding (to decrease the number of inter-culturing practice by the farmers which disturbs the structure of the soil, leads to soil compaction and increases the cost) and support and enhance the population of beneficial insects as a part of conserving biodiversity and effect of mulch on yield (leguminous crops like mulch help in natural nitrogen fixation in the soil). About 621 farmers visited these demo plots till date and are benefiting from what they learnt.

30 villages were a part of Nutrient management demo trials with an aim to streamline the fertilizer application at proper stages of the crop in split doses and foliar application at later stages, hence contributing to a significant increase in the yield along with cost reduction. About 570 farmers have visited these demo plots.



27 villages were chosen for Pest Management trials with a chalked out plan to promote spraying in recommended doses based on surveillance and Economic Threshold Level (ETL) and drop the concept of random or calendar sprays. The objective is to promote botanical pesticides (most of them home-made, such as Dashparni Arka, Amrut Pani and Neem Seed Kernel Extract), yellow sticky cards, light traps, trap crops and inter-crops to enhance the beneficial insect population reducing environmental pollution and minimising the residual effect of pesticides in soil, thus reducing the number and quantity of chemical pesticides, contributing to increased yield and lowered cost of cotton cultivation. A total of 651 farmers visited the Pest Management demo plots and promised to check on the use of chemical pesticides and promote the biological and physical methods to control insect-pests.



Demo plots are kept at a convenient distance for all the farmers to visit and witness the adopted methods in real time and evaluate for themselves the difference between the practices traditionally followed by most of the farmers and the methods and practices recommended by Spectrum International. The practices are then adopted by other farmers in the following year to get the desired results.



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