

Report on *Khet Bachao Abhiyan* Awareness Programme

Date: 1 June 2026

Under the nationwide “*Khet Bachao Abhiyan*” (**Save the Farm Campaign**) launched by the Hon'ble Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and Rural Development during 1–30 June 2026, a scientific team comprising Dr. Amar Jeet Gupta, Principal Scientist (Horticulture) and Nodal Officer, TSP; Dr. Shailendra Gadage, Principal Scientist (Agricultural Extension) and Nodal Officer, SCSP; and Dr. Bhushan Bibwe, Senior Scientist (ASPE), ICAR-Directorate of Onion and Garlic Research (DOGR), Pune, visited the APMC Market, Khed. The APMC Market, being an important platform and participatory model connecting farmers, agricultural traders, agri-entrepreneurs, and retailers from Khed Taluk and nearby villages, was selected for dissemination of the campaign messages. Total 125 farmers, agri-traders, agri-entrepreneurs, and retailers benefitted from the programme. Mr. Dhandre and Mr. Gopale, officials of the APMC Market Committee, introduced the scientific team to the participants.

During the interaction, the scientific team explained the objectives of the campaign and highlighted the importance of balanced and judicious use of fertilizers, climate-resilient farming practices, weather-based agricultural advisories, and improved access to mechanization and government schemes. Participants were sensitized on soil test-based nutrient management, efficient use of agricultural inputs, and adoption of sustainable farming practices. The discussions also focused on location-specific advisories related to crop selection, crop diversification, risk mitigation, and suitable alternatives under conditions of water scarcity and climatic uncertainties. Various technologies developed by ICAR-DOGR for improved onion production, crop management, and productivity enhancement were presented during the programme.

Dr. Amar Jeet Gupta emphasized scientific cultivation practices, including selection of season-specific improved varieties, seed treatment, balanced fertilizer application, integrated nutrient management, and sustainable crop management approaches. He also highlighted suitable crop and management options for mitigating risks associated with climatic variability and water scarcity. Dr. Shailendra S. Gadage elaborated various technologies and extension initiatives developed by ICAR-DOGR for improved onion production and management. He also interacted with the participants regarding ongoing SCSP activities and created awareness about the benefits of the scheme for farming communities. Dr. Bhushan Bibwe briefed the participants on scientific onion storage technologies and post-harvest management practices for reducing storage losses and maintaining produce quality. Farmers were advised to avoid the use of chemical powders during storage and adopt safe and natural alternatives. Farmer groups and FPOs were encouraged to visit ICAR-DOGR, Pune, to avail facilities such as agri-business incubation centres and custom hiring services for onion processing and value addition.



