

A Brief Note on Floriculture Advisory of ICAR-DFR and FAO of UN

The main stay of Indian floriculture is growing of traditional flowers in open field conditions and cut flowers in protected cultivation, which are mostly in the hands of small and marginal farmers. From 3.40 lakh hectares of land, India produces about 19 lakh MT of loose flowers and 8.90 lakh MT of cut flowers per annum contributing significant revenue to the exchequer through domestic and international trade.

Due to Covid 19 pandemic, every sector is facing hardship and floriculture sector is not an exception. In view of the transport restrictions, cancellation of railways, cancellation of domestic and international flights the movement of flowers has been greatly impacted. The supply chain is completely disrupted. The major consumption avenues are affected forcing the farmers to take desperate measures. It is expected that the situation would change for better in coming months as the lockdown eases.

The ICAR-Directorate of Floricultural Research, Pune prepared a National Advisory on Floriculture during April 2020. The state and crop specific advisory is prepared with the inputs from 22 centers of AICRP on Floriculture that are spread across the country. The advisory also contains the Government of India guidelines for the farmers, details about *Arogya Setu* App, *Kisan Rath* App, and exemptions during lockdown. To tide over the hardship faced by the farmers the advisory urges the farmers not to lose hope in testing times but diversify in to value addition where ever possible. Technologies available on dry flower making, preparation of gulkand, rose water and gulal making were shared for the benefit of the farmers. The advisory was widely circulated.

The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations has taken note of the valuable advise rendered by ICAR-Directorate of Floricultural Research, Pune and used the advisory as one of the resources for preparing sector specific advisory Volume I (30.04.2020) entitled ***Rebuilding Floriculture***. The advisory also highlights the current status of floriculture in India and proactive policies of the Government of India to help the floriculture sector besides some recommendations to promote the sector.

We believe that the FAO's recognition of the National Advisory on Floriculture documented by ICAR-Directorate of Floricultural Research, Pune will have a global reach for the benefit of farming fraternity.