

Regional Research Station, Leh of CAZRI organizes training on Agro Biodiversity in Ladakh on 11 July 2013

Recently established Regional Research Station of CAZRI for cold arid zone in Leh organized a training on protection of plant varieties and farmer's rights act to create awareness amongst farmers along with KVK, SKUAST-K, Leh, NGOs, researchers and other stakeholders for conservation and use of agro-bio diversity. Participants included 34 farmers from several villages viz., i.e. Changa, Kharu, Nang, Skurbuchan, Eggu and Nubra; seven representatives from three NGOs and one from state animal husbandry department, seven researchers, two scientists and other officials of SKUAST-K and CAZRI, Leh. The training was inaugurated by Dr. M. S. Mir, ADR, SKUAST-K emphasizing the need to preserve wild and weedy relatives of crop and horticultural plants. Dr. D. Namgyal, PC, KVK welcomed the participants. Thereafter, Director CAZRI's message of greetings and good wishes for the training was read out.



The training included lectures and interactive session on bio-diversity, IPR and patents, PPV & FR act, DUS testing and farmers' role in germplasm conservation. It was conducted by Dr. Suresh Kumar, Officer in-charge, RRS, CAZRI, Leh. A film on *Krishak Adhikar* by PPV & FR Authority, New Delhi was also screened. In the end, one hour long lively open house discussion was organized in which participants' interesting questions were clarified.

It emerged during this programme that even though Ladakh is a cold desert, it has floristic wealth of 638 plant species belonging to 61 families as well as rich agro-bio-diversity of 22 field and vegetable crops, 11 fruit crops, 97 ethno medicinal plants, 21 aromatic plants, 22 ornamentals, 21 forage, many species of willows and poplars and other important trees/shrubs besides 20 rare endangered and threatened species. It was realized that being tolerant to drought, cold and fluctuating climate of Ladakh, these species need to be studied as donor of genes for future abiotic stress management. Also, there is a need to document immense variability in many of the crops and fruit plants for their registration and *in-situ* and *ex-situ* conservation for use by the posterity. The training ended with vote of thanks.