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PARC NEWSLETTER

Pakistan Agricultural Research Council

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47th Board of Governors meeting held at NARC

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Kauser Abdulla Malik, Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research (MNFSR) and President, Board of Governors of Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), chaired the 47th Meeting of the Board at the National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC) Islamabad. Official board members, including the Federal Secretary of the Ministry of National Food Security and Research and officials from the Ministry of Finance and Planning and Reforms, participated in the meeting. In addition, provincial members also participated in the meeting. In his address, Dr. Kauser Abdulla Malik extended a warm welcome to all members of the PARC Board and commended the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council for its endeavours in modernizing the country's agriculture sector. Dr. Kauser also provided guidance to the PARC team, emphasizing the importance of maintaining their current level of dedication while simultaneously strengthening their involvement and interaction with the farming and scientific community.

Chairman PARC, Dr. Ghulam

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Aflatoxin control to agricultural exports: Dr. Kauser

ISLAMABAD: A significant dialogue on regulatory harmonization in Pakistan for Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) and Bio-pesticides was held, aiming to improve food safety standards in the country. The event brought together four major partners, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI), Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), and representatives from the private sector specially Rafhan Maize Product Co. Ltd. The primary focus of the dialogue was to facilitate the availability and regulation for Aflatoxin biological control technology for maize, which had demonstrated promising results in field trials.

Addressing the dialogue, Dr. Kauser Abdulla Malik, the esteemed chief guest, emphasized the significance of aflatoxin control in enhancing Pakistan's agricultural exports. He commended the collaborative efforts of CABI, USDA and PARC in this domain, recognizing their dedication to ensuring food safety. Dr. Kauser further highlighted the importance of exploring innovative techniques to minimize the reliance on nitro-based fertilizers, alongside promoting the use of organic fertilizers, in response to the challenges posed by climate change. He acknowledged the Ministry's development of the National Agricultural Biotechnology Policy and extended his appreciation to PARC, USDA, CABI, and the private sector for their instrumental contributions to the success of the dialogue. He also acknowledged the active participation of media personnel, recognizing their valuable engagement in disseminating information related to this crucial topic.

In his concluding remarks, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman, Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), emphasized the significance of Aflatoxin Control in both bolstering export potential and safeguarding the nation's public health. He underscored the ongoing efforts of PARC scientists in developing biological control methods for Aflatoxin in various crops such as Chillies, Maize, Rice, and Ground nuts. Furthermore, Dr. Ali expressed the intention to present forthcoming policies pertaining to Biotechnology and seed certification. He extended his gratitude to all partners involved, the esteemed Minister, and media personnel for consistently highlighting the endeavors of agricultural scientists.

Ms. Jessica Mudjitaba-Fernandez,

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Dr. Kauser Abdulla Malik, Federal Minister for (NFS&R) chairing the 47th meeting of PARC Board of Governors at NARC

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Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman, PARC alongwith Ms. Jessica Mudjitaba Fernandez, Program Manager, USDA, Mr. Asmat Raza, Agricultural Specialist, USDA, Ms. Hillary MJehl, Research Plant Pathologist, USDA and Mr. babar Ehsan Bajwa, CABI's Senior Regional Director, Asia during a USDA-PARC-CABI meeting on regulatory Harmonization in Pakistan for MRLS and Biopesticides at NARC on Jan.22

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Program Manager, USDA, stated that Collaboration is crucial in tackling the challenges posed by Aflatoxin contamination. She emphasized that by working together, USDA, CABI, PARC, and the private sector can pool their expertise and resources to develop effective strategies for Aflatoxin control, ensuring the safety and quality of agricultural products in Pakistan. Mr. Keith Metzner, USAID, acknowledged the longstanding cooperation between Pakistan and the United States in the agricultural sector, which has resulted in notable achievements, particularly in the cultivation of wheat and maize. He emphasized the significance of enhancing food safety mechanisms as a means to boost agricultural exports from Pakistan.

Mr. Babar Ehsan Bajwa, CABI's Senior Regional Director, Asia expressed his gratitude to all participants for their active engagement in the dialogue and their genuine interest in the national cause of ensuring food safety and implementing Biological control measures for Aflatoxin. In his remarks, Dr. Bajwa acknowledged the significance of their collective efforts in addressing this critical issue and emphasized the importance of continued collaboration and knowledge sharing to achieve sustainable solutions in the realm of Aflatoxin control.

NARC is a centre of excellence for agricultural research: Dr. Kauser

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Kauser Abdulla Malik, Federal Minister for the Ministry of National Food Security and Research, chaired the launching event of the updated "Agro-Ecological Zones of Pakistan" at the National Agricultural Research Centre, NARC Islamabad. During his speech, Dr. Kauser commended the efforts of PARC scientists and stated that NARC is the centre of excellence and a exemplary organization.. He also emphasized the importance of establishing a dissemination mechanism to engage all stakeholders and suggested that provincial agricultural departments should utilize the report.

The report offers a comprehensive overview of Pakistan's updated agro-ecological zones, considering changing environmental conditions. It was prepared under the directive of the Ministry of National Food Security and Research, categorizing Pakistan's ecology into various zones and sub-zones with a specialized database.

Dr. Kauser Abdulla Malik, Federal Minister (MNFS&R), Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman, PARC, Dr. Shahzad Asad, DG, NARC, Dr. Shahid Maqsood Gill, Member NRD, Dr. Bashir Ahmed, Director Water Institute inaugurating "Updated Agro-Ecological Zones of Pakistan" at NARC ON feb.29

Initially PARC delineated 10 agro-ecological zones in 1980s with the knowledge and technologies available at that time. After about 40 years PARC has now redefined these zones with more precise data, technology and modern knowledge. Additionally, data on 25 crops, including 13 each of khareef and Rabi crops suitable for different ecological zones, was developed.

Chairman PARC, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, expressed gratitude to the Federal Minister for his keen interest in the report's preparation, highlighting its significance in identifying appropriate crops for diverse ecological conditions nationwide. He said that Identifying agro-ecological zones in Pakistan is crucial as it helps tailor agricultural practices to specific environmental conditions, maximizing crop productivity. Understanding these zones can lead to more sustainable and profitable farming methods, better resource allocation, contributing to food security and economic growth in the region.

The Incharge of the project, Dr. Arshad Ashraf, Provided thorough briefing of these ecological zones, while highlighting the potential crops, livestock and commodities in different agro-ecological zones.

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Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman, PARC during an interview with Ptv program "Subh e Pakistan" at NIGAB on Jan-15

Accountant General of Pakistan, Mr. Ahmar Ellahi called upon Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman, PARC visited various research facilities at NARC including speed breeding of wheat, NIGAB, PGR, HRI on Jan-29

Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman, PARC addressing the worthy scientists, officers and staff members of PARC on the occasion of start of new year-2024 at NARC ON Jan-02

Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman, PARC presiding over the 53rd meeting of Technical Advisory Committee of Board of Directors of Agricultural Linkages Program at PARC on Feb.22

Animal Sciences Institute, PARC hosted National Training Workshop on "Sperm Sex Sorting and Cryopreservation Techniques in Water Buffalo" and "Laparoscopic Artificial Insemination in Sheep and Goat" at NARC, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman, PARC, graced the event as the chief guest

Dr. Kauser Abdulla Malik, Federal Minister, NFS&R, alongwith Ms. Jessica Mudjitaba Fernandez, Program Manager, USDA, Mr. keith Metzner, USAID, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman, PARC & Mr. Babar Ehsan Bajwa, CAPI's Senior Regional Director, Asia, presiding a dialogue on regulatory harmonization in Pakistan for maximum residue limits and Bio-pesticides

Dr. Kauser Abdulla Malik, Federal Minister for (NFS&R) chairing the stakeholders meeting of fertilize right pakistan project organized by PARC, ICARDA and USDA at NARC on Feb-19

Captain (R)Muhammad Asif, Federal Secretary for M/o (NFS&R) Chief guest, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman, PARC, Norwegian Ambassador to Pakistan, Dr. Knut Ingolf Dragset, leading scientist from Geno Global Norway during an international seminar on "Genetic potential and economic impact of Norwegian Red Dairy Cattle at NARC

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Muhammad Ali, delivered a thorough overview to the Board concerning recent initiatives in agricultural research and the achievements made in addressing administrative challenges, as well as resolving longstanding financial liabilities pending since 2013. During the briefing to the board, Dr. Ali highlighted that the majority of the long-pending administrative and financial issues of the council have been resolved. Additionally, for the first time in the history of PARC, a dedicated research budget has been allocated for conducting agricultural research in high-tech areas. He also provided the Board with updates on newly initiated programs aimed at aligning research with modern scientific paradigms, these programs include genomics-based improvement of livestock breeds, smart agriculture practices, the application of CAD and CNC technologies in agricultural machinery design, and the certification of organic agriculture practices.

The Board meeting drew to a close with the President of the Board extending heartfelt thanks to all attendees for their active participation, valuable contributions, and commitment to the shared goals of advancing agricultural research and development.

International collaboration vital for climate resilience: Dr. Ali

ISLAMABAD: PARC and ADB collaborated to host a groundbreaking workshop focused on Promoting climate-smart agricultural research in Pakistan. The event, held at National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC) Islamabad, brought together esteemed participants from various national and international research organizations. Chairman PARC, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, expressed his gratitude to all attendees, including Ms. Noriko Sato senior Natural Resources Specialist ADB, Dr. Takashi Yamano, principal economist ADB and others for their valuable contributions to the cause. Chairman PARC reiterated that Climate smart agriculture research is crucial in addressing the challenges posed by rapidly changing climatic conditions to ensure sustainable food production and agricultural resilience. Dr. Ali also underscored the importance of engaging with international institutions and experts to leverage their knowledge and experiences for the benefit of agricultural research in the region.

During her remarks, Ms. Noriko Sato provided a comprehensive overview of ADB's initiatives in Pakistan. Dr. Takashi Yamano presented insights on climate change impacts, including temperature variations, crop damage from floods, and greenhouse gas emissions in agriculture. The discussions also encompassed potential solutions to mitigate these emissions, such as promoting low-carbon rice cultivation and developing climate-resilient and drought-tolerant crop varieties. Dr. Ruben Lampayan, ADB consultant highlighted the inefficiencies in water usage in rice cultivation and emphasized the adoption of water conservation techniques, Alternate Wetting and Drying (AWD) practices, and other effective water management technologies to enhance rice production while minimizing water consumption. Senior specialist, Dr. Krishna Dev Joshi highlighted the importance of the delivery of climate smart crop varieties to transform Agri-food system of Pakistan and to address the challenges of climate change and ensure food security in the country. Climate Change specialist, Dr. Hiz Jamali emphasized that low water productivity in rice poses a significant challenge to sustainable agriculture practices in Pakistan, exacerbated by key climate challenges such as water scarcity, unusual rainfall patterns, and rising temperatures impacting crop yields

Director Water Institute NARC, Dr. Bashir Ahmed, and Director NIGAB, Dr. Shaukat Ali shared insights on success stories by PARC on climate smart agriculture in Pakistan enhancing water productivity in rice, developing climate-resilient crop varieties, addressing climate change implications on water availability, and tackling key climate challenges in country's agriculture sector. The meeting concluded with a commitment between PARC and ADB to collaborate for the advancement of sustainable agricultural practices and fostering global partnerships to address the evolving environmental conditions affecting food security and economic growth in the country.

Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman, PARC, Ms. Noriko Sato, Senior Natural Resources Specialist ADB, and Dr. Takashi Yamano, Principal Economist, ADB during a workshop on “Promoting Climate Smart Agriculture Research in Pakistan at NARC

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