



Knowledge level of hybrid castor growers regarding its production technology

M.M. DESALE, D.K. BADHE AND R.C. PATEL

See end of the article for authors' affiliations

Correspondence to :

M.M. DESALE

Directorate of
Extension Education,
Mahatma Phule Krishi
Vidyapeeth, Rahuri,
AHEMDNAGAR
(M.S.) INDIA

ABSTRACT

The present investigation was conducted in Kheda district of Gujarat state where it has maximum area under hybrid castor cultivation than the other districts. For this study, 10 villages were selected out of which 120 farmers were selected by proportionate random sampling technique. The findings of this study revealed that majority (79.17 per cent) of the castor growers had medium to high level of knowledge regarding recommended hybrid castor production technology. Cent per cent of the hybrid castor growers had good knowledge regarding castor cultivation practices *viz.*, land preparation, interculturing, manual weeding and timely harvesting.

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INTRODUCTION

Castor (*Ricinus communis* L.) plant belongs to Euphorbiaceae family. According to available literature, castor is indigenous to Eastern Africa and most probably originated in Ethiopia. Castor is an important industrial non-edible oilseed crop. Castor seed contains 45-47 per cent non-edible oil, which is used for domestic, medicinal and industrial purposes. Castor oil is used as a lubricant in all moving parts of the machinery and particularly high-speed engines and aeroplanes. Hydrogenated castor oil is used in polished, varnished, transparent paper, linoleum, plasticizers, ointments, waxes, printing ink, cosmetics, hairdressing, soaps etc. In dyeing industries and disinfectants, it is used for the preparation of Turkey red castor oil. It is also used as purgative.

Total area under castor crop in Gujarat during 2007-08 was 3,54,000 hectares and it has increased by 26% as compared to previous year. Area under castor crop has increased in North Gujarat (37%) and Saurashtra (34%). Total production of castor seeds in Gujarat during 2007-08 was 6,51,000 tones, which has

increased by 32% as compared to previous year (Anonymous, 2008).

Recent data of area and production of the district shows that areas under castor cultivation have increased however the yield is falling down year by year. Therefore, there is a wide gap between the average yield of farmer's field and the potential yield of the crop. This indicates that the farmers did not have proper knowledge regarding recommended hybrid castor production technology. Looking to the importance and urgency of this problem, this study was undertaken with the following objectives to study the knowledge level of castor growers regarding recommended hybrid castor production technology and to study the practice wise knowledge level of castor growers regarding recommended hybrid castor production technology.

METHODOLOGY

Present study was conducted in Kapadwanj Taluka of Kheda district because it has the maximum area under cultivation of hybrid castor than the other Talukas of district. On the basis of area under hybrid castor

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