

From Director's Desk...

ALTHOUGH it has happened by destiny and not by design, yet it gives me unbounded pleasure to be the Director of this prestigious institute at a historic moment when it is celebrating the Golden Jubilee of its foundation. The institute has infinitely many contributions and success stories spread over a period of almost 79 years when it started as a small statistical section in 1930. The name Institute of Agricultural Research Statistics (IARS) was given to it on 02 July 1959, though it was given the status of a full fledged institute in the ICAR in April 1970. Since 1959, 02 July every year has been celebrated as foundation day of the institute. The year 2008 –



2009 has been the year of celebrations for the institute, enjoying the glory of its past as also doing an introspection to produce a roadmap to navigate towards brilliance while facing and meeting successfully new challenges of research while marching towards platinum jubilee. On 02 July 2009, the institute would become 50 years old and it is time to take a stock of its march towards excellence through this publication “*IASRI . . . an era of Excellence*”. I would like to express my deepest sense of admiration towards the founder Directors, all the past Directors, Joint Directors, to all the past and the present Heads of Divisions, Scientists, Technical personnel, Administrative, Supporting and other staff members who have built this institute and brought it to its present form by way of sheer vision, wisdom, dedication, hard work, support, help and team work. It would be my pleasant duty to express my heartfelt gratitude towards the galaxy of eminent scientists who have served on various committees like Institute Research Council, Institute Management Committee, Research Advisory Committee, Quinquennial Review Team, and other committees for their guidance in deciding the research agenda, their critical evaluation of the research programmes to make it internationally competitive and acceptable, fresh and fragrant ideas, support and help, during this journey of 50 years as a consequence of which the research achievements have become radiant and vibrant.

The schema for the celebrations of the Golden Jubilee year was drawn by a team of young scientists led by Dr. Rajender Parsad. This team of youth was augmented with an experienced group comprising of Heads of Divisions and led by Dr. V.K. Gupta so as to give beautiful shape to the diagram drawn by this young group. Based on the suggestions, a calendar of events was drawn punctuated with several events, major ones being (a) the organization of Seminars by guest faculty made up of distinguished Statisticians and Agricultural Scientists from India and abroad, and (b) conducting one-day workshops on specialized topics of current interest.

The seminars were delivered by internationally renowned scientists like Dr. JN Srivastava, Colorado State University, USA; Dr. Bikas K. Sinha, Member, National Statistical Commission, Government of India; Dr. Ravindra Khattree, Professor of Statistics, Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan, USA; Dr. Alope Dey, INSA Senior Scientist, ISI New Delhi; Dr. Pitam Chandra, Assistant Director General, ICAR, New Delhi; Dr. Prem Narain, Former Director, IASRI, New Delhi; Dr Murari Singh, Department of Mathematics and Statistics, Concordia University, Canada; Dr. V.K. Sharma, Former HD(DE) and Professor, IASRI, New Delhi.

To disseminate the research work carried out by the institute and to identify newer statistical and informatics issues that need attention, five workshops were conducted. The themes of these workshops were (a) Design of Experiments in Agricultural Research; (b) Applications of Small Area Estimation Techniques; (c) Expert Systems in Agriculture; (d) Remote Sensing and GIS Techniques for Decision Support in Agriculture; and (v) Statistical and Computational Issues in Genomics. Scientists from different parts of the country participated in these workshops. These workshops received high appreciation. I take this opportunity to thank profusely the guest faculty, all the participants, the conveners/co-conveners and others who helped in conducting successfully these workshops.

An important breakthrough in the capacity building and sensitization of the scientists of NARS was the initiation of a new concept of organizing “*Travel Training Programmes*” in different areas of statistics and computer applications. Two such travel training programmes on Advances in Design of Experiments were organized for the scientists of Acharya NG Ranga Agricultural University, Rajendra Nagar, Hyderabad and its centers. These were organized at Guntur and Hyderabad. These are now becoming popular and requests from other research Institutes have also started pouring in.

Another important item in the framework of the Golden Jubilee celebrations was to bring out a publication entitled ‘*IASRI . . . an Era of Excellence*’ to be released on the foundation day of the institute. This publication consists of messages from the leaders in the ICAR and all the well wishers, the reminiscences of alumni and the brilliance achieved during these 50 years in the research and teaching programmes of the institute. Bringing out such a publication is an arduous task but I am immensely pleased to mention that Dr. V.K. Gupta, ICAR National Professor, gladly accepted to shoulder this demanding task as Chairman, Publication Committee. Not only did he conceive the ideas, the contents and the format of this publication, but he also took personal interest in giving it the final shape. He got full support from all the members of the editorial committee, viz., Dr. P.K. Malhotra, Dr. Rajender Parsad and Dr. Seema Jaggi who together toiled with Dr. Gupta in realizing the dream of bringing out this publication in time. The whole team deserves laurels for their dedication and untiring efforts in shaping this publication.

With a deep sense of gratitude I would like to express my gratefulness to all those who have sent their good wishes and blessings in the form of message for the accelerated growth of the institute. I would also like to place on record my appreciation towards all the contributors who have helped in making this publication a possibility by way of submitting their articles in time. I would also wish to express my sincere thanks to one and all who have helped directly or indirectly in bringing out this publication.

On this occasion, I congratulate the whole family of IASRI and wish them best and only best in their future research endeavors. Let us all march together in pursuit of higher goals, elevated targets, supremacy in research, . . . to help agricultural research grow exponentially so as bring solace to the farming community.



(VK Bhatia)