

Sugarcane – DSCL way of bringing prosperity to the farmers

The DCM Shriram Consolidated Ltd (DSCL) started its first crushing season in 1997-98 in U.P. having 16,748 hectare under sugarcane in its area with intensity of sugarcane cropping at only 26%. The challenge to the company was low productivity due to poor technologies, low yielding and susceptible varieties, poor soil conditions and low water availability. The DSCL realized that to ensure regular and adequate supply of sugarcane either the area had to be increased or the yield had to go up and maximum possible share of the sugarcane produced in the area had to come for crushing at the factory. The Company moved in the matter by extending credits for farm inputs, ensuring availability of quality inputs at reasonable rates, providing extension services for popularizing modern agri-techniques, soil testing, providing better varieties of seeds, recommending proper crop rotation, inter-cropping and developing close relationship with the farmers.

The result is that the average productivity has increased in the last four years from 42 ton/ha to 55 ton/ha and the yield in paired row spacing upto 75 ton/ha to 120 ton/ha. The farmers are also getting additional income of Rs.5000 to 10,000 per hectare from inter-cropping. Further the intensity of sugarcane cultivation has improved to 52% and the area under sugarcane to 50,000 hectare.

The Company established the first Haryali Kisaan Bazar (HKB) in July 2002 and now there is a chain of 16 HKBs in four States viz. Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Rajasthan. These units provide fertilizers, insecticides, pesticides and seeds of different crops, agricultural implements, diesel, petrol and lubricants through BPCL petrol pumps to ensure better quality and quantity cooking gas to farmers through Bharat gas agency, different FMCG products of daily use, veterinary medicines, green card facility by using ATM through rural branch of ICICI Bank and giving crop extension services through a network of agronomists. The innovative theme of HKB concept focuses on making available high quality inputs at reasonable rates and good farmer extension services on modern agri-techniques to the growers of the area under one roof.

The Company has established a Soil Testing Laboratory in 2000 to give advice to the farmers for judicious use of fertilizers and to promote the concept of Integrated Nutrient Management. It has also established its R & D farm in 16 hectares land and is doing its research work in close co-ordination with different sugarcane institutes like UPCSR (Shahjahanpur), IISR (Lucknow) and SBI (Karnal). This farm is mainly working to establish package of practices for the region including proper varietal selection, right doses of pesticides and fertilizers, different inter-cropping models, etc.