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Dated the 27th December, 2011

Dear Colleague,

Greetings for a happy, prosperous and productive New Year - 2012.

Nearing 2012 is once again time for greetings, compliments and plans, for it would herald the beginning of the XII Five Year Plan. Indian agriculture was celebrated during 2011 for the highest ever food production in all components of cereals, pulses, fruits and vegetables, meat, milk, fish and eggs, with the growth rate of 5.4%.

ICAR led the decoding of the pigeon pea genome, a first time accomplishment by an entirely Indian group of Scientists. Nanomaterials were sourced for phosphatic fertilization with measurable success. The trend of varietal releases to suit various agro-ecosystems and breeder seed production across various field and horticultural crops was continued, with greater emphasis on emerging challenges of abiotic stresses. **The National Initiative on Climate Resilient Agriculture spread its wings, with crop varieties for climate change as well as relevant ground level interventions in villages, enabling science-led agriculture.** Enhanced productivity levels of pulses made news through over 6,000 demonstrations across the country, leading to a record all-time high in pulse production. DIVA kit for differentiating between naturally infected cattle and buffaloes with Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and vaccinated animals; a new strain of pig for the North Eastern Region; breeding of marine fish, *Pompano*; value chains for Banana pseudostem and Oceanic tuna; and special packaging for flowers, under NAIP, were among the many notable contributions of ICAR.

A long felt need of the Council to have a corporate platform was met with the approval of the Union Cabinet for 'AgrInnovateIndia', for relevant activities both at home and abroad. International cooperation took a new dimension with the launching of the Borlaug Institute for South Asia (BISA) with CIMMYT during the year. A Knowledge-Innovation Repository in Agriculture for North-East (KIRAN) and Rice Management Portal were launched, while the National Agro-Biodiversity Management Board was reconstituted. The ICT efforts in agricultural research and education got a boost with more e-Courses in agriculture taking shape, along with the National Bioinformatics Grid and mobile extension services for a comprehensive approach from 'seed-to-market'. ICAR also went overseas with participation in trade fair at Muscat and provided open access to all its publications, towards globalization of the programmes. We are increasingly getting engaged with international agencies, CGIAR Institutions and Universities, with appreciable efforts in capacity building in Africa, in terms of both receiving students through Fellowships as well as visits of our Colleagues to different countries.

Responding to the changing needs, we are revisiting our formats from 'Recruitments to Rewards' in terms of ARS guidelines, capacity building for scientists, KVK guidelines, nomenclatures of Institutes and Divisions, AICRPs and AINPs, Research Advisory Committees, Research project files, Performance indicators and ICAR awards. It is also heartening that the Principal Secretary to the Hon'ble Prime Minister constituted an Inter-Departmental Committee for formulation of a comprehensive policy for research and education in agriculture, with DARE/ICAR as the Nodal Point. This provides us an opportunity for chartering a long term path for individual as well as institutional excellence in the cause of the Indian farming community. I would like to compliment you for bringing out the Vision-2030 documents, that would also feed into the policy perspective being formulated.

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It was a memorable occasion for the NARS when the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India addressed the 83rd Foundation Day of ICAR on the 16th July, 2011, and I quote:

"The ICAR has served our country with great distinction for over eight decades now. It has done pioneering work in many areas of agricultural research, leading to very significant breakthroughs in several areas. The contribution of ICAR scientists in the achievement of national self-sufficiency in foodgrains and diversity in food production is truly enormous" and further, "You have a record to be proud of and although the future challenges are truly enormous, I am sure our agricultural research system will succeed in delivering the national good, whatever be the odds. With these words, I wish the ICAR family, all success in its efforts. May God bless your path."

The above words would be the guiding principles for our endeavors in the coming Plan. We have had an extensive consultation process involving all stakeholders through the year, with Progressive and Innovative farmers, Networks of subject matter specialists, Vice Chancellors and Deans of State Agricultural Universities, Directors and Heads of Divisions of ICAR Institutes, Professional agricultural societies and NGOs, as well as special consultations for Agricultural knowledge management, Gender perspective in agriculture and Inter-Departmental discussions. We are beholden to the Hon'ble Union Minister of Agriculture and Food Processing Industries and President of the ICAR Society, who has been guiding our efforts all the time, for also convening special meetings of Scientists from different disciplines and Institutes for a one-to-one interaction, for the first time, that has sent waves across the scientific community in the system.

As we move further, we are embarking on two missions, 'Farmer FIRST', and 'Student READY', as also Consortia platforms for achieving greater partnerships. Two major projects, viz., National Agricultural Education Project and National Agricultural Entrepreneurship Project are being formulated. In our efforts to do things differently, mechanisms are being developed for Extramural funding, Post Doctoral Fellowships, Agri-Innovation fund, Agri-Incubation fund, Regional processing & fabrication hubs and Referral & Certification facilities. Upgradation of some of the Institutes as Deemed Universities is also on the anvil.

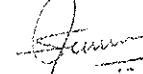
Indian agriculture, agricultural research, education and all associated aspects are in focus and there is a great deal of enthusiasm as well as expectation among our stakeholders. Instead of saying how much we have done, we shall see how much remains to be done. We are at an important stage of agricultural transformation, from 'primary agriculture to secondary agriculture' and look at XII Plan as an opportunity for making a change in enabling and ennobling agricultural research. At Family NARS and Team ICAR, prioritizing the programmes, recognizing our strengths, joining hands for greater synergy and a winning strategy are the need of the hour, to make agriculture more rewarding and remunerative.

I am sure you will continue to give your best as in the past and I wish you all the best.

With regards,

Encl: ICAR Salient Achievements – 2011

Yours sincerely,



(S. Ayyappan)

Distribution:

1. AS(DARE) & Secy., ICAR; AS & FA, DARE/ICAR
2. DDGs; ND, NAIP; ADGs; NCs; Principal Scientists; Senior Scientists; Directors; Deputy Secretaries; Under Secretaries of DARE/ICAR Hqrs.
3. Directors of ICAR Institutes/Directorates/Bureaux/NRCs; Project Coordinators; Zonal Project Directors; Programme Coordinators

For kind information:

1. President, NAAS
2. Chairman, ASRB; Members, ASRB; Secretary, Controller of Examinations, Deputy Secretary, Controller (Online Examinations), Under Secretary, ASRB
3. Vice-Chancellors of State Agricultural Universities/Central Agricultural University