

Preface

The New Urea Policy – 2015 (UP-2015) was notified on 25th May, 2015 for the period commencing from 01/06/2015 to 31/03/2019. It made mandatory for all the indigenous producers of urea to produce 100 per cent of their total production of subsidized urea as Neem Coated Urea (NCU). Coating Normal Urea with neem (NCU) has based on the agronomical trials at research and farm levels, proved that crop yields increase with application of NCU as compared to NU. This policy intervention is mainly aimed at controlling an excessive use of urea, which is observed to have been affecting the soil health adversely, and thereby, the yields of crop in general. In 2014-15, Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme was introduced to assist State Governments to issue SHCs to all farmers in the country.

Against above backdrop, this study was simultaneously assigned to six AERCs/Us for their respective states under the Co-ordination of **ADRTC, ISEC, Bengaluru** for the work plan year 2016-17. Accordingly, *Agro-Economic Research Centre for Bihar & Jharkhand, T M Bhagalpur University, Bhagalpur* has undertaken this study in Bihar for the reference period of kharif – 2015. It was undertaken in four sample districts comprising two sample crops (viz., paddy & maize) with a total of 400 sample farm households. The field work was undertaken during April-July, 2016 and the draft report was prepared in November, 2016. It was reviewed by the Co-ordinating Unit in December, 2016. Now, it is brought out by incorporating the comments given by the Co-ordinator.

The study reveals economic feasibility of NCU over NU on both the sample crops in the state. It has also dealt with the status of SHC Scheme in the state. We hope that the findings of the study will be useful for a wide range of policy makers, academicians, as well as research professionals.

We deem it our duty to acknowledge and appreciate the co-operation extended by all those, who have greatly helped us in completion of this study. First of all, we express our heartfelt gratitude to Prof. Parmod Kumar, ISEC, Bengaluru for designing the study proposal, questionnaire etc. and Dr. K B Ramappa and Dr. A V Manjunatha, ADRTC, ISEC, Bengaluru for successfully Co-ordinating the study and their valuable comments on the draft report. We record our gratitude to our Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Prof. (Dr.) Rama Shanker Dubey for his consistent interest in completion of the study. We are grateful to the Director (Agriculture), Government of Bihar and DAOs of Begusarai, Bhagalpur, Rohtas and West Champaran for providing us their kind co-operation in collection of required data and necessary information. We are thankful to all the members of the Project Team for involving themselves in collection and tabulation of data. We will be failing in our duty, if we do not thank the respondents for sparing their valuable time and providing information and data.

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