



## The Rubber Board NEWS BULLETIN

### STFR MEETING IN TRIPURA



The first meeting of the State Level Task Force on Rubber (STFR) was held at State Secretariate, Tripura, on 18 March 2020. The meeting was convened by Dr. K.N. Raghavn IRS, Executive Director, Rubber Board. Mr. S.K. Rakesh IAS, Additional Chief Secretary (Forest) Government of Tripura chaired the meeting. Mr. Kiran Gitte IAS (Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Govt. of Tripura), Ms Deepa D. Nair IAS (Special Secretary, Labour, Govt. of Tripura), Mr. Budhi Debbarma IFS (Executive Director, TFDPC Ltd.), Mr. Prasad Rao IFS (Managing Director, TRPC Ltd.), Ms. Girijamony KA (Jt. Rubber Production Commissioner -in charge, Rubber Board), Mr. SK Dey (Joint Director, Rubber Board) and Mr. Shyamal Sen (D.y RPC-in charge, Rubber Board) participated in the meeting.

The National Rubber Policy (NRP) – 2019, brought out by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India in March 2019 was mainly based on the recommendations of a Task Force on Rubber Sector (TFRS). TFRS was constituted by the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India in March 2018 with Chief Secretaries of Kerala and Tripura as Chairman and Co-chairman. TFRS has to recommend short term solutions and long term strategies for mitigating problems being faced by rubber growers, especially low rubber prices, boosting production to breach the gap between demand and supply and regulation of import and integration of both Central and State Government strategies/schemes for rubber plantation development activities. For coordinating and monitoring such activities at the State level State Task Force on Rubber (STFR) are being formed in rubber growing states in a phased manner.

The STFR will formulate Centre-State integrated strategies and programmes for rubber plantation development and allied activities. It will also examine various schemes implemented by the State and Central Governments and other institutional agencies and identify avenues for convergence of schemes and programmes for providing support for rubber plantation development and allied activities. The STFR will also sort out state specific issues, if any, such as restrictions on felling/sale of old rubber trees for replanting, land rights and other issues. ■

#### Highlights

##### Grower's Corner

Switch over to weekly tapping to reduce cost of production

Farm activities for April

**Rainguarding**

**Spraying for the control of Abnormal leaf fall**

**Weeding**

**Land Preparation**

**Pitting and refilling**

**Soil and water conservation**

**Fertilizer application**

**And more .....**

# Switch over to low frequency tapping to reduce cost of production\*



Low frequency tapping (LFT) with stimulation can be practised from the first year of tapping to reduce the cost of production, increase productive life of trees and to manage the tapping labour shortage. The systems recommended are once in three days (S/2 d3), once in four days (S/2 d4), once in six days (S/2 d6) or once in seven days (S/2 d7) frequency. Trees under higher frequencies of tapping can also be converted to LFT. However, when such conversion is done there will be a temporary yield depression. To minimise the depression effect, conversion may

be done during the low yielding months (February-April). Success of LFT depends on regular tapping throughout the year with application of yield stimulant at stipulated schedules for each frequency and clone. The stimulation schedule varies with clone, age of the tree, tapping system and frequency. Method of yield stimulation recommended is application of 2.5% ethephon on the panel (applied on recently tapped area just above the tapping cut to a width of 1.5 cm) in all the above cases. For high yielding clones like RRII 105 under third daily (d3) tapping frequency with weekly one day regular off (6d/7), three annual stimulation and under 7d/7 only two rounds are needed. The updated stimulation schedule recommended for different systems of tapping and clones under 6d/7 and 7d/7 are given in Table 1 below. The scheduled stimulation for April may be postponed to May/June, if soil moisture is deficient.

When tapping is done by the grower himself, weekly tapping with rainguard would be most appropriate as the effort will be minimal without compromise on production. In addition to tapping on all scheduled days under d6 or d7, removal of bark shaving @ 2.5mm/tap, and tapping upto the correct depth (0.5 to 1.0 mm near to cambium) in all tapping days, and yield stimulant application as per recommended schedule ensures optimum crop. Trees which have undergone higher frequencies of tapping for the initial two or more years, after converting to weekly (d7) tapping, monthly stimulation may be followed.

## Schedule of stimulant application under low frequency tapping

Clone	Tapping system	Rounds/year	Schedule
RRII 105	S/2 d3 7d/7	2	April/May/June, September/ October/ November
RRII 105	S/2 d3 6d/7	3	April/May/June, September, November
RRII 105	S/2 d4 7d/7	4	April/May/June, August, October, December
RRII 105	S/2 d4 6d/7	6	April/May, June, August, September, November, December
RRII 105	S/2 d6 7d/7	10*	All months - after every 6th tapping, 72 hours before the 7th tapping
RRII 105	S/2 d6 6d/7 (weekly tapping)	12**	All months - after every 4th tapping, 72 hours before the 5th tapping
PB 217	S/2 d3 6d/7	3#	April/May/June, September, November
PB 217	S/2 d4 6d/7	5	April/May, June, August, October, December
GT 1	S/2 d3 6d/7	4	April/May/June, August, October, December
GT 1	S/2 d4 6d/7	7	April/May, June, August, September, October, December, January
RRIM 600	S/2 d3 6d/7	4	April/May/June, August, October, December

\*During the initial two years of opening 20 rounds per year (after every three tapping, 72 hours before 4th tapping), \*\*During the initial two years of opening 24 rounds/year (after every two tapping, 72 hours before 3rd tapping), # No stimulation in the initial two years of opening due to low drc. **Note:** 1) Diluent – palm oil/coconut oil; 2) 5% lace application before third tapping after new opening/opening after annual rest; 3) All the above recommendation are applicable under rainguarded condition; 4) Stimulation may be done between 48-72 hours before tapping; 5) Do not stimulate when drc falls below 30%.



# Important farm activities in April\*

erable that the density should not exceed 500/ha.

**Grower's  
Corner**

## Rainguarding



Procurement of materials such as bituminous compound, polythene, fixing materials etc. may be done for rainguarding. Depending on the area to be covered, the rainguarding may be undertaken from April.

## Spraying for the control of Abnormal leaf fall

The materials viz. Copper sulphate, lime, COC, spray oil etc. required for prophylactic spraying in May against abnormal leaf fall may be procured 30-50 kg of  $\text{CuSO}_4$  and lime or 8 kg COC and 40 L spray oil may be required per hectare. The spray equipment may be serviced well in advance.

## Weeding

Weeding should be carried out before the fertilizer application. Weeds are then kept aside for drying and dried weeds can be used for mulching the plant basin.



## Land Preparation



Land preparation for new planting and replanting can be continued during this period. Large trees of economic value should be removed first followed by felling and removal of smaller trees and slashing of under-

growth in the case of new planting. A light burn after felling and drying facilitates planting operations. Lining, terracing and pitting also may be undertaken during this period. Rubber may be planted either by adopting square (for level land) or rectangular (for level and near level lands) planting system. In undulating and hilly areas, contour lining should be undertaken and terraces should be cut along the contour to conserve moisture and prevent soil erosion. Instead of taking continuous terraces in the beginning, for economy, individual square platforms of size 1.25 m x 1.25 m can be constructed around each plant point and later on they can be joined together to form continuous terraces. Provision should be made for proper drainage.

## Planting distance

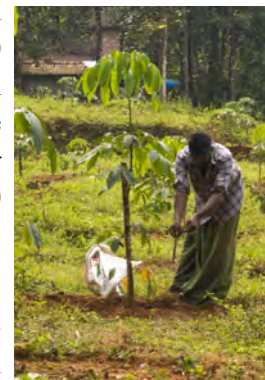
The density recommended for proper growth and development of rubber is about 420-445 plants/ha. In the case of budded plants. It is pref-

## Pitting and refilling

The standard size of the pit is 75 cm x 75 cm x 75 cm. In hard and stony soils, pits of size 90 cm x 90 cm x 90 cm can be taken. Filling should be done with top fertile soil. Well decomposed and powdered cow dung or compost at the rate of 12 kg and rock phosphate at the rate of 175 g per pit may be mixed with the top 30 cm soil in the pit.

## Soil and water conservation

In sloppy areas, soil conservation measures may be undertaken at the time of land preparation itself to prevent soil erosion and to conserve water. Construction of stone pitched contour bunds (Edakkayyalas) and silt pits are the common conservation practices recommended other than contour terracing. Silt pits (trenches) of about 120 cm length, 45 cm width and 60 cm depth can be taken across the slope on the interspaces of rubber at the rate of about 250 pits per hectares.



## Fertilizer application

Fertilizer recommendation to the individual fields based on soil and or leaf analysis or satellite based fertilizer recommendations (RUBSIS) will be more advantageous and economical and as far as possible it has to be followed. The facilities at the central soil and leaf testing laboratory attached to the Rubber Research Institute of India or the Regional laboratories can be utilized.

## Up to 4th year of planting

April – May is the planting season and for new plantings no fertilizer application is required during this time. For the initial four years, the discriminatory fertilizer recommendation based on the initial soil sample analysis if available can be followed. Otherwise the general fertilizer recommendation given below in table can be practiced. Two types of fertilizer mixtures either with magnesium or without magnesium is recommended. In Kanyakumari district of Tamilnadu, Trissur, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur, Kasaragod, Wynad districts of Kerala, Karnataka, Goa and Maharashtra regions the magnesium status of the soil is

Fertilizer recommendation for initial four years					
Year of Planting	Months after planting	Dose of mixture (g/ plant) 10:10:4:1.5 12:12:6		Quantity per hectare 10:10:4:1.5/ 12:12:6	
First year April-may	0	Nil		Nil	
2nd year April-May	9	450	380	200	190
3rd year April-May	21	550	480	250	215
4th year April-May	33	450	380	200	170

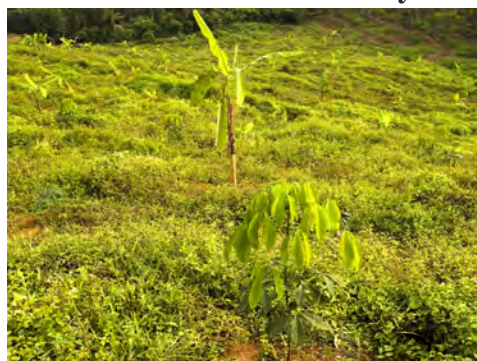
for one season. The same can be supplied through 65kg of urea, 100 kg of rockphosphate and 20 kg of muriate of potash.

#### Mature rubber under tapping

The general fertilizer recommendation for mature rubber under tapping is 30 kg each of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. The entire quantity of fertilizer can be applied as single dose in April-May or it can be applied in two split doses one in April-May and the second in September-October.

high and here 12:12:6 mixture is recommended. For all other regions in the traditional belt of rubber cultivation, Mg containing 10:10:4:1.5 NPKMg mixture is recommended. For Northeastern region 12:12:6 mixture is recommended.

#### Immature rubber from fifth year to tapping



From fifth year of planting till maturity the quantity of fertilizer to be applied is based on the management practices fol-

lowed in the initial four years.

If the fields were properly mulched and good cover crop was maintained in the initial years, then the general fertilizer recommendation is 30 kg/ha each of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. This can be supplied through 65 kg urea, 150 kg rock phosphate and 150 kg muriate of potash. The fertilizer can be supplied in two splits one in April-May and the other in September-October depending upon the rain and availability of moisture in the soil. Hence during April-May, half of the recommended fertilizer can be supplied through 32.5 kg urea, 75 kg rock phosphate and 25 kg muriate of potash. These straight fertilizers should be mixed together on the day of application and should not be stored for later use. The entire quantity can be uniformly applied to the field.

Depending upon the number of trees per hectare, the entire quantity can be equally distributed in the field.

If no cover crop was established and no mulching was practiced in the initial years then application of 200 kg of 15:10:6 NPK mixture is recommended

This can be supplied through mixing 65 kg urea, 150 kg rock phosphate and 50 kg muriate of potash. If two split application is followed then apply half the quantity of these fertilizers during April-May season. Instead of mixing straight fertilizers, ready to use mixtures can also be used and the same quantity provided in the table given above may be used.

The quantity of fertilizer application for well managed plantations from fifth year onwards is same as that of the mature rubber and hence the requirement for fertilizer mixture given in the table can be followed for mature rubber also. No fertilizer applications are recommended for mature plantations which are expected to be replanted within a period of three years.

For north eastern region for mature rubber the fertilizer recommendation is 35:35:35 NPK kg/ha. This can be supplied through 350 kg of 10:10:10 NPK mixture either in single dose or in two equal splits one in April-May and the second in September-October.

#### Method of fertilizer application

##### Immature rubber

Up to fourth year apply the fertilizers at the base of the plants in circular bands. The band width can be increased with the age of the plant and the fertilizer may be mixed with the soil by slight forking for preventing the losses. From fifth year onwards apply the fertilizers in rectangular or square patches in between four plants.

##### Mature rubber

Apply the fertilizers in rectangular or square patches in between four trees. The fertilizers can also be broadcasted in between the rows of trees.

**\*All the instructions/ restrictions issued by the Governments (Central/ State) to contain Covid 19 virus should be followed while doing farm activities.**