Rubber Demo Project
Open for Public

Dr. K.N. Raghavan inaugurating the Rubber Demo Project. Mr. K.C. Surendran (Director (Finance) in charge), Dr. James Jacob (Director (Research)), Mr. Thomas Eapen (Senior Scientist) are also seen.

Dr. K.N. Raghavan, Chairman & Executive Director, Rubber Board inaugurated the Rubber Demo Project at Central Experiment Station (CES), Chethackal. The Demo Project aims to give exposure to interested persons in rubber plantation forestry. The one day package includes an estate trip, food and stay. The visit also provides a chance to know about various farm practices, harvesting and latex processing. Dr. James Jacob (Director, Rubber Research Institute of India), Mrs. P. Sudha (Director, Rubber Training Institute), Mr. K.C. Surendran (Director, Finance-in-charge) and Mr. Thomas Eapen (Senior Scientist) spoke on the occasion.

The CES Chethackal located at Naranammoozhi Panchayath of Ranni Taluk in Pathanamthitta District is the major research station of Rubber Research Institute of India, with an area of 255 hectares. The research station has rubber plantations at different growth stages, rubber nurseries, processing unit and field trials at various stages of evaluation. The CES also offers outdoor attractions like Check Dam with a garden, trekking facilities, off-road safari, hill climbing, cycling circuits etc. as a part of this one day package.

Route to CES is through Ponthenpuzha forest and adjoining Manimalayar river. Madatharuvi waterfalls, Perunthenaruvi waterfalls (15 km), Sabarimala Holy place (30 km), Konni Elephant training centre (40 km), Erumeli Sastha temple (25 km), Gavi coracle boating (45 km) and Panchalimedu hill station (45 km) are the nearby tourist attractions.
Rainguard your trees to
Guard your income in rainy season

During rainy season, tapping can be carried out by fixing a rainguard above the tapping cut and prevent loss of tapping days and thus yield due to rain. Regular tapping can be ensured by rainguarding under any given tapping frequency. For rainguarding, a suitable device is fixed on the trunk just above the tapping cut and flow of water through the main trunk is channeled out. This method is found to be effective in keeping the tapping cut and the bark below and above within the rainguard in dry condition during the rainy season. To obtain optimum yield under LFT system, timely fixing of good quality rain guard and maintaining it leak proof throughout the monsoon is essential.

Four types of rainguard, viz. polythene skirt, tapping shade, Guardian/Kissan rainguards and tapping shield are recommended.

Materials required to rainguard 300 trees (average size) following polythene skirt method are:
1. LDPE virgin polythene 300 gauge, 45 cm wide: 12-14 kg
2. Bituminous rainguard compound: 30-35 kg
3. Cora cloth: 6 m or LDPE 400 gauge ribbon with 2.5 cm wide: 600-700 g
4. Staple pins (No. 10 for virgin bark and 24/6 for renewed bark): 2000 Nos. (2 box)

Ready to use good quality rainguard compound should be used for fixing. Bituminous compound should not be heated on fire or mixed with kerosene to make it loose. Before use, irrespective of the brand, rainguard compound may be tested for phytotoxicity. For this, the compound should be applied as a band on a few trees, on the renewing bark above the tapping cut. If no symptoms like exudation of latex from bark underneath the applied band and tissue damage is observed within a week, the compound may be used for rainguarding. For efficient rainguarding, polythene sheet may be frilled before fixing (frill size of 7 mm with 1.5 cm gap between adjacent frills).

During monsoon period there are chances for leakage of rainguard leading to considerable crop loss on rainy days and partial loss during few more subsequent tappings after monsoon. This can be prevented by fixing a mini rainguard of 3 inch wide LDPE sheet just above the current year’s rainguard during August – September just like normal rainguarding, but without frill and a second coating of compound.

Chances of bark rot are high when the trees are rainguared and tapping is continued during rainy season. Irrespective of the type of rainguard used, regular panel washing using fungicide (mancozeb 0.375%) at 10-15 days interval is necessary to prevent incidence of panel diseases. Spraying of fungicide is not very effective to prevent panel disease. With the introduction of low frequency tapping, rainguarding is needed even under low rainfall.
Important farm activities in April

**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 CuSO4 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 undergrowth 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 preferable that the density should not exceed 500/ha.

**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. For details regarding general recommendation of fertilizer application visit ‘Cultural practices’ on www.rubberboard.gov.in
The following training courses will be conducted during April 2021

1. Training on beekeeping in rubber plantations : 20th April 2021
This one day course imparts training on beekeeping to farmers/SHG members for additional income generation. Rubber growers, farmers, RPS, SHG members can apply for this course. Fees prescribed for this course is Rs.500/- + GST 18% + 1% flood cess.

2. Training on Rainguarding : 22th April 2021
Rubber farmers and interested persons can apply for this course. The course contents include different methods of rain guarding and knowledge on rain guarding. The fee prescribed for this course is Rs.500/-+ 18% GST + 1% flood cess

3. Training on Manuring in Rubber: 26th April 2021
This one day course imparts training on the importance of fertilizer application, fertilizer recommendations, soil and leaf analysis and discriminatory fertilizer application. The training fee is Rs. 500/- + GST 18% + 1% flood cess.

4. Short Term Training on Rubber Processing & Quality Control: 26-28 April 2021
The course content includes composition of natural rubber latex, collection and preservation, preparation of sheet rubber, grading, concentration of preserved latex, solid block rubber, EBC, PLC, testing of block rubber and cenex, effluent treatment and pollution control. Persons from rubber plantations, public sector institutions, rubber processing units, and any other interested persons can participate in this course. Fees prescribed for this course is Rs.4500/- + 18% GST +1% flood cess.

SC/ST participants are eligible to get 50% concession in course fee on production of caste certificate. Payment can be made by direct remittance to the Board’s account with Central Bank of India, RB, Kottayam, IFS Code CBIN0284150 A/C No. 1450300184. For details contact 0481 2353127, 2353326, 2351313, 2353325. Fax No. 0481 2353187. E-mail: training@rubberboard.org.in