

Report on the Session on 'Statistical Computing'

The computer has many an application and not all users are familiar with the entire gamut especially the Indian Agricultural Statisticians working in the Eastern and North-Eastern region. As such, it was decided that the topic "Status of Agricultural Statistics and Statistical Computing in Eastern and North - Eastern India" be chosen for discussion at the Session this year.

The Session had as

Chairman	:	Prof. P.K. Bose, Calcutta University
Convenor	:	Shri R. Gopalan, IASRI, New Delhi
Speakers	:	Dr. A.K.P.C. Swain, Utkal University
	:	Dr. M. Rout, CIFA
	:	Sh. B.K. Samanṭa, CRIJAF
	:	Dr. L.K. Pati, OUAT
Participants	:	All the delegates

The session started with a very brief introduction by the Secretary.

The Chairman drew the attention of the participants to the important role of computer.

Dr. A.K.P.C. Swain, Professor, Utkal University spoke about the status of Statistical Computing in Utkal University. He desired that Utkal University personnel be trained in use of computers and suggested that arrangements may be made for regional training program at Bhubaneswar either by Society or by IASRI.

Dr. M. Rout, Sr. Scientist, CIFA, Bhubaneswar spoke about the nucleus in computer field at CIFA. He introduced CIFA, and said that presently the Computer Centre is actively engaged in (i) development of software; (ii) use of packages for data analysis, graphics, preparing portable data, and word processing; (iii) conducting training; (iv) providing consultancy in data processing; (v) creating databases, and (vi) disseminating information to users. He gave a profile of resources available in the Centre in terms of computer systems and peripherals, availability of software, and manpower component. The general service facilities include databases on crop production, meteorology, library, fisheries, nutrition, aquaculture, etc. Work on quantitative modelling and simulation, programming, graph writer, and information infrastructure are on. The facilities have been developed through

NICNET, CD-ROM work station and Bibliographic Information Systems.

Shri B.K. Samanta Sr. Scientist, CRIJAF Barrackpora, Calcutta, spoke about the status of statistical computing at CRIJAF. He gave a brief account of the set up of the institute. He presented details of a job of international Jute Organisation that is being done at CRIJAF. This work pertains to documentation of Jute germplasm data.

Dr. L.K. Pati, Reader, OUAT, Bhubaneswar spoke about status of agricultural statistics in the state of Orissa. He made an attempt at enumerating the agencies engaged for collection of agricultural statistics, describing the method of collection, assessing the degree of reliability of data, listing measures to be taken to remove the lacuna in the collection, and suggesting improvement.

A very short discussion ensued and the points made included the following :

- Teachers from academic universities have breaks in between teaching sessions. This time can be utilised for attending training programs.
- Problems which are basically administrative in nature may be got solved at the Institutional level.
- Softwares may be shared between Institutions wherever possible.
- Collaboration between Institutions may be effected wherever needed.
- As Agricultural Statistics and Statistical Computing are becoming inseparable, attempts may be made to procure computers on one hand and improve the reliability of data on the other.
- There is a considerable variation in the status of Statistical Computing. Till such time statistical computing and computer professionals arrive on the scene, the onus of shouldering the responsibility may be borne by Agricultural Statisticians.

The Chairman concluded the session with the following remarks :

- The status of statistical computing is poor. But, there is no room for despondancy.
- The process of modernisation has started.
- There are signs of all round improvement.
- In time to come more men and machines will be available.
- As far as Agricultural Statistics is concerned, the status is far from satisfactory.
- Computers must be used in improving the status of Agricultural Statistics.
- Future will be better.