

Welcome Speech
by
Shri Atul Chaturvedi
President
The Solvent Extractors' Association of India

It gives us immense pleasure to warmly welcome on behalf of The Solvent Extractors' Association of India and All India Cottonseed Crushers' Association our Guests of Honour Shri Suresh Kotak, Chairman Kotak Group of Companies; Shri Pasha Patel, the Farmers' Leader and Chairman, Maharashtra Agriculture Cost and Price Commission; Shri R. S. Sodhi, Managing Director of Gujarat Cooperative Milk Federation; Our Special Guests Shri Devchand Thakkar, President of All Gujarat Cottonseed Crushers' Association; Shri Natubhai Patel President of All Saurashtra Cottonseed Crushers' Association; Shri Dilipbhai Patel of Raja Industry, Kadi; & also all the speakers and delegates for the Conclave

A special warm welcome to our friends from China who have shared their technology with us to manufacture gossypol free cottonseed meal.

The reason for choosing the historic city of Ahmedabad was essentially because this region has been at the fore front of Cotton production as well as marketing of cotton oil.

Friends, a few months back I had the privilege of attending the 57TH Annual General Meeting of AICOSCA. While leafing through their Annual Report I suddenly realised Cottonseed maybe the largest Oilseed in the country and India maybe the largest producer of cotton oil in the world .In a country which is dependent on imports to the extent of almost 70% of its requirement this is a singular achievement and the stakeholders of this important crop deserve full credit for the spectacular growth of Cotton in our country. The idea of organising an annual Cotton Conference got firmed up around this time.

SEA and AICOSCA have been working together over the years to promote the use of cottonseed oil for human consumption as well as cottonseed meal as feed ingredient. We decided to jointly organise this conference which I am sure in coming years would become an important event in our Calender like Castor and Mustard.

A cursory look at the World cottonseed scenario, high lights the leading role played by our country in this sector. Hence its all the more important we give this important oilseed the required thrust at National level.

Over the last five years, as per Oil World, the world's production of cottonseed on an average is 44 million tonnes with cottonseed sown over an area of 33.5 million hectares giving a yield of 1.3 tonnes per hectare.

India produces around 11.8 million tonnes of cottonseed with plantings of over 12 million hectares and an average yield of 0.98 tonnes per hectare. Our yields are woefully low and compare very unfavourably with that of China the second highest producer of cottonseed in the world. China produces approximately 11 mln tons using an area of about 4.3 million hectares. Their average yield is around 2.5 ton/hectare. India has a lot of catching up to do.

The World annual production of cotton seed oil is in the range of 4 Million tonnes of which India produces around 1.3 million tonne.

As per Oil World, the world's Cotton seed meal output in 2016-17 is estimated at 17.7 million tonnes with India accounting for 6.8 Million tonnes which is one third of the world production. Our exports of cottonseed meal is negligible at around 45000 mts.

Cottonseed oil is preferred oil by the organised food industry for the unique frying properties of the oil which keep our namkeens and snacks fresh for a long period of time. Cost wise also cotton oil is competitively priced which increases its acceptability.

I would be failing if I do not mention that the popularity of cotton seed oil owes its success to G M Technology. And it is also imperative for our

country to keep abreast of and adopt the latest advances in G M technology as well as adhere to the best practices of crop management. Needless to say the recent plight of our Cotton seed Farmers in Maharashtra should open our eyes to the need of scientific management of our Agriculture and educating our farming community. If the farmer survives , we survive or else we would be doomed.

At this time, may I mention that an Indian scientist Mr. Kirti Rathore working at the Texas A&M University of USA has developed a cotton crop strain, which produces cottonseed having very low gossypol content. Such a strain incorporated in Indian agriculture could do wonders for the cottonseed sector due to very high value addition.

Friends, our Association SEA had been following up with Policy makers to increase duty on imported oils which they finally accepted recently. The role played by our friend Pasha Patel in convincing the decision makers to see reason finally resulted in substantial increase in duties .This has helped raise prices of domestic oilseeds and should go a long way in bringing smile back on our oilseed farmers. Unfortunately, Cotton seed oil duties were not raised during this round of increase which is creating an anomalous situation and harming the interest of cottonseed farmers. We have represented to Govt. that this oversight be corrected immediately or else cotton oil imports would rise and affect our farmers .I am sure Pasha Patel Saheb would help in this matter as usual.

With these few words I would like Shri Sandeep Bajoria the President of AICOSCA to give you a deeper insight on the wondrous properties of cottonseed oil.

Thanking you,

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