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ICAR looks on technology transfers in big way

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About 43 patent applications were filed and two international and nine national patents were granted during 2011-12 to the institutes under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). Apart from that over 200 extant varieties were registered and granted protection and 400 and 36 applications were brought out in the *Plant Variety* Journal. Six copyrights were registered by the ICAR institutes to protect developed softwares. 'Weather Cock' software package, capable of agro-meteorological analysis to understand possible impacts of climate change on crop performance, was developed and registered. Trademark 'IISR' was granted to the Indian Institute for Spices Research, Kozhikode.

Dr S Ayyappan, secretary (Department of Agricultural Research and Education) and Director General, ICAR, revealed this on the role of his organization in revolutionizing agriculture, on eve of 64th republic day. "The unforeseen challenges of Indian agriculture are presenting uncommon opportunities that also seek unconventional approaches to harness the potentials and ICAR team is geared to take it head on. Over a dozen patents were granted signalling internalization of IPR culture in the Council. We surged ahead in developing farmer-friendly technologies, their assessment and refinement. Consultations with all stakeholders marked the year in our review and planning process," said Dr Ayyappan.

In the field of bio-technology and genomics, ICAR has played a central role in decoding of rice, potato and tomato genomes as partner of international consortium. Recently, India contributed sequencing of the gene-rich region of the tomato chromosome 5 (tomato has total twelve chromosomes) and provided further support to generate five-fold sequence coverage of the entire tomato genome by Next Generation Sequence (NGS) technology. The genomes of the cultivated tomato and its closest wild relative have been decoded by the Tomato Genome Consortium (TGC), a group of over 300 scientists from 14 countries.

ICAR is the apex scientific organization with robust agricultural research system for planning, promotion, execution and coordination of agricultural research and education in the country. ICAR with 99 institutes, 65 Agricultural Universities and 631 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) spread across the country constitutes one of the largest national agricultural research systems in the world.