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New huge cropping hopes



[Mowsam Hazarika](#) · 08:24, 13 Jun 2017 | Updated 13:19, 13 Jun 2017 · 8405 views · 2 min read



Crijaf Sona, a microbial formulation powder used for retting jute ([/taxonomy/term/1923](#)) fibres, was launched ([/taxonomy/term/1637](#)) in Guwahati on Monday.

The microbial formulation, developed by the Central Research Institute for Jute (/taxonomy/term/1923) and Allied Fibres (CRIJAF), under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, is expected to increase the income of farmers. Nearly 80,000 farmers are engaged in jute (/taxonomy/term/1923) cultivation in Assam and the annual production of jute (/taxonomy/term/1923) fibre is 1.3 lakh tonnes.

Retting is the process of extracting fibre from a plant's stem and one way of doing so is the use of micro-organisms and moisture. Water or microbial retting is an old but the most popular process in extracting fine bast fibres. Jute (/taxonomy/term/1923) stalks, after harvesting, are tied into bundles and submerged in soft running water. The stalk stays submerged in water for 20 days or less if the quality of jute (/taxonomy/term/1923) is better.

Crijaf Sona is applied between the bundles as (/taxonomy/term/2291) they are laid on top of each other. It helps to reduce the retting period by six to eight days, improves productivity by eight to (/taxonomy/term/2005)10 (/taxonomy/term/2005) per cent and to also improves quality. This leads to additional income of farmers, between Rs 9,000 and Rs 11,000, from one hectare of land as (/taxonomy/term/2291) fibre can be extracted easily from the whole plant. Labour cost is also reduced. It does not affect plant, animal (/taxonomy/term/2081), fish or human life.

Principal (/taxonomy/term/1978) scientist of the institute, Bijon Mazumdar, said: "Farmers will benefit from this product as (/taxonomy/term/2291) 3kg or 4 kg is required per bigha, entailing an investment of around Rs 220 but the return is in thousands. We have been using it on a trial basis in Nagaon, Morigaon (/taxonomy/term/101) and Barpeta and the result is very good. Its use will eliminate discolouring of the fibre."

Next2Nature, a jute (/taxonomy/term/1923)-diversified products manufacturing unit, has started manufacturing microbial formulation with support from Guwahati Biotech Park (GBP). Its CEO, Nishant Saraogi, said: "Initially we will manufacture around 1 lakh kg of Crijaf Sona this year. "



Mowsam Hazarika

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