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CCI'S Direct Interaction And Outreach With The Cotton Farmers Through An Exclusive Mobile App - "Cott-Ally"

Having completed an education in Economics at the University level, Dr. P. Alli Rani's career began with the Indian Economic Service (IES), Government of India. She was then selected for Indian Railway Accounts Service (IRAS) handling the Finances of the Indian Railways. She was then selected as Director Finance of CONCOR in 2009.

Dr. Rani joined the Cotton Corporation of India Ltd. as Chairman-cum-Managing Director in October 2017, a Company mandated to balance the demand and supply of quality cotton in the Indian economy.

The Cotton Corporation of India Limited (CCI) is a Public Sector Undertaking under the administrative control of Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. CCI operates in all the cotton growing States with more than 400 procurement centres under 17 procurement/sales branches. The major role of the CCI is to undertake Minimum Support Price (MSP) operations on behalf of the Government of India



GUEST COLUMN

Dr. P. Alli Rani,
Chairman-Cum-Managing Director,
The Cotton Corporation of India Ltd. (CCI)

when the prices of Fair Average Quality (FAQ) grade seed cotton fall below the MSP level. Besides MSP operations, CCI undertakes commercial purchase operations to fulfill the raw material requirement of the domestic textile industry particularly during lean season.

In step with the Government of India's digitalization drive and in order to have a direct interaction



and outreach with the cotton farmers, CCI has developed a mobile app - “Cott-Ally” exclusively for the cotton farmers.

Objective:

- To maximise the use of the digital media among the farmers to increase the reach of all government schemes especially in the cotton farming sector.
- To have direct interaction and outreach with the cotton farmers in their regional languages.



This app is an authentic platform to keep the cotton farmer informed about various information related to Minimum Support Price operations, tracking of payments status, etc. This mobile app has been developed in such a way, that each and every farmer can download and operate it easily in the regional language of their choice in addition to Hindi and English.

The various other features of “Cott-Ally” are as follows:

- Easy to operate in regional languages.
- MSP cotton rates state-wise, variety-wise and quality-wise can be seen.
- Farmers can track real time payment status of their kapas sold to CCI under MSP.
- Contact details of procurement centers opened by the CCI.
- Direct interaction with CCI through Live chat to resolve doubts & grievances, if any.
- General information on quality management of cotton crop and other related information.
- Can be downloaded from google play store for android mobile/app store for Apple mobile.

Key Achievements:

- Based on the positive response from cotton farmers and user-friendly features, “Cott-Ally” has won the following awards:
 - i) “Best Government initiative by a PSU” by Anthronik’s 1st edition of India Concord Summit & Awards 2018-Connecting people to PSUs.





ii) Standing conference of Public Enterprise (SCOPE) Corporate Communication Excellence Awards in the category "Effective use of Digital Media".

- About 50,000 farmers have downloaded the "Cot-Ally" App.
- Farmers have expressed their satisfaction with its user friendly features.
- "Cott-Ally" is expected to keep the cotton farmer informed and continuously updated of the steps taken by CCI for implementation of MSP and also to provide a platform where the farmer can access and communicate with CCI continuously.
- More than 12 lakh farmers are registered with CCI.
- the live chat feature has been developed in such a way, that whenever a farmer selects the State, live chat will be routed to the CCI Branch office of that particular state, so that the farmer can initiate his/her chat in the regional language of choice.

Scalability of "Cott-Ally" mobile App:

- Small farmers don't know where they have to sell their kapas, because of lack of knowledge. This mobile app is giving access

about the center details of CCI and reduce the involvement of commission agents.

- Farmers can view the details of nearest CCI branch office/ state-wise, district-wise purchase center along with the contact details of the associated center in-charge.
- Farmers can get general information with regards to quality management of their crop and other relevant information time to time from CCI.
- Farmer can get the news regarding crop treatment and advisories to tackle pests' attacks.
- Farmers will be updated with all the new notifications from the Government of India in respect of cotton.
- "Cott-Ally" may prove to be a tool to increase the awareness amongst farmers for adoption of best farm practices and will increase their economic conditions.

(The views expressed in this column are of the author and not that of Cotton Association of India)

Enhancing the Value of Indian Cotton

He has a B. Tech. from Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai and is the Founder Chairman and Managing Director of Technocraft Industries (India) Ltd; a Government recognised International Trading House. He has established hi-tech technology park with engineering design services facilities, employing nearly 300 engineers with office in Germany & USA. He has also established wholly owned subsidiary companies and warehouses in UK, Poland, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and manufacturing units in Murbad, Maharashtra and in Quanjiao, China. With over 40 years of experience in International Trade, he has been Director, Cotton Association of India, President Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), President - Confederation of Exporting Units (CEU), Managing Committee Member, Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI), President, Indo-Romanian Chamber of Commerce, Member, Board of Governors, IIT, Bombay, among others.

He has been awarded the National Trophy for Export Excellence from Prime Minister of India and the Distinguished Alumni Award from Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai

India is known to be an important cotton cultivation country for over the last 5000 years. Not only are we producing a very large quantity of cotton year after year, but we also produce very large variety of cotton. Indian cotton has played a major role in shaping the Indian economy. The Indian textile industry is predominately cotton based. The textile industry contributes about 5% of GDP, 14% of industrial production and 11% of total export earnings. It is the second largest employer in the country providing employment to over 51 million people directly and to 71 million people indirectly.

The value of textiles in economy can never be over emphasised.

The base of this major contributing factor to Indian economy is cotton. Improvement in the value of cotton will automatically lead to growth in economy and rural upliftment.

At present, Indian cotton suffers from two major issues, low yield and contamination. If these two issues are tackled, the value and brand of Indian cotton will go up significantly.

Yield of Indian cotton is one of the lowest in the world. Comparative figures of yield in major producing countries is given in the Table below:

10 Years Avg. Yield in Kg. /Hectare	
Country	Avg.
India	521
China	1410
USA	928
Pakistan	685
Uzbekistan	724
Brazil	1498
Burkina Faso	394
Mali	390
Turkmenistan	530
Turkey	1501
Cote D'Ivoire	422
Benin	429
Tanzania	221
Zambia	189

Sustained efforts are being made to improve the yield through better quality of seeds and agro practices. Some agro practices that are required to be implemented quickly are:-

- Crop rotation in cotton farming.
- Proper selection of seeds.
- Plant spacing including dense plantation.



GUEST COLUMN

Shri. Sharad Kumar Saraf
 Founder Chairman and Managing Director,
 Technocraft Industries (India) Ltd.

- Drip irrigation
- Timely use of fertilizers, insecticides, photosynthesizers.
- Proper soil preparation prior to sowing.

These are some of the practices that would lead to improvement in yield of cotton per hectare. For this, it is essential to educate and enlighten the cotton growers. There are some agencies that are putting in substantial efforts in bringing awareness among growers for improving the agro practices in order to enhance the yield. Unfortunately, Indian farmers still lack the knowledge and skill required to improve the yield.

In this connection, a mention must be made about the sustained efforts being made by several agencies working under Textile Mission of Cotton, a programme being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture. It is heartening to note that due to the sustained efforts made, several additional areas have been brought under cotton cultivation and yields has also gone up. These efforts need to be replicated across the country in order to increase the yield of cotton.

Indian cotton is acclaimed as one of the best quality cotton in the world in terms of physical parameters, but unfortunately, these qualities are eclipsed by the contamination that gets introduced right from the time of picking. While efforts are being made for improving the yield, very little is being done to educate the farmers regarding the need for clean cotton. As a result, Indian cotton is now considered to be one of the most contaminated cotton in the world. Spinning mills have to import cotton from US and Australia mostly because of the need for clean cotton. Clean cotton not only gives higher yield while spinning, but also results in cheaper spinning cost.

It is therefore advisable that ginning mills should become more proactive when it comes to contamination control. The TMC approved ginning mills which are controlling contamination are commanding a premium in the market. Some progressive gins have acquired a brand image and command loyalty from the customers. There is no reason why all the gins cannot be made responsible for contamination control. In fact, all the gins must have access to laboratories for proper grading and quality control of cotton. It may be worthwhile to consider setting up standards of acceptable limit of contamination, so that a cultivation of clean cotton is established.

At present, there is hardly any regulation of

ginning. The spinning mills have to do substantial quality checks before accepting the cotton consignment from the gins. The ginning mills can and should play a major role in controlling contamination.

It is well-known that Indian farms are fragmented and generally cotton is cultivated on one or two hectares in each farm. This gives a very poor economy of scale leading to very high cost of labour and agro practices. There is a need to find a solution to consolidate the farms.

Just as there are spinning mills in the co-Operative sectors, we need to establish large co-operative of growers as well. This is a popular model in USA where large number of farmers in a particular growing area form a co-operative which supports cultivation and ginning from end to end. In fact, these co-operatives also market their cotton, bringing in additional revenue directly to the cultivators. Such co-operatives will also lead to mechanisation in cultivation as well as modernisation in ginning.

The value of cotton can be further improved by finding new uses of cotton. We have four well established Textile Research Associations (NITRA, BTRA, ATIRA and SITRA). These are capable of developing new and innovative use of cotton e.g. BTRA is developing a special process to treat cotton fibres to make it oleophil and at the same time hydro repellent. Such cotton swabs can be used for absorbing oil from oil spills and in several engineering operations. Similarly, cotton being cellulose, it should be possible to convert low end cheaper varieties of cotton and cotton wastes into various cellulose products. New high-tech applications of cotton are possible with the growth and availability of specialised coatings and chemicals.

The Government and industry need to work together in order to enhance the value of Indian cotton. We are endowed with abundant and high-quality cotton. We also have a dedicated Ministry to look after the interest of textiles and make it work for the growth of the economy. If done in a proper manner, cotton can truly become white gold.

Courtesy: Cotton India 2018 (Aurangabad)

(The views expressed in this column are of the author and not that of Cotton Association of India)

Kites Fly High Over the CAI

To celebrate Makar Sankranti, many members of the cotton fraternity including CAI President Shri. Atul Ganatra, gathered at the Association on January 14, 2020. Young and old had fun flying kites, with the seniors easily beating the youngsters with their kite flying prowess! This was followed by high tea. Here are a few glimpses of the colourful event.



UPCOUNTRY SPOT RATES								(Rs./Qtl)					
Sr. No.	Growth	Grade Standard	Grade	Staple	Micronaire	Gravimetric Trash	Strength /GPT	Spot Rate (Upcountry) 2018-19 Crop January 2020					
								13th	14th	15th	16th	17th	18th
1	P/H/R	ICS-101	Fine	Below 22mm	5.0 – 7.0	4%	15	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	P/H/R (SG)	ICS-201	Fine	Below 22mm	5.0 – 7.0	4.5%	15	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	GUJ	ICS-102	Fine	22mm	4.0 – 6.0	13%	20	9139 (32500)	9139 (32500)	9139 (32500)	9111 (32400)	9111 (32400)	9111 (32400)
4	KAR	ICS-103	Fine	23mm	4.0 – 5.5	4.5%	21	9983 (35500)	9983 (35500)	9983 (35500)	9983 (35500)	9983 (35500)	9983 (35500)
5	M/M (P)	ICS-104	Fine	24mm	4.0 – 5.5	4%	23	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	P/H/ R (U) (SG)	ICS-202	Fine	27mm	3.5 – 4.9	4.5%	26	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	M/M(P)/ SA/TL	ICS-105	Fine	26mm	3.0 – 3.4	4%	25	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	P/H/R(U)	ICS-105	Fine	27mm	3.5 – 4.9	4%	26	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	M/M(P)/ SA/TL/G	ICS-105	Fine	27mm	3.0 – 3.4	4%	25	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	M/M(P)/ SA/TL	ICS-105	Fine	27mm	3.5 – 4.9	3.5%	26	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	P/H/R(U)	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.5 – 4.9	4%	27	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.7 – 4.5	3.5%	27	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	SA/TL	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.7 – 4.5	3.5%	27	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	GUJ	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.7 – 4.5	3%	27	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	R(L)	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 – 4.5	3.5%	28	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 – 4.5	3.5%	28	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	SA/TL/K	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 – 4.5	3%	28	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	GUJ	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 – 4.5	3%	28	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	30mm	3.7 – 4.5	3.5%	29	-	-	-	-	-	-
20	SA/TL/K/O	ICS-105	Fine	30mm	3.7 – 4.5	3%	29	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	31mm	3.7 – 4.5	3%	30	-	-	-	-	-	-
22	SA/TL/ K / TN/O	ICS-105	Fine	31mm	3.7 – 4.5	3%	30	-	-	-	-	-	-
23	SA/TL/K/ TN/O	ICS-106	Fine	32mm	3.5 – 4.2	3%	31	-	-	-	-	-	-
24	M/M(P)	ICS-107	Fine	34mm	3.0 - 3.8	4%	33	-	-	-	-	-	-
25	K/TN	ICS-107	Fine	34mm	3.0 - 3.8	3.5%	33	-	-	-	-	-	-

(Note: Figures in bracket indicate prices in Rs./Candy)

UPCOUNTRY SPOT RATES								(Rs./Qtl)					
Standard Descriptions with Basic Grade & Staple in Millimetres based on Upper Half Mean Length [By law 66 (A) (a) (4)]								Spot Rate (Upcountry) 2019-20 Crop January 2020					
Sr. No.	Growth	Grade Standard	Grade	Staple	Micronaire	Gravimetric Trash	Strength /GPT	13th	14th	15th	16th	17th	18th
1	P/H/R	ICS-101	Fine	Below 22mm	5.0 - 7.0	4%	15	10320 (36700)	10264 (36500)	10264 (36500)	10264 (36500)	10264 (36500)	10292 (36600)
2	P/H/R (SG)	ICS-201	Fine	Below 22mm	5.0 - 7.0	4.5%	15	10461 (37200)	10404 (37000)	10404 (37000)	10404 (37000)	10404 (37000)	10432 (37100)
3	GUJ	ICS-102	Fine	22mm	4.0 - 6.0	13%	20	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	KAR	ICS-103	Fine	23mm	4.0 - 5.5	4.5%	21	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	M/M (P)	ICS-104	Fine	24mm	4.0 - 5.5	4%	23	9983 (35300)	9926 (35300)	9926 (35300)	9926 (35300)	9926 (35300)	9983 (35500)
6	P/H/R (U) (SG)	ICS-202	Fine	27mm	3.5 - 4.9	4.5%	26	11079 (39400)	11051 (39300)	10967 (39000)	10826 (38500)	10911 (38800)	10967 (39000)
7	M/M(P)/SA/TL	ICS-105	Fine	26mm	3.0 - 3.4	4%	25	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	P/H/R(U)	ICS-105	Fine	27mm	3.5 - 4.9	4%	26	11200 (39900)	11192 (39800)	11107 (39500)	10967 (39000)	11051 (39300)	11107 (39500)
9	M/M(P)/SA/TL/G	ICS-105	Fine	27mm	3.0 - 3.4	4%	25	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	M/M(P)/SA/TL	ICS-105	Fine	27mm	3.5 - 4.9	3.5%	26	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	P/H/R(U)	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.5 - 4.9	4%	27	11248 (40000)	11220 (39900)	11164 (39700)	11023 (39200)	11107 (39500)	11192 (39800)
12	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.7 - 4.5	3.5%	27	11276 (40100)	11220 (39900)	11164 (39700)	11079 (39400)	11135 (39600)	11220 (39900)
13	SA/TL	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.7 - 4.5	3.5%	27	11304 (40200)	11248 (40000)	11164 (39700)	11107 (39500)	11164 (39700)	11248 (40000)
14	GUJ	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.7 - 4.5	3%	27	11332 (40300)	11276 (40100)	11276 (40100)	11220 (39900)	11276 (40100)	11332 (40300)
15	R(L)	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 - 4.5	3.5%	28	11332 (40300)	11276 (40100)	11192 (39800)	11079 (39400)	11135 (39600)	11220 (39900)
16	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 - 4.5	3.5%	28	11445 (40700)	11389 (40500)	11332 (40300)	11248 (40000)	11304 (40200)	11360 (40400)
17	SA/TL/K	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 - 4.5	3%	28	11501 (40900)	11445 (40700)	11360 (40400)	11304 (40200)	11360 (40400)	11417 (40600)
18	GUJ	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 - 4.5	3%	28	11445 (40700)	11389 (40500)	11389 (40500)	11332 (40300)	11389 (40500)	11445 (40700)
19	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	30mm	3.7 - 4.5	3.5%	29	11557 (41100)	11501 (40900)	11445 (40700)	11360 (40400)	11417 (40600)	11473 (40800)
20	SA/TL/K/O	ICS-105	Fine	30mm	3.7 - 4.5	3%	29	11642 (41400)	11585 (41200)	11501 (40900)	11445 (40700)	11501 (40900)	11557 (41100)
21	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	31mm	3.7 - 4.5	3%	30	11838 (42100)	11782 (41900)	11782 (41900)	11726 (41700)	11782 (41900)	11838 (42100)
22	SA/TL/K / TN/O	ICS-105	Fine	31mm	3.7 - 4.5	3%	30	11923 (42400)	11867 (42200)	11867 (42200)	11838 (42100)	11895 (42300)	11923 (42400)
23	SA/TL/K/ TN/O	ICS-106	Fine	32mm	3.5 - 4.2	3%	31	12401 (44100)	12345 (43900)	12345 (43900)	12260 (43600)	12317 (43800)	12373 (44000)
24	M/M(P)	ICS-107	Fine	34mm	3.0 - 3.8	4%	33	15719 (55900)	15663 (55700)	15663 (55700)	15607 (55500)	15663 (55700)	15719 (55900)
25	K/TN	ICS-107	Fine	34mm	3.0 - 3.8	3.5%	33	16253 (57800)	16197 (57600)	16197 (57600)	16141 (57400)	16197 (57600)	16253 (57800)

(Note: Figures in bracket indicate prices in Rs./Candy)