

**RFRI, JORHAT CONDUCTS FIELD DEMONSTRATION CUM
AWARENESS PROGRAMME ON BIOLOGICAL CONTROL OF PESTS
AND DISEASES**

A 'Field Demonstration cum Awareness Programme' on eco-friendly management of pest and disease problems of *Gmelina arborea* Roxb. and *Aquilaria malaccensis* Lamk. was conducted at Medicinal and Aromatic Plant Garden, Panbari, Golaghat (Assam) of Assam Forest Department on September 23, 2015. Twenty five participants including students, forest officials and farmers participated in the programme. Main aim of the Programme was to create awareness about the biocontrol potential of entomopathogenic fungi and *Trichoderma* spp.

Shri R. Rajarishi, Scientist-C and Dr. Shailesh Pandey, Scientist-C highlighted the importance of biological control to tackle serious pests and diseases in forest nurseries and raising quality planting stock. Live demonstration for preparation of spray material of *Beauveria bassiana* and enrichment of vermicompost with *Trichoderma* in a proper and scientific manner was shown to the participants. Shri Rajarishi shared his experience on the use of *Beauveria bassiana* to manage *Craspedonta leayana*, a serious insect pest of *Gmelina arborea*.

Dr. Pandey strongly emphasized on the conservation of *Aquilaria malaccensis*, an endangered but highly demanded tree species. Furthermore, he highlighted the importance of *Aquilaria*, owing to its highly priced resinous wood and wood oil (*Agar oil*). The species has come to the risk of extinction due to large scale exploitation from natural forests. As a result, it has been included in Appendix II of the *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* (CITES) and considered 'critically endangered' in India. In this context, *Trichoderma* treated *Aquilaria* seedlings were planted by all the participants under the guidance of Dr. Pandey and Shri Rajarishi to create awareness on community involved tree plantation activities. The training programme enhanced the knowledge and skill of the participants to take up relevant farming activities in their villages by taking advantage of the expertise available with the Rain Forest Research Institute (RFRI).

The training concluded with vote of thanks by Shri Somendra Saikia, Forest Range Officer, Social Forestry Range, Bokakhat. The programme was supported by Social Forestry Division, Golaghat and Eastern Wildlife Division, Bokakhat of Assam Forest Department.

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Glimpses of Field Demonstration cum Awareness Programme



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