The **Sugarcane R&D Workshop of Tamil Nadu & Puducherry**, a unique outreach initiative from ICAR - Sugarcane Breeding Institute, is being organized every year since 1981. It focuses on the problems of the sugarcane farmers and Sugar Industry and evolves appropriate strategies to improve the sugarcane productivity in the state.

Shri M.C. Sampath, Hon'ble Minister for Industries, Govt. of Tamil Nadu inaugurated the **Golden Jubilee** Sugarcane R&D Workshop of Tamil Nadu & Puducherry, on 23 October 2019. Releasing the “Compendium of Research Articles & Status Papers”, Shri Sampath appreciated ICAR- Sugarcane Breeding Institute for developing Co 11015, a promising high-sucrose variety suitable for Tamil Nadu. He hoped that this variety will help in improving the sugar recovery in the state, which has dropped significantly in the recent years. Shri Doraikannu, Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture, Govt. of Tamil Nadu, in his address listed out the measures taken by the Government of Tamil Nadu for the sugarcane farmers of the state and highlighted the benefits of PMFBY (PM Fasal Bima Yojana) for sugarcane farmers.

Smt. Reeta Harish Thakkar, IAS., Commissioner of Sugar, Govt. of Tamil Nadu & Managing Director, Tamil Nadu Sugar Corporation (TASCO) in her Presidential address appreciated the efforts taken by the public-sector and co-operative sugar mills in multiplying the seed material of the newly released variety, Co 11015.

Dr Bakshi Ram, Director, ICAR-Sugarcane Breeding Institute in his Theme address mentioned that Sugarcane agriculture in Tamil Nadu has been facing several challenges for the past five – six years, poor rainfall being the major one. Sugar production in Tamil Nadu is expected to be around 7.5 lakh tonnes in 2019-20 season as against 8.60 lakh tonnes which is expected to be produced in 2018-19 season. Co 11015, which has been identified for commercial cultivation in Tamil Nadu, has been found to be capable of accumulating high sugar content by 240 days, steadily increasing to 360 days. Cultivation of such promising varieties would go a long way in improving the sugar production of Tamil Nadu which has been seeing a sharp decline in the last few years compared to other sugar producing states, he added.

This two-day workshop discussed wide-row spacing with intercropping, reviewed the mechanization efforts in the region and discussed the performance of new cane varieties, besides assessing the current varietal position in sugar factories. Varietal trials including AICRP on sugarcane and Sugarcane seed nursery programme were also discussed in the workshop and recommendations were drawn on these technical sessions for future action. Earlier, Dr D Puthira Prathap, Principal Scientist, ICAR-Sugarcane Breeding Institute presented the ATR (Action Taken Report) on the recommendations of the 49th Workshop of Tamil Nadu & Puducherry.

The Cheyyyar Co-op Sugar mills Ltd., the host of this workshop, had arranged an exhibition of recent and popular sugarcane varieties, sugarcane machinery including harvesters, drip irrigation technologies and many other agricultural inputs at the venue.
About 300 delegates comprising scientists from ICAR-Sugarcane Breeding Institute, Coimbatore and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore, Cane development Department personnel from various sugar factories of Tamil Nadu & Puducherry, officers from the Department of Agriculture, Directorate of Sugar and other Cane Development organizations in Tamil Nadu & Puducherry participated in the Workshop.

Tamil Nadu Industries Minister speaks

Varietal exhibition
Director, SBI at Varietal exhibition

Workshop Compendium release