

Report of MGMG Team, ICAR- DOGR, Pune

Date: 8 May 2026

As part of the Intensive Awareness Campaign for Adoption of Science Based Nutrient and other Input Management/Mera Gaon Mera Gaurav (MGMG) programme, a scientific team visited Pondewadi, Tal. Ambegaon, District Pune to sensitize farmers on judicious use of fertilisers and other inputs using science-based technologies and tools.

The team conducted an awareness meeting with 40 participants including 29 women farmers. During the session, the team highlighted various technologies developed by ICAR-DOGR and their specific benefits for enhancing onion production. The team emphasised the judicious use of fertilisers and explained the various problems such as soil degradation, increased pest susceptibility, health hazards and environmental problems caused by the excessive application of chemical fertilisers. Information was provided to the farmers regarding the onion cultivation explaining the importance of choosing between the bulb-to-seed method, which ensures varietal purity through bulb selection, or the quicker seed-to-seed method for high-quality production. An isolation distance of 1,000 metres to prevent cross-pollination and ensure cool temperatures during the flowering stage was advised to farmers to gain success in seed production. The farmers were also advised to adopt one village one variety concept in seed production. For bulb crops, mulching with black polyethene or biodegradable films was recommended to suppress weeds, thereby reducing weedicide/pesticide applications.

To move toward more sustainable farming, farmers were advised to replace heavy synthetic NPK fertilizers and pesticides with integrated nutrient management practices. It was advised to use organic alternatives like farmyard manure, vermicompost, and bio-fertilizers such as *Azotobacter* and Phosphate Solubilizing Bacteria (PSB), which improve soil health while maintaining bulb yield. Pre-harvest and post-harvest management practices, such as selecting the right variety, nursery raising by seed priming with *Trichoderma* spp., drip irrigation at regular intervals, and proper curing after harvesting, were also explained to reduce storage losses in onions. As farmers commonly use chemical powders to reduce storage losses in onions, it was advised not to use any chemicals during onion storage.

