

## **Stakeholders trained on maize hybrid seed production in Jalpaiguri, West Bengal**

An "One Day Training cum Workshop on Hybrid Maize Seed Production" was organized at Mohitnagar, Jalpaiguri on 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2019. On this occasion Shri PK Mandal, Managing Director of West Bengal State Seed Corporation urged to enhance the activity of maize hybrid seed production in the state. He assured procurement of hybrid seeds by WBSSCL. Speaking on the occasion Dr. Sujay Rakshit, Director ICAR-Indian Institute of Maize Research, Ludhiana told that hybrid maize seed production in West Bengal will help in reducing seed cost for the whole region including Bihar, West Bengal and NEH region. This will make seed availability assured in this region. He highlighted that hybrid seed production can be a promising alternative to diversify boro rice-based cropping system and remunerative option for doubling farmers' income as envisaged by the honourable Prime Minister, while saving precious water resources used in Boro rice production. The seed production of hybrid maize started in 2006 in West Bengal, which reached upto 1040 MT by 2013-14. In 2018-19, the production again increased to 544 MT, which included seeds of eight public sector hybrids of ICAR-IIMR and AICRP on maize centres. The productivity was 2.0 to 2.5 t/ha which is rated very good and can provide a good option for alternate seed production site for catering need of NEH states and other parts of the country. Though seed production in North Bengal is at nascent stage, it holds immense potential to supplement the maize seeds production taking place in South Bengal (Nadia district). The stakeholders were trained on important aspects of maize hybrid seed production methodologies like maize biology, hybrid seed production guidelines, crop management for higher yield and disease-insect management. The programme was jointly organised by the ICAR-Indian Institute of Maize Research, Ludhiana; State Department of West Bengal, and West Bengal State Seed Corporation Ltd. Kolkata. The training was attended by 38 stakeholders from seed producing organisations, state seed production agency, UBKV scientist and KVK personnel from the districts of Malda, Murshidabad, Uttar & Dakshina Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar.