

## **ICAR-CCRI Scientists Conduct Comprehensive Survey of Sweet Orange Orchards in Nalgonda District, Telangana**

As requested by Government of Telangana, a team of scientists from the ICAR-Central Citrus Research Institute (ICAR-CCRI), Nagpur, Maharashtra conducted an extensive survey of Sathgudi sweet orange orchards in Nalgonda District of Telangana from 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 2024.

The sweet orange farmers of Nalgonda District are grappling with significant challenges, particularly poor fruit size, fruit drop, and low yields. Non-availability of quality planting material emerged as another critical issue impacting the productivity of these orchards. To address these problems, the ICAR-CCRI scientists conducted a comprehensive survey across the 15 orchards. During the survey, the scientists collected soil and leaf samples from different orchards. They observed several biotic stresses, including dry root rot, citrus greening, viral diseases, and infestations by pests such as green and red mites and fruit flies. The team also identified other factors such as nutrient deficiencies, poor calcareous soils and inadequate orchard management practices in some areas.

The team from ICAR-CCRI included Dr. Naresh Meshram (Senior Scientist, Entomology), Dr. A. Thiruganavel (Senior Scientist, Horticulture), Dr. Darshan M. Kadam (Scientist, Horticulture), and Dr. Kiran Kumar K. (Scientist, Nematology). They were accompanied by Dr. T. Suresh Kumar (Principal Scientist, Horticulture) and Dr. K. Venkata Ramesh (Scientist, Plant Pathology) from Sri Konda Laxman Telangana State Horticultural University (SKLTSHU), Hyderabad, Telangana. Also joining them were officials from the Department of Horticulture, including Sh. B. Babu (Joint Director of Horticulture) and Sri V. V. S. Saibaba (District Horticultural and Sericulture Officer, Nalgonda District), along with other district horticulture officers.

The collected samples will undergo detailed analysis at ICAR-CCRI to confirm these preliminary observations and provide more insights into the root causes of the issues faced by sweet orange farmers in Nalgonda District. The findings are expected to guide future interventions to enhance citrus production in the region.

It may be mentioned here that another expert team from ICAR-CCRI, Nagpur also visited Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh recently in the month of July, 2024 and guided the citrus farmers of the region on recent scientific package of practices to be followed for better yield and productivity on a sustainable basis.

