Sugarbeet seed production program in collaboration with USDA –ARS

Vasantdada Sugar Institute trying to promote sugarbeet as supplementary crop to sugarcane in tropical region. Seed is an important input, for which presently, we have to depend on European seed producing companies. Possibility of development of indigenous sugarbeet seed was discussed with Dr Imad Eujayl, a scientist from USDA-ARS in USA and learnt that, sugarbeet seed can be produced in tropical region at VSI with the technical help from USDA-ARS. Breeding Material Transfer Agreement was signed between VSI and USDA-ARS Accordingly, seeds of ten sugarbeet breeding lines received and sowing in portrays under greenhouse condition was done on 22nd September 2020 with the hands of Shri Shivajirao Deshmukh, Director General VSI. These plants after 12 weeks were shifted to cold room at 4-degree C for 16 weeks to induce Vernalization and bolting required for flowering.

Climate resilient sugarbeet based cropping system model under rainfed condition- United Nations- FAO- NRAA

Considering less water requirement & crop period, the Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations sanctioned a project to VSI for developing sugarbeet based cropping system in rainfed area in western Maharashtra in association with National Rainfed Area Authority, New Delhi. Under this project two seed drills for sowing of sole sugarbeet and intercropping in sugarcane were developed by VSI and used for sowing. Sowing was done at the farmers' fields in the operational area of Baramati Agro Ltd Dist. Pune. After harvesting sugarbeet processed in 100 TBD pilot plant for production of ethanol.

MTA with ICRISAT for evaluation of extra early pigeon pea varieties under sugarcane based cropping system

In India, Pigeon pea (Cajanus cajan L.) pulse crop being cultivated in arid to semiarid region as sole and strip crop during kharif season, require 6-7 months for harvesting due to which its intercropping in sugarcane was not feasible. International Crops Research Institute for the Semiarid Tropics (ICRISAT), Hyderabad developed two super early pigeon pea varieties (ICPL 11255 & ICPL 11301), matures within 90- 105 days suitable for sowing in Kharif & summer seasons. Considering the advantage of early maturity, Filler trials was sown during Kharif & Summer season showed that the pigeon pea variety ICPL 11255 matures within 100-105 DAS, yields about 10.2 quintals per hectare with average plant height of 95 cm and suitable for intercropping in sugarcane.