



# Field Demonstrations

## What is a Field Demonstration?

Field demonstrations validate and/or demonstrate technologies in target areas in farmer's fields under farmer's conditions.

## Why a Field Demonstration?

Field demonstrations

- raise awareness and interest about new technologies, and/or
- show the benefit of a new technology and help convince farmers to try it.

## Establishing field demonstrations

**Step 1. Meet real needs** Identify important problems and their true causes and work with farmers to identify viable options.

**Step 2. Validate or demonstrate?** New practices may need to be validated under local conditions in researcher-led field demonstrations. Use validation results and farmer feedback to implement multiple farmer-led demonstrations.

**Step 3. Establish the demonstration.** What makes a good field demonstration?

- **Discussion.** Discuss with and collect input from farmers, extension and researchers about what should be demonstrated and how.
- **Access.** Ensure easy access and good visibility of the site. Fields should be visible from the road and have a sign indicating what is being done and who can be contacted for further information;
- **Compare.** Demonstrations should clearly show the benefit of a new practice. Demonstrations beside a typical field make for good comparisons.
- **Plot size.** Make plots large enough to be believable (e.g., minimum 10 m x 10 m.)
- **Representative.** Fields should be representative of the target area.
- **Collaborators.** Work with willing collaborators who contribute something to establishing the site. This indicates commitment to the activity.



Field demonstrations are critical in raising awareness

## Step 3..... (continued)

- **Sign.** Post a sign showing what's being tested and who to contact
- **Field visits.** Visit fields regularly to note developments.
- **Feedback.** Accept, note and learn from both positive and negative comments.
- **Risk.** It may be necessary to guarantee farmers any shortfall in yield, but avoid paying unless farmers are asked to do extra.

## Step 4. Conduct the field day.

- **Field visit.** Check the sites shortly before the Field day.
- **Refreshment.** Where necessary, provide some refreshment.
- **Transport.** Plan whether farmers will move to different sites and if so, how?
- **Ease of understanding.** Use words and terms your audience will understand. Hold general discussions in areas where all participants are comfortable (e.g., in the shade) and where they can see and hear. If necessary provide a portable loudspeaker.
- **Involve collaborators.** Allow farmers to make observations and comments.
- **Feedback.** Use field days to informally (and in a non-threatening manner) collect feedback on technology and farmer needs—what do they like? What are their farming needs? Would they use the technology—if not, why?, etc. Accept questions outside the area of technology being tested.
- **Criticism.** Accept criticism of the technology – do not stifle this, as the farmers need to see you are genuinely interested in their perspectives. Use such feedback to improve how the technology is implemented or presented.