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## Best sowing time for rice crop in Island ecosystem

**SRI VIJAYA PURAM, MAY 27/--/** Ensuring timely sowing is critical to achieving optimal yield in rice, especially



under the unique climatic conditions of the island ecosystem. To address this, ICAR-CIARI is conducting an experiment for determining Suitable Cropping Window and Varieties in Rice-based Cropping System under Island Ecosystem at Bloomsdale Farm. Three rice varieties namely CARI Dhan 5, CARI Dhan 6, and Gayatri were transplanted across four different sowing windows: 1st June, 15th June, 1st July and 15th July to evaluate yield performance and agronomic traits across these varied planting dates.

From the initial observation the following key findings were derived from the experiment:

Early sowing (1st June) consistently outperformed later dates in grain yield (4.15 t/ha) and key yield attributes such as

harvest index and panicle weight. Among the varieties, CARI Dhan 6 emerged as the top performer with the highest grain yield and harvest index followed by Gayatri and CARI Dhan 5.

The interaction between sowing time and variety revealed that CARI Dhan 6 sown on 1st June yielded the highest compared to other combinations. Delayed sowing beyond mid-June resulted in yield decline, likely due to waterlogging, increased pest and disease pressure (e.g., Gundhi bug, false smut), and rainfall at the time of harvest disrupting crop maturity.

Based on the initial study the following advisory may be adopted by the farmers for getting more profitability in the paddy cultivation. Optimum sowing window: 1st to 15th June for maximizing productivity in rice. Preferred variety: CARI Dhan 6 for its superior yield and adaptability.

Delaying sowing beyond 1st July can significantly reduce yield due to adverse climatic conditions. As the monsoon season has already commenced in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, farmers are requested to procure good quality seeds from ICAR-CIARI and start preparing the land for nursery raising to enhance rice productivity under the island ecosystem.