

Dr. Gurcharan Singh Kalkat

Dr. Gurcharan Singh Kalkat, a reputed Agricultural Scientist, played an important role in the agricultural development of the country. He can rightfully claim a share in the development of green revolution in the State of Punjab.

2. Born on 17th June 1926, Dr. Kalkat obtained his B.Sc. Agriculture degree from Punjab Agriculture College, Lyallpur (now Pakistan) in 1947. He obtained his Masters degree in Agriculture from Punjab University, Solan (India) in 1956. As a Rockefeller Fellow, he joined the Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, USA in January, 1957 and completed his Ph.D. in Agricultural Zoology Entomology in December 1958.

3. He joined as Deputy Director, Agriculture, Punjab (India) in 1960 and was appointed as Director, Agriculture in 1971. He developed a system of cooperation with Punjab Agricultural University, both at the HQ and at the field level which ensured coordinated approach to agricultural development and speedy flow of technical information to the agricultural field staff and the farmers. He also established coordination with the Punjab State Cooperative Marketing Federation and field level cooperatives to ensure timely storage and supply of inputs and provide necessary credit to the farmers. He was appointed as Agriculture Commissioner, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India (1973-1978). At the national level, he coordinated various agricultural development programmes of the States, coordinated with Indian Council of Agriculture Research for the agriculture programme and National Seeds Corporation for requisite production of seeds of varieties/hybrids needed for different regions of the country.

4. Dr. Kalkat worked as Senior Agriculturist with World Bank Stationed at Washington DC, USA and worked on agriculture and rural development programmes of Nigeria and Ghana. He also worked as Vice Chancellor of the Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana from April 1988 to March, 2001. He identified the priority areas to find the problems of farmers and farming in consultation with experts in Agricultural economics and farm scientists.

5. Dr. Kalkat has been working as first Chairman of the Punjab State Farmers Commission since June 2005, and advising the State Government on various policy issues concerning farmers and farming, with emphasis on the introduction on new techniques to conserve ground water and also improve the income of small farmers.

The Commission got conducted studies on 1) “Rural suicides in Punjab” and suggested measures to mitigate the distress of the Affected families. 2) Flow to credit and indebtedness of farmers. 3) Agriculture and Rural Development in Punjab-transforming from crisis to growth and 4) Fall in Water table in central Punjab-How Serious?

Dr Kalkat has been awarded Padma Bhushan Award in March, 2007.