



Dr. G.S. Shekhawat

(b. July 9, 1941)

Dr. Girdhari Singh Shekhawat was born on 9th July, 1941 at Turkiawas, Rajasthan. After his graduation from the University of Udaipur in the year 1964, he joined Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi for Post Graduation and obtained M. Sc. (Agriculture) in the year 1966 and Ph. D. under the guidance of Dr. D.N. Srivastava in the year 1970 with Gold medals. He did Post Doctoral research for nine months (January-September 1976) at Institute of Phytopathology, George Augustus University, Gottingen, West Germany and again for nine months (November, 1984 to July, 1985) at Scottish Crop Research Institute, Dundee, Scotland. Dr. Shekhawat started his career as Assistant Bacteriologist at Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi in the year 1968 and continued in that position till 1972. He joined ICAR-CPRI, Shimla as Scientist S-2 in July, 1972 and became Head of the Plant Pathology Division in October 1975 at a young age of 34. Since then, he played a pivotal role in development of this institute and became its Director in November 1995. He was President of Indian Potato Association (1993-94, 1998-99, 2000-2001); Indian Phytopathological Society (2001); Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Indian Potato Association (1983-84); Fellow of the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences; and Distinguished Fellow of Indian Potato Association. He was also member of several national and international committees like ICAR Scientific Panel on Plant Pathology; Central Sub-Committee for Crop Standards, Govt. of India; Steering Committee for Global Initiative on late blight, CIP, Lima Peru; Working Group to Formulate Future Work Plan on Bacterial Diseases of Potato, CIP, Lima, Peru; Working Group for Identification of Future Lines of Work on Bacterial Wilt, North Carolina State University, USA. He organized the Global Conference on Potato in December, 1999, an International Workshop on Bacterial Wilt of Potato in 1993. After his retirement in July 2001, he became Scientist Emeritus of ICAR and conducted research at Rajasthan Agricultural University, Jodhpur. Dr. Shekhawat expired on January 9, 2006. Dr. Shekhawat did pioneering work on etiology, epidemiology, histopathology and resistance of bacterial canker of mango, bacterial leaf streak and blight of rice at IARI, New Delhi. After joining Central Potato Research Institute, Shimla, he initiated fundamental research on bacterial diseases of potato and over the year established a state-of-the-art bacteriology laboratory. From this laboratory he pursued path-breaking experiments on etiology, epidemiology, diagnostic and management of bacterial wilt, soft rot, common scab and mycoplasma like organisms causing diseases in potato. Dr. Shekhawat was a strong believer of research with a purpose. He crystallized scattered experimental evidences into efficient disease management schedules, which are today's benchmark recommendations. The inherent talent of Dr. Shekhawat came to its fulfillment in research management. As Director ICAR-CPRI, he contributed immensely for consolidation of resources, modernization of research facilities, human resource development, development of research and linkages, development of improved potato varieties, development of processing technologies, crop modeling, refinements in seed production system etc. Dr. Shekhawat is a glaring example of "simplicity is the best policy" for achieving excellence in every facets of human endeavour. Central Potato Research Institute received best ICAR institution award in its inaugural year, which is a mere reflection of his managerial skill. Dr. Shekhawat was awarded IARI-Golden Jubilee Medal for M.Sc. and Sunitabala Raychaudhary Medal, 1970 for securing highest grade point at IARI, New Delhi. He

received Dr. Ramanujam Memorial Award in 1998; Dr Mundkur Memorial Award in 1997; Prof. N. Prasad Memorial Award in 2000; ICAR-CPRI Golden Jubilee Year Award in 2000; and above all, the coveted Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Award of Indian Council of Agricultural Research in the year 2000 for his life time achievement on potato research. He published more than 250 scientific articles in national and international journals and edited five books.