"Developing a user-centered website on sugarcane production technologies"

Sugarcane Breeding Institute
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CaneInfo: connecting stakeholders in sugarcane farming with knowledge

What is CaneInfo?

CaneInfo is a free-to-access website that provides a platform for sugarcane grower, cane development personnel, scientists and students to share information and knowledge on sugarcane.

This website is the culmination of a two-year research project entitled, “Developing a user-centered website on sugarcane production technologies” funded by the Department of Scientific & Industrial Research, Ministry of Science & Technology, Govt. of India during 2008-10. This is a pioneering initiative by any public-funded sugarcane research institution in the country.

Why CaneInfo?

This information age has prompted the Sugarcane extension system in our country to shift from being predominantly print-focused. The present system has its obvious disadvantages such as being costly, time-consuming, outdated information, limited search options etc., Keeping this in view, CaneInfo has been developed by Sugarcane Breeding Institute to address these issues and cater to the information needs of the stakeholders in sugarcane farming. CaneInfo is unique in that it is completely “user-centered”.

How CaneInfo was developed?

Recognizing that only by bringing the user in to the development process could the utility of the website be maximized, a series of Focus Groups were conducted among the target audience to identify their information needs systematically. This unique feature makes CaneInfo stand apart from other websites. Before designing the website, the CaneInfo team explored the users’ expectations from the proposed website, their attitude towards internet, their computer usage, the problems they experience in obtaining digital information and their content priorities in sugarcane production. A prototype of the website was created with this information and was demonstrated to the target audience for evaluation. All these efforts culminated in the dynamic and demand-driven website CaneInfo.
How to use CaneInfo?

_CaneInfo_ is available in http://caneinfo.nic.in. First time users can use the Site map or the Search option provided in the site for easy navigation. Icons have been used predominantly in the site to facilitate low-literate users. Becoming a member of the _CaneInfo_ Club, by way of completing a simple registration process, provides you access to several Special features of the site.

Modules in CaneInfo

A few modules available in _CaneInfo_ are listed here:

Ask a Specialist

Through this module, users will be able to post questions of their concern under specific categories. The query will be directed to the concerned expert in the website project team to provide the answer. The answer is provided within a time-frame and is posted over the site. Answers are sent to users by email, and recorded in the site for everyone to access as a searchable compilation of Q & A.

OFAS (Online Fertilizer Advisory Service)

This fertilizer recommendation expert system provides the cane growers / extension personnel to get a suitable fertilizer recommendation for sugarcane. Once the STL values are entered as per the test report, the expert system gives recommendations on the quantity of lime, organic manures and chemical fertilizers.

Online Directory of research institutions and sugar factories

This application provides the location-wise name, address and contact details of sugar factories and sugarcane research stations.

Discussion Forum (Bulletin board)

The objective of this forum is to provide a facility for the cane development personnel and cane growers to encourage sharing of information through open discussions on various sugarcane related issues of current interest. Through this board, users will
be able to debate on field problems and possible solutions and may get the best practices of others. The forum is moderated for effective monitoring.

**Suggest a Variety**
This application provides a list of suitable varieties with suitable user inputs such as state, zone, tolerance/resistance to various factors such as red rot, soil conditions etc., By using this module, the farmer will get information on specific varieties suited best to his needs.

**Publications/Bibliographic database**
The publications in various languages (at present in English, Hindi and Tamil) and categories are placed in corresponding sections. Research abstracts of Sugarcane scientists have also been included.

**Multimedia Gallery**
This module provides digital images and short videos relating to sugarcane technologies such as pest/disease/variety/machinery for public viewing.

**What’s Available?**
This module provides the cane growers/sugar factories/govt.departments with information of the outlets for inputs, including availability of seed material. They will also be encouraged to provide the labour availability/requirement status, besides information on availability of micro irrigation systems, harvesters, plant protection chemicals etc.,

**What’s new?**
This module gives the latest information about sugarcane related events in the country.

**News Feeds**
This module syndicates the information related to sugarcane in areas of interests like research, cultivation aspects, sugar prices etc. in a single location using RSS feeds.

**Streaming of Video Programmes**
The video content on sugarcane production technologies are streamed through Canelnio.
CaneInfo Team

Project Advisory Committee

CaneInfo was effectively monitored and guided by the following Project Advisory Committee headed by the Director of Sugarcane Breeding Institute.

1. **Dr. N. Vijayan Nair**  
   Director, Sugarcane Breeding Institute  
   **Chairman**

2. **Advisor, DSIR,**  
   Ministry of Science & Technology, Gol  
   **Co-chairman**

3. **Dr. Subhash Shinde**  
   Principal Scientist & Head,  
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   Vasantdada Sugar Institute, Pune  
   **Member**

4. **Shri. Vimal Kumar Varun**  
   DSIR, Ministry of Science & Technology, Gol  
   **Member**

5. **Mr. M. Sabesh,** Scientist (Sr. Scale)  
   Central Institute of Cotton Research  
   Regional Station (ICAR), Coimbatore  
   **Member**

6. **Shri. E. Manivel**  
   Deputy General Manager(Factory)  
   Bannari amman Sugars Limited, Sathyamangalam  
   **Member**

7. **Shri. R. Krishnan**  
   Progressive Farmer, Erode District  
   **Member**

8. **Dr. D. Puthira Prathap**  
   Senior Scientist & Principal Investigator  
   CaneInfo Project  
   Sugarcane Breeding Institute, Coimbatore  
   **Member-secretary**

**Project Investigators**

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Senior Scientist

**Co-Principal Investigators**

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- **Dr. P. Rakkiyappan**  
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- **Dr. J. Srikanth**  
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