

Rashidpura Pyaz (Sanwaloda Selection): Drought tolerant and high yielding onion variety**Innovator: Late Shri Manaram Choudhary, Sikar, Rajasthan**

Late Shri Manaram Choudhary had developed an early maturing and drought-tolerant variety of onion through mass selection, which has also become famous in the northern states of Haryana, Delhi, and Rajasthan due to its good taste and performed well. He had been practicing farming for over fifty years and onion farming for over thirty years. He lived in a joint family with his four brothers and his children. He had about ten hectares of cultivable land. Now the land is being looked after by his sons, where wheat, millet, cluster-bean, and onion are still cultivated. Manaram was also involved in the dairy business and owned some cattle. The innovator was awarded with National award during 4th National Biennial Award Function organized by the National Innovation Foundation in 2017.

Due to the scarcity of irrigation water in the western Rajasthan including Sikar region, farmers dug enough wells. Despite having three wells in field of Shri Manaram, he did not get enough water for irrigation. This problem of the region inspired him to experiment and test the crop varieties performed well in low water. In every cropping season, he tried to use the different crop varieties under the drought condition to check their adaptability.

Plagued by this problem, he always used to try to devise experiments in search of a such variety that requires less irrigation, early maturity and can survive under the drought conditions which is a major constraint for onion cultivation in the region. In Rabi 1983, Manaram cultivated some local varieties of onion in his farm. He was very particular in selecting light-red (whitish) coloured onions, as their number was less in the population. He tried these onions at his own home and found



Late Shri Manaram and Rashidpura onion

them to be delicious in taste, but they exhibited a very less shelf life.

He then preserved some bulbs by drying then and sowed them in the next season. He observed that the plants from the whitish bulb were early maturing and yielded well in comparison to the crop from dark-red coloured onion even under water stress and low irrigation conditions. Keeping this in mind while harvesting, he preferred to keep the whitish coloured bulb for the seed to the red/pinkish ones. He stabilised the characters over a period of ten years (1983 to 1993) by performing the repeated selection.

Once he was satisfied with the yield stability of the variety and the drought-tolerant characteristic of the variety, he named the variety as Rashidpura onion.



Family of Shri Manaram Choudhary

The variety developed by Manaram is an early maturing, drought tolerant and superior in taste over the other local varieties. This variety is early maturing (110-115 days) as compared to the normally cultivated varieties (125-135

days) and has higher yield (40 metric tons bulbs per hectare) than the commercially cultivated varieties (25-30 metric tons bulbs per hectare).

The variety has attained wide popularity in the northern states of Rajasthan, Delhi, Punjab, and Haryana for its taste and performance. The variety was tested and validated at Rajasthan Agricultural Research Institute Durgapura, Rajasthan during Rabi 2015-16 and 2016-17. Deputy Director, Agriculture (Extension), Sikar and ARS, Durgapur, Jaipur had appreciated the performance of the variety, especially recognizing the taste.

The onion variety “Sanwaloda Selection or Rashidpura onion” is in the process of its registration (Acknowledgement Number-REG/2015/1782) under the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Act (PPV&FRA), 2001.