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**Short Communication**

# RICE BEAN — A NEW CROP FOR TRIBALS OF BIHAR PLATEAU

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Rice bean, popularly known as 'Raj moong', has proved to be the highest yielding *kharif* pulse in this region. On account of its high yield and high degree of resistance to viral and bacterial diseases in comparison to other kharif pulses as well as its profuse pod-bearing and bold-seeded character, rice bean may prove to be more popular and acceptable to the local farmers than moong and urid. Moreover, due to the hardness of its seed-coat, grain damage by storage pests is negligible or almost nil. A need was, therefore, felt to evaluate rice bean varieties obtained from various parts of the country to test their suitability for this region.

Evaluation trials were conducted in a randomised block design with 21 varieties in *kharif* 1990, with 22 varieties in *kharif* 1991 and with 24 varieties in *kharif* 1992. Out of these, 16 varieties were common to all the three years. Each plot was of 3×4 m, 10 rows, 30 cm apart and 4 m long. Fertilizer @ 40 kg N and 40 kg $P_2O_5$/ha was basally applied before sowing.

In the combined analysis of three years yield data (Table 1), RBL -13 recorded highest mean yield of 1486 Kg/ha followed by RBL-6 (C) 1339 kg/ha; the third highest mean yield was obtained by the variety RBL-100 (1272 kg/ha). It can be seen from the table, that the yield obtained during 1990 were very low; in th eyear 1991 the yields were better, but true potentiality of the varieties appeared only in the year 1992. In individual years, variety RBL-3 (868 kg/ha) ranking number 3 was at par with the highest yielding variety RBL-4 (899 kg/ha) in 1990. In the year 1991, the highest yield was obtained by the variety RBL-13 (1410 kg/ha) followed by RBL-35 (1290 kg/ha) both being at par. In the year 1992, the yield figures showed much higher yield than the previous years. Highest yield was obtained by the variety RBL-35 (2264 kg/ha) followed by, and at par with, RBL-13 (2181 kg/ha) RBL-13 is the best variety for this region.

**Table 1. Combined analysis of three years' yield data on ricebean**

| Sl. No. | Variety | Yield (kg/ha) | | | Mean yield (kg/ha) | Overall rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | | |
| 1. | RBL-1(c) | 629 | - | 2056 | - | - |
| 2. | RBL-2 | 409 | - | - | - | - |
| 3. | RBL-3 | 418 | 1024 | 1792 | 1078.0 | - |
| 4. | RBL-4 | 899 | 1234 | 1681 | 1271.3 | - |
| 5. | RBL-5 | 766 | 406 | 1347 | 906.3 | - |
| 6. | RBL-6(C) | 874 | 1103 | 2042 | 1339.6 | II |
| 7. | RBL-7 | 686 | 1220 | 1389 | 1098.3 | - |
| 8. | RBL-8 | 800 | 1251 | 1681 | 1244.0 | - |
| 9. | RBL-9 | 412 | - | - | - | - |
| 10. | RBL -10 | 645 | 1068 | 1778 | 1163.6 | - |
| 11. | RBL-13* | 868 | 1410 | 2181 | 1486.3 | I |
| 12. | RBL-35 | 241 | 1290 | 2264 | 1265.0 | - |
| 13. | RBL-36 | 499 | 1047 | 1597 | 1047.6 | - |
| 14. | RBL-38 | 340 | - | - | - | - |
| 15. | RBL-48 | 720 | 252 | - | - | - |
| 16. | RBL-50 | 822 | 330 | 1319 | 820.3 | - |
| 17. | RBL-51 | 535 | 1063 | 2042 | 1213.0 | - |
| 18. | RBL-52 | 375 | 1047 | 1778 | 1066.6 | - |
| 19. | RBL-70 | 554 | 990 | 2069 | 1204.3 | - |
| 20. | RBL-100* | 797 | 1076 | 1944 | 1272.3 | III |
| 21. | RBL-121 | 398 | 991 | 1375 | 954.6 | - |
| 22. | RBL-26 | - | 1133 | 1472 | - | - |
| 23. | RBL-69 | - | 1106 | 2375 | - | - |
| 24. | RBL-122 | - | 944 | 1694 | - | - |
| 25. | RBL-23 | - | 847 | 1403 | - | - |
| 26. | RBL-40 | - | 844 | 1778 | - | - |
| | S.E. (Mean) | 73 | 109 | 69 | 143 | |
| | C.D. at 5% level | 310.93 | 310 | 195.25 | 412 | |
| | C.V.% | 17.74 | 19.94 | 6.73 | 21.5 | |

The average yield of moong and urid in this region are much lower than that of rice bean, being only 5-6 q/ha, whereas the average yield of rice bean has been shown in the trials to be as high as 12-14 q/ha. Moong is harvested earlier, in 60-65 days and urid in 80-90 days, while rice bean can be harvested within 75-90 days, not too late if we get 200 per cent higher yield over the above named traditional pulses crops.