

# Rubber Board to promote crown budding

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The Rubber Board intends to promote crown budding that will help develop disease-tolerant canopy in plantation estates as means to control leaf diseases in rubber.

Scientists at the Rubber Research Institute of India (RRII) have conducted an interaction with estate owners and estate managers for the promotion of crown budding.

MD Jessy, Director (Research) in charge handed over the budded stumps of FX 516 clone to R Adalarasan, Managing Director, Rehabilitation Plantations Ltd as a part of the promotional programme of crown budding in large estates on a limited scale.

The experiments conducted by RRII have proved that

FX 516 is a suitable clone for crown budding in rubber.

## Higher incidences

Shaji Philip, principal scientist at RRII, said crown budding is a technique on the stem of a high yielding rubber clone at a height of 2.5-3 metres using a disease-resistant clone to develop a vibrant disease-tolerant canopy.

Climate change and continuing heavy rains increased the incidence of diseases in rubber plantations. Though RRII has evolved effective disease management strategies to control various diseases, it is pointed out that unfavourable weather, increased expenses, environmental concerns, etc are preventing growers from adopting chemical control measures in rubber holdings.

Experiments on crown



Crown budding with a disease-resistant clone is a promising technique to manage leaf diseases

budding for the past many decades show that crown budding with a disease-resistant/tolerant clone is a promising technique to manage leaf diseases.

## Yield declines

In these circumstances, the Rubber Board has decided to promote crown budding techniques on a limited scale to develop “evergreen rubber plantations” with healthy

and disease-free leaves. He pointed out that the abnormal leaf falls in rubber trees has resulted in the decline of the yield by about 25-30 per cent and of late, the phenomenon is on the rise.

This has forced farmers to spend more to protect the trees by dolling out at least ₹10,000 per hectare for the application of chemical fertiliser. “The rising cost of pesticides and labour shortage for its application is also posing a problem to the farming community,” he said.

Crown budding has been in practice in India since the 1970’s and farmers are now coming forward to adopt this practice as it would enable them to curb diseases in rubber trees which led to a drop in production and revenue loss, he added.