

Webinar on “Onion Bulb, Seed Production and Impact of Thrips, a Vector of *Iris yellow spot virus*”
organized by the Entomological Society of India (ESI) and ICAR-Directorate of Onion and Garlic
(ICAR-DOGR), Pune to be held on 24/10/2020

Onion is a spice and vegetable crop of prime importance in India and globally. The onion is indispensable to Indian cuisines and recipes. India is the second-largest producer of onions in the world. Onion is highly vulnerable to biotic stresses caused by insect pests and diseases. Among biotic stresses, Iris yellow spot virus (IYSV), and onion thrips, *Thrips tabaci* Lindeman emerged as a major threat to both bulb and seed onion crops. These pests also inflict significant losses to other economically important alliums such as garlic, shallots, leeks, and chives. *T. tabaci* alone estimated to cause over U.S. \$1 billion in crop losses annually worldwide. Besides causing yield loss through direct feeding, they also aggravate the incidence of various fungal and bacterial pathogens. In India, both the pests also causing substantial economic losses to an onion bulb as well as a seed crop. It is learned that there is a shortage of quality onion seeds especially for the short-day onion in India. Therefore, there is a need to streamline the seed chain where 80% are farmers produced seeds. Anthracnose disease is creating havoc in the current *Kharif* season in addition to the existing blights and these are the issues that year after year taking a toll in major onion producing areas.

Therefore, to aid in devising a sustainable management strategy for addressing various issues related to this immensely important commodity, the Entomological Society of India (ESI) and ICAR-Directorate of Onion and Garlic (ICAR-DOGR), Pune organizing a one-day webinar for addressing challenges posed by thrips, IYSV, and other emerging issues in onions. This webinar is anticipated to provide a common platform for researchers, farmers, onion seed and pesticide industries, KVKs, and various other stakeholders working in thrips management to share their experience and expertise to prepare a road map for future research. The deliberations and discussion among various stakeholders will help to formulate a sustainable roadmap for addressing various issues related to onion bulb, seed production as well as thrips and thrips-bourne diseases of onion.