

# BIO LIFE

Letter from Executive Director, Agribusiness

Volume 01 Issue 34 March 2015

## Championing Poultry - ACI Animal Health won 1st prize in 9th IPSS 2015

ACI Animal Health won the 1st prize in 9th International Poultry Show and Seminar (IPSS) 2015, organized by World's Poultry Science Association-Bangladesh at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka. This international exhibition took place during 19 - 21 February, 2015. A total of 147 local and foreign companies participated in the Poultry Show with 297 stalls. ACI Animal Health displayed complete poultry solution with advanced technology through its magnificent pavilion at the show.

Among all the participating local and foreign companies, ACI Animal Health won the first prize for Best Pavilion. ACI Animal Health team received the prize from the chief guest of the program, Mr. Mike Robson, FAO Country Representative in Bangladesh.



ACI Pavilion - Showcasing complete poultry solution



Awards and Recognition

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University of Guelph researchers hope their new discovery will help combat a disease killing honeybee populations around the world.

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## Innovations and New Products

### MI-PLUS - Probiotic for Hatchery

On 26 February 2015, ACI Animal Health launched MI-PLUS – a probiotic tablet for hatchery. It improves growth rate and stimulant immunity, maintains water quality and control pH at suitable level for hatchery. MI-PLUS reduces Ammonia, Nitrite, Hydrogen Sulfide and other toxic gases from the pond. While it reduces odors, digests

organic wastes, it also reduces and inhibits harmful bacteria such as Vibrio sp. MI-PLUS contains Bacillus subtilis, Bacillus licheniformis, Bacillus megaterium, Bacillus pumilus, Bacillus amyloliquefaciens. It is manufactured by Biovac, Thailand. MI-PLUS is available as 5 gm tablets. Each sachet has 12 tablets and each box has 10 sachets.



### BENGAL TIGER - the Tractor for the Country

This January, ACI Motors launched a new tractor model “SONALIKA DI 60RX MM Super – Bengal Tiger” in 60HP Category at a low trade price. Keeping the local customers' requirement in mind, a tractor with a Bangladeshi sub-brand named 'Bengal Tiger' is introduced for the first time in the country. It is truly “The tractor for the country!”

The key features of low price, low fuel & maintenance cost, high ground clearance, longer wheel-base, bigger tyre size etc., has made 'Bengal Tiger' the elegant tractor of its class. It is developed to serve people with low-income,

who has heavy duty tractor requirement. This tractor is compatible to serve the primary objectives which we seek in 60HP tractors. This new model has all the fundamental characteristics of a traditional 60HP tractor.

“SONALIKA DI 60RX MM Super – Bengal Tiger” went through the field test and gave very good result regarding performance and fuel consumption. It has better fuel efficiency than other models of its class. Customers and users of 'Bengal Tigers' are satisfied with its performance as well.



## Events and Activities

### ACI Animal Health co-sponsored 'Showcase Canada'

ACI Animal Health participated as a co-sponsor of "Showcase Canada 2015", Canada's flagship trade show in Bangladesh. The two-day event was held on 14-15 February 2015 at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel, Dhaka. The Canada-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CanCham), in association with the High Commission of Canada in Bangladesh, organized the show. ACI Animal Health exhibited innovative products and solutions it

provides to farmers with a stall in the event. As a co-sponsor, Mohammad Shaheen Shah, Business Director, ACI Animal Health received crest from Mr. Benoit Pierre Laramee, High Commissioner of Canada.



Photo: Mr. Mohammad Shaheen Shah, BD, ACI Animal Health receiving Co-Sponsorship Crest of Showcase Canada 2015 from Mr. Benoit Pierre Laramee, High Commissioner of Canada

### Field Force Conference 2015 by ACI Seed

On 17 January 2015, the Annual Field Force Conference 2015 was held with the participation of ACI Seed field force from all over the country. The daylong conference was arranged by ACI Seed at ACI Center, Dhaka. Executive Director of ACI Agribusiness Dr. F H Ansarey was present as the chief guest on the occasion and gave the 'Aspiration for 2015' to the field force in his remarks. Md. Shafiqul Aktar, Ph.D., Business Manager, ACI Seed gave the 'Inspiration for 2015' and the closing remarks in the conference.

Different business heads and officials of ACI Agribusiness also attended the program. There were Technical sessions as well as Business Presentations & Dialogue. During Business Presentations & Dialogue session, all the Zonal Sales Managers of ACI Seed presented their respective Field Budget in the conference. At the end of the day, an award giving ceremony took place which was followed by a photo session, dinner, and cultural program.



## Events and Activities

### 1300 Farmers Motivated by ACI Seed Field Days in February

In February 2015, a total of 25 field days were organized by ACI Seed on 13 varieties of 9 different Crops. These varieties are ACI-Super and Anokhi in Tomato, Korotwa in Ridge Gourd, Sweet Baby in Pumpkin, Elin in Cucumber, Biddut and Tikki in Chilli, CLX-321 and Snow-White in Cauliflower, Tropical -70 in

Cabbage, Marshal-Super and Rownok in Bottle Gourd, and Papiya in Bitter Gourd. These field days were held in 14 different districts. The districts are Jessore, Rajbari, Bhola, Jamalpur, Mymensingh, Sherpur, Bogra, Comilla, Dinajpur, Panchagarh, Rajshahi, Pabna, Bagerhat, and Chittagong. In total,

near about 1603 farmers, as well as dealers, retailers and other stakeholders, were present in these field days. Among them, about 1356 farmers are highly encouraged and motivated to cultivate these varieties. These field days are playing very effective role in the massive promotion of these varieties.



Field Day-CLX321, Panchagarh (23 Feb 2015)



Field Day - Tikki (Chili), Chittagong (22 Feb 2015)



Field Days - ACI Super (Tomato), Dinajpur (10 Feb 2015)



Field Day - Papiya (Bitter gourd), Bhola (15 Feb 2015)



Field Days - Karotoa (Snake gourd) Bhola (16 Feb 2015)

### Ongoing Watermelon Variety Trials at Bhola and Thakurgaon

ACI Seed is trialing a wide range of watermelon varieties. The Watermelon Variety Trial 2014-15 includes 17 varieties from five different participating companies. The purpose of this trial is to evaluate watermelon varieties for yield, quality, and maturity. The trial fields are located in Bhola and Thakurgaon districts. The crops are at early flowering stage in Bhola. On the other hand, they are at vegetative stage in Thakurgaon. Both the trials are being carried out at farmers' plot.



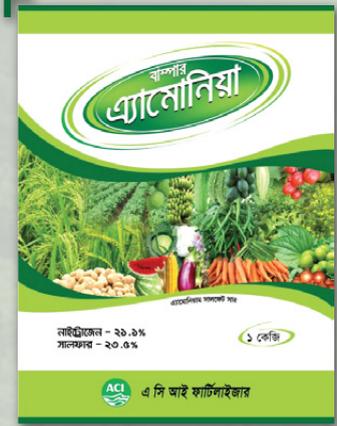
## Events and Activities

### “Bumper Ammonia”: relaunched Ammonium Sulphate by ACI Fertilizer

ACI Fertilizer relaunched Ammonium Sulphate as “Bumper Ammonia” with new pack design in February 2015. This relaunching of the product in the market is made to retain and enhance its brand value being the top preference of customers. As the retail sale of the product is increasing gradually, specific measures are taken for its brand building.

Ammonium Sulphate is a source of Nitrogen & Sulphur. In some cases,

it works better than other fertilizer products as a source of Nitrogen and Sulphur to the plants. The key benefits of the product are: least tendency to absorb atmospheric water favoring longer storage, more resistant to ammonia volatilization compared to Urea, improved efficacy of post-emergence herbicidal sprays, increased drought tolerance through enhanced root development of the plant etc.



### Training Program promoted Mango Cultivation in Hill Area

A day long training program on mango cultivation was held on 18 February 2015 at Tong Restaurant in Chittagong. This training was chaired by Sanumong Marma, Ex. Zilla Parishad Member, Khagrachari. members of DAE, dealers & retailers, mango farmers and two NGO representatives were present in the training session. Mr. Sarder Ali Mortuza, General Manager (Sales) & Zonal Sales Manager, Comilla of ACI Fertilizer were also present in that program. The training discussion mainly focused on the importance of mango cultivation and prospects of mango in hilly areas, related fertilizer application

method. The panel also discussed the problems in cultivation and relevant solution. The way of quality improvement & highest production procedure were also prescribed to the participants. Participants with diverse backgrounds highly appreciated the initiative as a mean of inter-cultural operation.

The fruit cultivation specially mango, litchi, pineapple is increasing rapidly in Chittagong, Khagrachari, Rangamati, and Bandarban. There is also a huge land in fallow condition. So there is a huge scope to increase cultivation and develop a potential market in



### Organic Fertilizer Supply Agreement for Pedrollo Group’s Tea Garden

In February 2015, Mr. Sarder Ali Mortuza, General Manager (Sales), ACI Fertilizer visited a tea garden of Pedrollo Group in Chittagong hill tracts and made a year-long agreement to provide organic fertilizer. Pedrollo Group will use these organic materials for their 5 lac new tea plants within 2015. Per plant organic fertilizer requirement is 500 gm. So the total requirement is 250MT. To execute the new plantation, ACI Fertilizer will provide technical support for using organic fertilizer along with other fertilizers. These technical sessions will start taking place from mid of March 2015. Organic fertilizer plays an important role in tea cultivation and the use of organic fertilizer in tea gardens is increasing rapidly in Chittagong & Sreemangal (Sylhet) areas.



## Events and Activities

### Balanced Fertilizer brings Better Result: Field Day at Kurigram

The Field Force of ACI Fertilizer arranged 3 field days on mustard using balanced fertilizer in February 2015 at Kurigram. Under M4C project, these field days took place in distant Char areas - Majhialir Char, Banshir Char, and Zattrapur char. On an average, profit

increased by 389 taka in three Char areas in 10 decimals demonstration result compared to 10 decimals control plot result for mustard cultivation.

In total, around 390 (130, 120 and 140 respectively) farmers partici-

pated in these field days and they were highly convinced with the demonstrated result using balanced fertilizer as the demonstration plots' production is almost double and net profit is about 4 times greater than control plots.



### Infrastructure Development SBU launched by ACI Motors

ACI Motors has launched its new Strategic Business Unit (SBU) - Infrastructure Development Services with an in-house ceremony held at ACI Center, Tejgaon, Dhaka on 13 January 2015. Executive Director of ACI Agribusiness Dr. F H Ansarey was present as the chief guest and celebrated the occasion by cutting a cake at the ceremony with ACI Motors Head Office Team.

Different business heads and officials of ACI Agribusiness also attended the program and congratulated ACI Motors and its Business Director, Mr. Subrata Ranjan Das for this new SBU. Mr. Tushar Kanti Saha, General Manager of Infrastructure Development Services will lead the SBU. This new SBU of ACI Motors is working for Agricultural Infrastructural Development.



### “Happy New Tractor”: ACI Motors’ Delivery Campaign

ACI Motors has introduced a new idea to make the customers feel special while taking delivery of new tractors. Resembling with the traditional marriage ceremonies, the new tractor is decorated like a 'New Bride' and customers are treated with dry sweet boxes while delivering. This initiative has strengthened customer relationship as the delivery of new tractor means the beginning of a new partnership between ACI Motors and its customers. Happy New Tractor campaign certainly played a role in an impressive sale during February 2015.



## Events and Activities

### Meet-up with Tractor Customers and Drivers at Munshiganj

On Friday, 27 February 2015, ACI Motors arranged a meeting for customers and drivers of its tractors at Sirajdikhan, Munshiganj. The participants were mainly from haulage market for sand and soil carry. With about 350 audiences, the program ended successfully. New spot orders, as well as delivery of earlier orders, took place. Audience had the opportunity to interact with ACI Motors team and get information on various tractor models.



### ACI Cropex Exports Sesame to Turkey

ACI Cropex has started exporting quality sesame seed to Turkey. After exporting to China followed by Taiwan, this has been a significant landmark in the journey of ACI

Cropex. The overall customer satisfaction and the feedback of these seeds were very good. Sesame seed is a major export product of ACI Cropex.



### Fresh Sea Fish served at 3 Dhaka Restaurants, courtesy of ACI Cropex

In February 2015, three different restaurants of Dhaka were provided with sea fish from ACI Cropex. These restaurants are Firehouse steaks & More, Luams Thai fast food and Urban Spice Indonesian

fusion cuisine. As a supplier of fresh sea fish with assured quality, ACI Cropex is now a regular provider of these restaurants. The restaurants received good feedback about the fishes from the customers.



### ACI-IAP-SIDA Project: 4 Field Days Held

ACI, in collaboration with the Innovation Against Poverty (IAP) Program of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), has been funding a project to promote climate smart sustainable agriculture in the coastal belt of Bangladesh. In February 2015, field days on vegetables were held at Bauphal, Dumki, Babuganj, Golachipa, Kolapara, Bakerganj. Around 800 farmers along with local Agriculture Extension Officers were present and spoke highly of the demonstrations held. Cultivation of vegetables such as cauliflower, tomato, cabbage and indigenous potato has become popular in the areas, after the intervention of ACI-IAP-SIDA project.



## Agri-tech & Communication

### Discovery aims to fight Destructive bee Disease

University of Guelph researchers hope their new discovery will help combat a disease killing honeybee populations around the world.

The researchers have found a toxin released by the pathogen that causes American foulbrood disease -- *Paenibacillus larvae* (*P. larvae*) -- and developed a lead-based inhibitor against it. The study was published in the December issue of the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*. The finding provides much-needed insight into how the infection occurs, said Rod Merrill, a professor in Guelph's Department of Molecular and Cellu-

lar Biology and a study co-author.

It also could lead to natural and more effective approaches for fighting the most widespread and destructive of bee brood diseases. "We are the first to do this," said Merrill, who conducted the study with graduate student Daniel Krska. Also involved were post-doctoral researchers Ravi Ravulapalli and Miguel Lugo, technician Tom Keeling, and Harvard Medical School's Rob Fieldhouse.

(Source: Agriculture and Food News, Science-Daily. [www.sciencedaily.com](http://www.sciencedaily.com))



### Organic Waste Digester: Green Energy Innovation

Young Mexican entrepreneurs develop a bio-digestion plant capable of generating electricity from organic waste in the market of the Nopal Collection Center in Mexico City.

The company SUEMA, Sustainability in Energy and Environment, created by Jahir Mojica Hernández, Carlos Apipilhuasco Gonzalez Mejía and Nelly Rodriguez, designed a system for waste treatment and decided to implement it in the market sector due to the amount of waste they generate.

The plant will be located in Milpa Alta, a delegation in the south of Mexico City, and process three to five tons of waste per day operating

24 hours to generate its own electricity and illuminate the market, thus benefiting from 65 tons of organic waste per month. The treatment plant will also nourish from sunlight.

Having an on-site plant will avoid transporting organic waste to the Bordo Poniente, city's wasteland where it is processed, avoiding an extra expenditure of up to 640 pesos per tonne per day. With the capture of harmful greenhouse gases energy will be generated and a soil improver will be produced, which will be delivered to the farmers.

(Source: Agriculture and Food News, Science-Daily. [www.sciencedaily.com](http://www.sciencedaily.com))



## Agri-tech & Communication

### Evolution of Chicken Flu Virus Traced

An international research team has shown how changes in a flu virus that has plagued Chinese poultry farms for decades helped create the novel avian H7N9 influenza A virus that has sickened more than 375 people since 2013. The research appears in the current online early edition of the scientific journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The results underscore the need for continued surveillance of flu viruses circulating on poultry farms and identified changes in the H9N2 virus that could serve as an early warning sign of emerging flu viruses with the potential to trigger a pandemic and global health emergency. The work focused on the H9N2 chicken virus, which causes egg production to drop and leaves chickens vulnerable to

deadly co-infections. Scientists at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and the China Agricultural University, Beijing, led the study.

Researchers used whole genome sequencing to track the evolution of the H9N2 chicken virus between 1994 and 2013. The analysis involved thousands of viral sequences and showed that the genetic diversity of H9N2 viruses fell sharply in 2009. From 2010 through 2013 an H9N2 virus emerged as the predominant subtype thanks to its genetic makeup that allowed it to flourish despite widespread vaccination of chickens against H9N2 viruses.

(Source: Agriculture and Food News, ScienceDaily. [www.sciencedaily.com](http://www.sciencedaily.com))

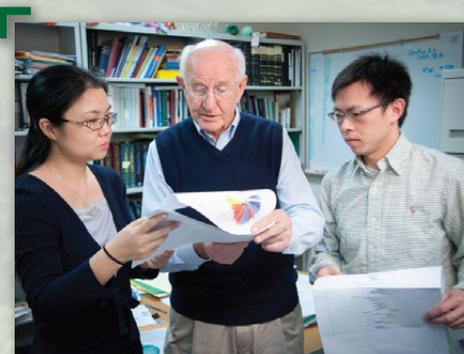


Photo Credit: Ann-Margaret Hedges  
St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

### Unraveling Controls for Plant root Growth

Green shoots are a sign of spring, but growing those shoots and roots is a complicated process. Now researchers at UC Davis and the University of Massachusetts Amherst have for the first time described part of the network of genetic controls that allows a plant to grow.

Plant stems and roots are built around xylem, long, hollow cells that act both as plumbing -- carrying water and minerals around the plant -- and as structural material. The structural strength of xylem comes from a secondary cell wall, inside the outer

cell wall, which is made either of helical fibers or of perforated sheets. This secondary cell wall is made from three molecules: cellulose and hemicellulose, which are essentially sugars, and lignin, which provides strength.

Researchers interested in making biofuels from plants would like to get the sugars out of plant material without interference from too much lignin.

(Source: Agriculture and Food News, ScienceDaily. [www.sciencedaily.com](http://www.sciencedaily.com))



## Agri-tech & Communication

### Onions Grown After Overwintering in Low Tunnels

In response to high demand for year-round local produce, researchers with the University of New Hampshire report they have successfully grown bulbing onions planted in fall for a spring harvest with the aid of inexpensive low tunnels.

The new research, which was funded by the NH Agricultural Experiment Station (NHAES) and by Northeast SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education), may provide additional marketing

opportunities for growers in cold climates who have been trying to meet the demands for fresh, year-round, locally grown produce.

"Direct-market sales are the primary outlet for growers in our region, and these off-season onions would likely be sold individually at sizes determined by local market preferences," the researchers said.

(Source: Agriculture and Food News, ScienceDaily. [www.sciencedaily.com](http://www.sciencedaily.com))



Photo Credit: University of New Hampshire

### Salt tolerance gene in soybean found

A collaborative research project between Australian and Chinese scientists has shown how soybean can be bred to better tolerate soil salinity.

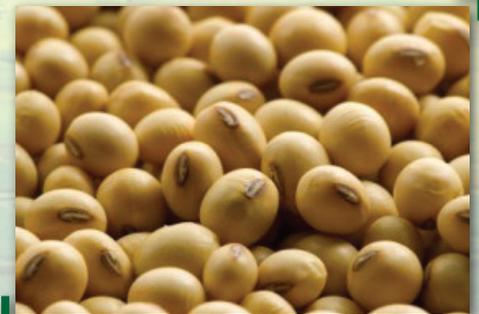
The researchers, at the University of Adelaide in Australia and the Institute of Crop Sciences in the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences in Beijing, have identified a specific gene in soybean that has great potential for soybean crop improvement.

"Soybean is the fifth largest crop in the world in terms of both crop area planted and amount harvested," says the project's lead, University of

Adelaide researcher Associate Professor Matthew Gilliam. "But many commercial crops are sensitive to soil salinity and this can cause major losses to crop yields.

"On top of that, the area of salt-affected agricultural land is rapidly increasing and is predicted to double in the next 35 years. The identification of genes that improve crop salt tolerance will be essential to our efforts to improve global food security."

(Source: Crop Biotech Update, International Service for Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications. [www.isaaa.org](http://www.isaaa.org))



### India develops vaccine to fight blue tongue disease

Indian Immunologicals Limited (IIL) has launched Raksha Blu, India's first vaccine for blue tongue disease that is prevalent among flocks of goats and sheep across the country. K V Balasubramaniam, managing director of IIL, said, "Blue tongue is a viral disease and there are about 24 viral strains prevalent in the world. However, among the Indian livestock only five strains are relevant. Onset of this disease results in more than 30 per cent mortality and high level of morbidity. There is no preventive mechanism

till date and the routine drugs that are used for treatment do not help the animals recover completely."

The vaccine is available at just US\$0.08 per dose, added Balasubramaniam. According to IIL, there are about 200mn sheep and goat population in India and more than 30 per cent of them are prone to endemic blue tongue disease across the country.

(Source: Far Eastern Agriculture, [www.fareasternagriculture.com](http://www.fareasternagriculture.com))



Photo Credit: Alan Grinberg/flickr

## Agri-tech & Communication

### Agribotix releases data processing software to support agricultural drones

Drone-enabled software company Agribotix has launched its new cloud-based Bring Your Own Drone solution for farmers using drones for agricultural data collection.

According to the company, the data processing solution could take images from any drone and combine them to return a single view of a field.

Paul Hoff, CEO of Agribotix, said, "During our first year of flying our

drones over crops, we discovered that drone pilots need a simple way to produce reports that are useful to a farmer. This includes everything from an overhead view of a field used to spot problem areas, to a zone map for precise fertilizer application. We have developed a solution that addresses these needs and more.

(Source: Far Eastern Agriculture, [www.fareasternagriculture.com](http://www.fareasternagriculture.com))



Photo Credit: ackab1/Flickr

### 180 Countries Engaged in Promoting Animal Health and Welfare Worldwide

180 countries engaged in promoting animal health and welfare worldwide. Since 1924, the OIE has been constantly striving to improve animal health and welfare. Increasingly over the years, developments in disease surveillance, prevention & control and the many food safety challenges to be met have highlighted the need for strong cooperation between the animal health, public health and environment sectors.

The World Assembly of national Delegates of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) met for the 82nd time in May 2014 to

consider and adopt the new inter-governmental standards and guidelines that contribute daily to improving animal health and welfare around the world.

As testimony to the powerful tripartite collaboration forged over the past decade under the "One Health" concept, Dr Margaret Chan and Mr José Graziano da Silva, Directors General of the World Health Organization (WHO) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), joined the opening ceremony of the 82nd OIE General Session. Around 900 participants were in attendance, including OIE Goodwill Ambassador over 50

high-level politicians and institutional actors, including more than 30 ministers of OIE Member Countries.

The OIE, which this year celebrates its 90th anniversary, is ever more focused on the future and ready to face the global challenges ahead, in close collaboration with its extensive network of national policymakers, leading scientists and partners. Following a week of intensive work, the World Assembly of OIE national Delegates adopted 40 resolutions.

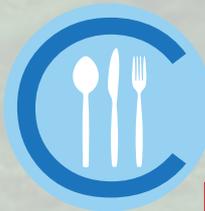
By protecting animals we preserve our future. The next assembly this year is in Paris, May 2015.





### Believe it or not!

-  In one day, a **Honey Bee** can fly 12 miles
-  It is rare, but not unusual, for a **young hen** to produce an egg with **no yolk** at all!
-  **Cows** like to sleep close to their families, and sleeping arrangements are determined by individuals' rank in the social hierarchy.
-  The stalk of **banana tree** is composed of leaf sheaths that overlap each other and grow from an underground stem called a rhizome.
-  There are no **black roses** in the world! The black roses actually are deep red colored roses which look dark and gloomy.



### Calorie Chart

Fresh Fruits		
Food Type	Quantity	Calories (Kcals.)
Sugar	5 gm	20
Honey	5 ml	16
Brown Sugar	5 gm	16
Jam/Jelly	1 Tbsp (20 gm)	55
Butter	1 Tbsp	45

Source: [www.nriol.com](http://www.nriol.com)

### Agro Tips

Although an important element for plants, excess boron can result in boron toxicity. So, we need to know about the visible symptoms and misconceptions about boron toxicity:

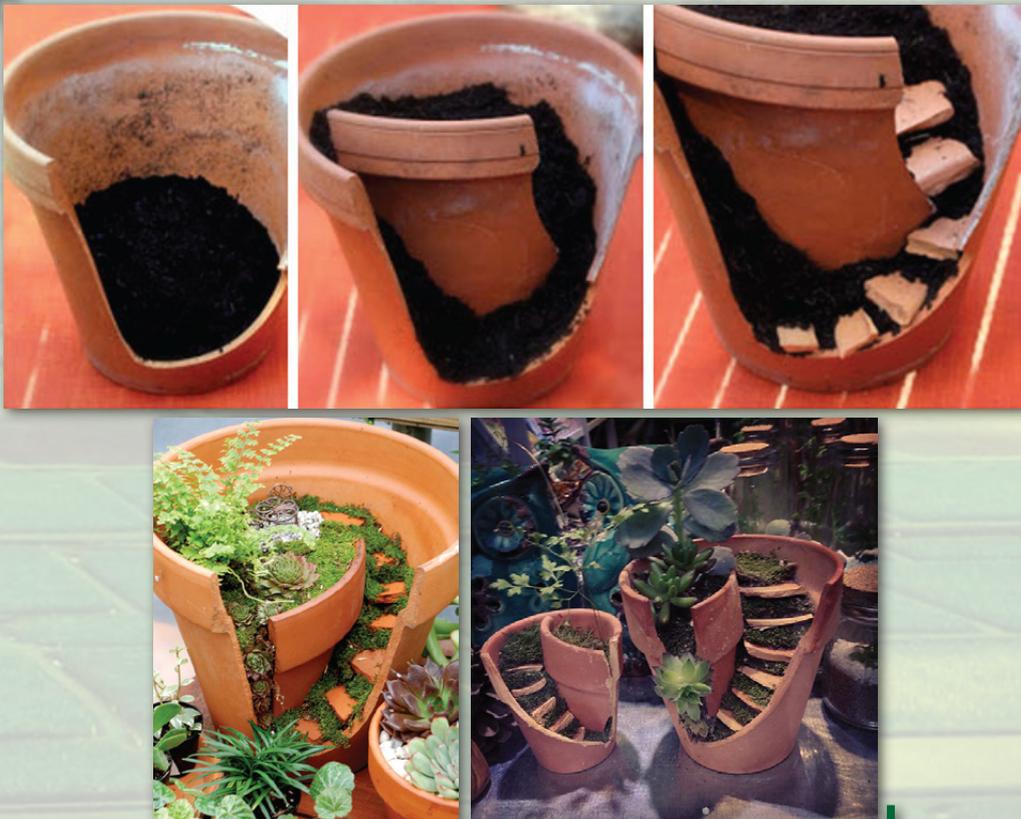
- For a wide variety of plant species, the typical visible symptom of boron toxicity is leaf burn, often at the margins and tips of older leaves. These symptoms reflect the distribution of boron in most species, with Boron accumulating at the end of the transpiration stream
- Contrary to the general perception, leaf burn is not the visible symptom of boron toxicity in all species. In some species, the symptoms of toxicity are fruit disorders (gummy nuts, internal necrosis), bark necrosis etc.
- Visible symptoms of boron toxicity do not appear to develop in roots. As boron concentrations in the roots remain relatively low compared to those in leaves, even at very high levels of Boron supply, toxic concentrations do not occur in root tissues.

## Readers' Corner

### Sharing is Caring!

What is your reaction when your gardening pot is just broken? Do you through it away? Or do you keep it at the corner of the garden and pay no attention later? The next time your pot is broken, please don't be upset. Instead, try something new and interesting. Pursuing your own creative mind, you can also turn those broken pieces into an amazing fairy garden. It won't take much effort and equipment. All you need is to put your creative energy and make the difference.

Try it yourself!



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*Creating Wealth for Farmers*

ACI Agribusinesses, the leading agriculture integrator in Bangladesh, is dedicated to gaining prosperity of Bangladesh through food security. ACI Agribusinesses offers complete solutions to farmers and also educates them about the technical know-how.