

## **Syllabus for ASRB-NET (AGRICULTURAL MICROBIOLOGY)**

### **Unit 1: History of Microbial World**

History, development and scope of microbiology, evolution of microbial life. Theory of spontaneous generation. Prokaryotes, archaeobacteria and eukaryotes. Techniques used in identification and classification of bacteria. Important groups of prokaryotes –photosynthetic bacteria, blue green algae, chemoautotrophic bacteria, spore forming bacteria, mycoplasma, viruses, bacteriophages and actinomycetes. Heterotrophic bacteria nitrobacteria, nitrogen-fixing bacteria and cyanobacteria, lactic acid bacteria, halophiles, thermophiles acidophiles and methanogens. Structure and classification of viruses, growth of viruses, lytic and lysogenic cycles, plant viruses, viroids.

### **Unit 2: Microbial Ecology and Physiology**

Principles of microbial ecology, Microbiology of ecosystems - soil, rhizosphere, phyllosphere, water - fresh and marine, and air. Microbial interactions - symbiosis, synergism, commensalism, parasitism, amensalism, antagonism and predation, adoption of micro-organisms to various ecosystems. Microbial growth curve. Mathematical expression of growth -continuous and batch cultures. Diauxic and synchronous growth. Microbial nutrition. Bacterial metabolism - aerobic and anaerobic respiration, electron transport chain, microbial photosynthesis, oxidative and substrate level photo-phosphorylation. Biosynthesis of cell wall, protein breakdown by microbes.

### **Unit 3: Soil Microbiology**

Soil microorganisms: major groups, decomposition of organic matter, soil health. Root exudates and rhizosphere effects. Manipulation of rhizosphere microflora in plant productivity. Microbial biomass. Nitrogen cycle: ammonification, nitrification and denitrification. Biological nitrogen fixation–symbiotic and asymbiotic. Biochemistry and genetics of nitrogen fixation. Microbial transformations of phosphorus, sulphur and minor nutrients. Role of bio-fertilizers in agriculture and forestry. Bioremediation of problem soils, plant growth promoting rhizobacteria and their mode of action. Formation and composition of soil organic matter: fulvic acid and humic acid.

### **Unit 4: Environmental Microbiology and Basic Microbiological Techniques**

Isolation and preservation of different types of microorganisms. Methods of sterilization and disinfection. Microscopy: Optical, phase contrast, fluorescent, dark field and electron. Microbial assay of vitamins, enzymes and antibiotics, Pollution of soil, water and air, Role of microorganisms in pollution, sources of pollution and their impact on environment, microbiology of sewage and industrial effluents and their safe disposal, management of solid and liquid organic wastes, composting, biogas, water purification, sewage treatment, water-borne diseases and effluent management.

### **Unit 5: Microbial Biotechnology**

Industrial production of metabolites - organic acids, alcohols, antibiotics. Fermentor designs and types. Control of fermentation process - batch, feed batch and continuous. Downstream processing in fermentation industry. Production of single cell proteins and probiotics, hormones, biofertilizers, biopesticides. Phyto-remediation. Microbiology of raw and processed foods. Fermented food – vinegar, wine sauerkraut, pickles, cheese, yogurt. Food preservation, contamination and spoilage, food-borne illness and intoxication. Food as

substrate for micro-organism, microflora of meat, fish, egg, fruits, vegetables, juices, flour, canned foods; bio-degrading microbes, single cell protein for use as food and feed, bioactive food / probiotics