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Meet on export of seafood

Union Minister of State for Agriculture to inaugurate

The main aim is to strengthen the aqua marine export fraternity

It brings together people engaged in commercial fishing and exporters

Nedumbassery: To promote export of ornamental fishes, seafood and related products through its perishable cargo centre, Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL), in association with the Marine Product Export Development Agency and the Fisheries Department is organising a one-day event 'Aqua Marine Export Meet 2010' here on Saturday.

Union Minister of State for Agriculture K.V. Thomas will inaugurate the event and State Fisheries Minister S. Sarma will preside over the inaugural ceremony, to be held at the CIAL conference hall. Participants include the National Fisheries Development Board, Kerala Aqua Venture International Limited, Centre for Marine Research Fisheries Institute, Central Industrial Fisheries Technology and Seafood Exporters Association of India.

According to the organisers, the event is an attempt to bring together different stakeholders ranging from producers to trade promotion institutions with an aim to strengthen the aqua marine export fraternity. It is also expected to showcase the potential of export of Indian ornamental fish and seafood business through air. Divided into two technical sessions, the event will deliberate on opportunities and challenges in ornamental fish export. Scientists and experts will make presentations on relevant topics apart from a presentation by CIAL on its cargo centre and the airlines.

According to CIAL, the event aims at bringing the people engaged in commercial fishing and exporters on a single platform.

It is also expected to address issues pertaining to transportation of live fishes and related perishable products. The meet will also be attended by the heads of the respective agencies apart from the airline representatives and delegates from the Cochin University of Science and Technology.

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Krishidhan Seeds gets funding

CHENNAI: Summit Partners, a U.S.-based firm, has announced the completion of its investment of \$30 million in Krishidhan Seeds Limited. The investment will be utilised for research and development, technology and product-related acquisitions, international expansion, and company infrastructure. The company has reported consolidated revenues of Rs. 279 crore for the year ended September 30, 2009.

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Free land distributed to landless farmers

KRISHNAGIRI: As many as 5,857 beneficiaries were given 'two acre' free agriculture land during the past four years, said P. Prabhakar, District Revenue Officer, here on Friday.

He told 'The Hindu' that the lands were distributed to the beneficiaries in nine phases from June 17, 2006 in three taluks in the district.

The agriculture lands distributed were freehold poramboke lands under Category I.

About 8,296.80 acres of lands were identified in the district. Of this, 1,901.93 acres of lands worth Rs. 4.84 crore were distributed to 2,116 beneficiaries.

Banned

The government had banned the distribution of lands in and around the hill areas through its order issued on July 25, 1989.

As per GO No. 49, issued by the Housing and Urban Development Department, lands were not distributed in 19 revenue villages in Denkanikottai taluk.

The district administration had issued free lands in the rest of the 75 revenue villages in Denkanikottai.

As per the instructions of the Commissioner of Land Administration, issue of free agriculture land in Hosur taluk to the landless farmers was completely banned.

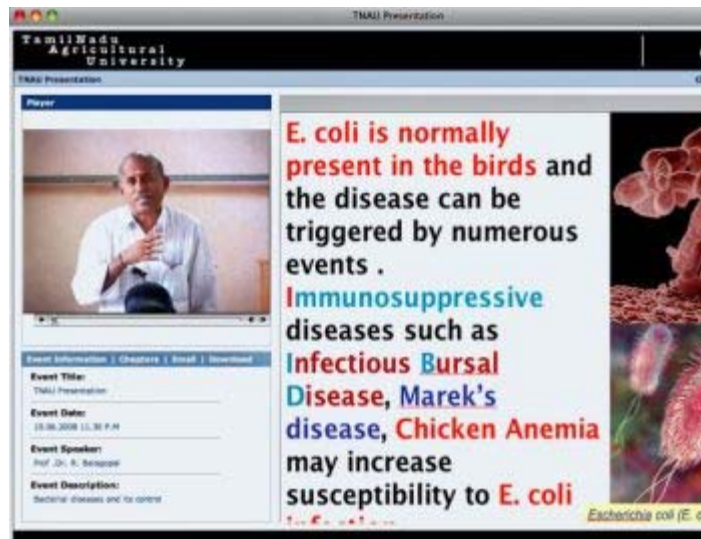
A decision in this regard was taken at a high-level meeting held at the State headquarters in view of Hosur being located near to the software city Bangalore, he added.

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TNAU moves course contents online

The portal has audio-visual content, slide shows



Hassle-free: TNAU's portal carrying lessons online.

COIMBATORE: Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, which works on acres and hectares, has ploughed bits and bytes on cyber land to plant its course contents.

In the first phase of 'Development of E-courses for B.Sc. Agriculture' project, the University had made available online all the modules of subjects in the graduate course.

“They can be accessed anywhere, even cyber cafe,” says R. Venkatachalam, Co-ordinator, Information Technology, TNAU.

Indian Council for Agriculture Research granted Rs. 13.5 crore for the project under Component I of the National Agriculture Innovation Project.

The portal – <http://mms.tnau.ac.in> – has audio-visual content, module-wise and it goes with slide shows and text of the lesson taught.

“The videos were shot during class hours at classrooms to make it as real as possible,” he says and adds 1,300 hours of videos have been uploaded.

Efforts are on to replicate the work for Horticulture, Forestry, Home Science, Biotechnology and other courses.

The planting has bore more than the anticipated number of fruits. “One of the benefits of posting the course contents online is that students who are from Tamil medium schools use it to improve English and communication skills,” says K. Ilamurugu, Professor, who is associated with the project.

“The other is that quality of teaching has improved in that faculty, conscious of recording, have made classes lively with interactions and demonstrations.”

The response from other agriculture institutions has been good. Mr. Venkatachalam says faculty and students of institutions in Bangalore, Anand, Aurangabad, Bagalkot and other areas access the content on a periodical basis.

After the project is reviewed, it will be scaled-up to include content from other institutions as well, he adds.

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Sustainable Sugarcane Initiative launched for increased productivity



MORE PRODUCTIVITY: P. Subbian (second right), Registrar, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, releasing a book on Sustainable Sugarcane Initiative at the university in Coimbatore on

COIMBATORE: The System of Rice Intensification (SRI) greatly reduces water requirement and ensures higher yield, less chaff and better resistance to lodging. Its success is tremendous and has been adopted in 19 lakh hectares of the State. Motivated by its success, the Sustainable Sugarcane Initiative (SSI) has been designed, P. Subbian, Registrar, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, said here on Friday.

He was launching the SSI, an initiative of the International Crop Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics – Worldwide Fund for Nature (ICRISAT-WWF) Project, in the TN-IAMWARM project at the university.

Mr. Subbian said SSI was a combination of cane planting innovations and water saving practices that had great potential to increase productivity, improve natural resource management, and assure higher income for farmers.

“Besides reducing water requirement, SSI has the scope of reducing seed cane cost, increasing farm income through intercrops, and facilitating mechanised cane harvesting due to wider spacing. Mechanised sugarcane harvesting is highly labour intensive.

To overcome the problem of labour shortage, the Government of Tamil Nadu has decided to purchase 85 harvesting machines. TNAU has already purchased one Bunnai Make Harvester from Thailand,” the Registrar said.

Pointing out that the SSI technique was eminently suited for mechanising sugarcane harvesting, Mr. Subbian said the extension functionaries should ensure rapid spread and adoption of the method across the country, similar to the SRI model. These efforts, he believed, would help the country achieve the targeted sugarcane production of 425 million tonnes.

Biksham Gujja, Team Leader, ICRISAT-WWF Project, Hyderabad, said producing more crops with less water, seed, and fertilisers was currently the greatest challenge facing the agricultural sector, warranting a new revolution in agriculture.

Outlining the strategy to promote SSI in Tamil Nadu, Mr. Gujja said it was proposed to take up at least 1,000 hectares of sugarcane under SSI in the next season.

A manual on SSI was released on the occasion.

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Training programme at TNAU

COIMBATORE: Training on “Processing of Vegetable Products” will be held at the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University on April 21 and 22.

According to a university release, the Post-Harvest Technology Centre of TNAU will train the participants in processing technologies to make dehydrated vegetables, pickles, candy, ketchup and chutneys, and instant mixes.

Fee

Those interested can send in a fee of Rs. 1,000 by demand draft drawn in favour of Dean (Agricultural Engineering), and addressed to Head, Post-Harvest Technology Centre, TNAU, Coimbatore – 641003.

For details contact 0422-6611268.

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By V Gangadharan

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New hybrid paddy variety records all-time high

CHENNAI: Researchers at the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University couldn't disagree more with the Filipino idiom: 'One grain of rice equals one bead of sweat', as a new hybrid paddy variety — TNRH 174 — developed by the TNAU's Tiruvur Rice Research Station (TRRS) has recorded the highest yield of 4,500 kg per acre.

Cultivated on a five-acre plot owned by a farmer, C Chandran, in Sembakkam near Tambaram, State agriculture department and TRRS officials said they were satisfied with the performance of the hybrid paddy seed.

"The grain is super fine, the yield is an all-time high and what is more, there have been no reports of crop diseases," said R Venkatasubramanian, Agriculture Officer in Kancheepuram district's Chitlapakkam block, where the trial was done. Moreover, the crop can be harvested in 125 days, while other varieties need about 135 to 140 days. The paddy variety currently ruling the market in the State is 'Bapatla' (BPT). Unlike other high yielding seeds that are susceptible to diseases, this variety is disease-resistant, Venkatasubramanian said. "I think TNRH could replace BPT when it comes to mass production," he added.

Vice-Chancellor of TNAU Professor Dr P Murugesu Boopathi said the trials for the new variety were being held at several other rice research stations in Tamil Nadu. The results from all stations would be collated to arrive at the overall performance of the hybrid variety.

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Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Clear

Saturday, Apr 17

Max Min

36.5° | 28.2°

Rain: 00mm in24hrs Sunrise: 05:57

Humidity: 34% Sunset: 18:22

Wind: Normal Barometer: 1008.1mb

Tomorrow's Forecast



Sunny

Sunday, Apr 18

Max Min

36° | 28°

Extended Forecast for a week

Monday Apr 19	Tuesday Apr 20	Wednesday Apr 21	Thursday Apr 22	Friday Apr 23
36° 28° Sunny	37° 28° Partly Cloudy	37° 29° Partly Cloudy	38° 30° Partly Cloudy	37° 29° Sunny