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Farmers educated on pulse productivity

At Soil and Water Management Research Institute

THANJAVUR: A field day, to educate farmers to improve pulse productivity in the Cauvery delta zone, was conducted at the Soil and Water Management Research Institute (SWMRI) here on Saturday.

Nearly 100 farmers participated in the field day. The farmers were enlightened with designer seed treatment, integrated nutrient management, integrated pest and disease management techniques, efficient water and weed management practices, said B. Chandrasekaran, Professor and Head of the Institute in a press release. Yield estimate was made in front of farmers on farm pulse demonstration plot.

The yield recorded was 1220 kg per acre. Various issues on crop production were also discussed by concerned scientists working in the SWMRI. Soil and water samples brought by farmers were analysed free of cost and suitable recommendations were made. Further, the best produces of pulse crops brought by farmers were evaluated by a team.

The three best farmers were honoured with a certificate and a memento. Dr.V.Rajagopalan, former Vice-chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agriculture University, V.Kaliyaperumal, Deputy director of agriculture and S.Anbalagan, Deputy director of seed certification participated in the field day. The farmers were advised to follow the following pulse production techniques. They should select the high yielding black gram and green gram varieties, select good quality seeds based on seed colour, seed weight and seed size.

They should level the field uniformly. This will help in uniform crop growth during samba and thaladi rice fallow pulse crop.

Timely sowing is very important ie during January-February 15 during "Thaipattam" and March-April 15 during Chithirai pattam. Farmers were also advised to maintain appropriate plant population, improve quality of pulse seeds by adopting designer seed techniques, dry the seeds adequately to reduce moisture level to 10 per cent etc.

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“Field veterinarians not trained in handling new diseases”

CHENNAI: There is no linkage between curriculum development and the veterinarians in the field, at a time when more and more new diseases are cropping up, said V. Gnanaprakasam, former Vice-Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS), here on Monday.

Speaking at an international workshop on 'Veterinary Education in South Asia in 2025 – issues, strategies and road map for development,' Dr. Gnanaprakasam said the field veterinarians were not trained to handle the new type of diseases.

The vets should develop the habit of analysing cases in which they failed. This would help them to understand the issue better and provide enhanced healthcare to the animals. A need-based syllabus with State-specific inputs was the need of the hour and it had to be revised once in five years, he added.

Veterinary education world over was getting revamped, taking into account the demands of end users, changing scenarios and shift in focus, said P. Thangaraju, Vice-Chancellor, TANUVAS. Veterinary education in the country was unique as it not only had veterinary subjects but also included animal production, livestock products technology, extension and rural economics. Due to this the farmers benefited a lot and their animals received better vet care and necessary information for proper housing, feeding, breeding and marketing of animal products.

Inaugurating the two-day workshop, C. Muthukumaraswamy, Secretary, Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries Department said the educators should take the students out of the class rooms to have hands-on experience. Brian Aldridge, Professor, Royal Veterinary College, University of London, said workshops of this kind would help in preparing the students to identify diseases.

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Water Day marked



A painting exhibition put up to mark World Water Day on Monday.

CUDDALORE: If wastage of water continues, then by 2025, there will be acute scarcity of water, forcing people to stand in queue to get the rationed out water. These are ominous forebodings conveyed through the paintings by the students of the Subramaniapuram Sri Ramalingar High School. These paintings were exhibited in front of the Collectorate here to mark the World Water Day on Monday.

One of the exhibits conveyed the message that water had become so scarce and expensive that even the milkman would not dare mix water with milk.

Another student painted a grave picture of healthy and frolicking lions transforming into emaciated beings owing to water scarcity. The show was put up by K.Arumugam, secretary of the Centre for Sustainable Development, a non-governmental organisation.

According to K.Arumugam, the Centre spreads the message to protect water sources, prevent pollution in them, removal of encroachments on irrigation channels, prevent over exploitation of ground water, recycle used water and use the defunct deep borewells for storing rain water.

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Need to preserve water resources stressed

Tamil Nadu Water and Drainage Board officials take out awareness rally



For blue resource: Officials of the Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage Board taking out an awareness rally on the occasion of World Water Day in Karur on Monday.

KARUR: The need to conserve water and water resources for ensuring a safe future for the next generations was highlighted in an awareness rally taken out by the Tamil Nadu Water and Drainage Board officials here on Monday.

The occasion was the World Water Day.

Participants at the awareness rally carried placards and banners that stressed water conservation, ensuring safe drinking water, frugal use of precious water, etc besides which they distributed pamphlets to the public highlighting those aspects.

The rally commenced near the bus stand and passed through the Kovai Road to reach the Coimbatore-Madurai-Salem bye pass road. TWAD Board Executive Engineer Rajendran led the rally.

Future generations

The pamphlets also pointed out that the available water resources were bare enough to meet the burgeoning human and cattle population the world over and unless efforts were taken to conserve water the future generations would not forgive the present lot.

Pollution

The officials also stressed the need to ensure that water sources remained aloof of industrial pollution and called upon the industrialists and entrepreneurs to ensure that their endeavours never caused pollution of water sources.

The sustained assault on water sources have made it difficult for the agency to supply enough potable water to the residents, the officials pointed out.

People should take a pledge to use water frugally and not to pollute or waste available water resources. Scientific studies have pointed out that acute water scarcity could plague the nation by 2025 and it was in the hands of the public to avert any crisis, the officials said.

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GM crop: Govt drops hot potato

Amitabh Sinha Posted online: Tuesday ,

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New Delhi : Misleading the public on safety of genetically modified crops or organisms without scientific evidence would not be made a punishable offence, the government has decided following concerns raised by some scientists and civil society groups.

A relevant clause to this effect in the proposed Bill to set up the National Biotechnology Regulatory Authority has been dropped, government sources have told The Indian Express.

The NBRA is being established to approve and regulate the use of biotechnology products in the country.

The proposed draft bill had a clause which made it a public offence to spread misinformation about the safety of a genetically modified product once scientific evidence had declared it to be safe. This was done to discourage interested groups and frivolous activists from spreading wrong information about biotech products.

The provision had come in for severe criticism by scientists and activist groups who saw a potential for misuse.

"In deference to the views expressed by a number of people, the government has decided to drop this provision for the time being," a senior government official said.

The NBRA Bill is being drafted by the Department of Biotechnology. The Bill is likely to be put before the Cabinet for approval in the next couple of weeks with the aim to introduce it in the current session of Parliament once it reconvenes after recess.

The proposal for setting up the NBRA has been pending for a long time but the issue has acquired urgency in the wake of the controversy surrounding the decision of the Environment Ministry

to put the introduction of genetically modified Bt brinjal on indefinite hold despite a green signal from the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC).

As of now, the GEAC is the only authorised body to approve the use of a genetically engineered crop or organism. It will cease to exist once the proposed NBRA comes into being.

The latest draft of the Bill also seeks to put the NBRA under the administrative control of an inter-ministerial advisory committee and not under the Department of Biotechnology as was being envisioned earlier. This has been done to mollify the Environment Ministry which wanted the control of NBRA, arguing that there was a potential conflict of interest scenario placing the authority under the DBT, whose mandate is to promote biotechnology.

The inter-ministerial committee can comprise senior

officials from all the relevant ministries including those from Environment, Science and Technology, Health, Agriculture and Commerce.