

TNAU NEWS



TAMILNADU AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY NEWS LETTER

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ADDITIONAL EXAMINATION HALL INAUGURATED)))

Every year, the university has to conduct 2981 examinations for 1027 courses of various disciplines in different degree programmes accommodating 4910 students. With a view to conduct the examinations at different spells throughout the year, an exclusive examination hall that can accommodate 300 students has been designed and constructed earlier.

In order to facilitate a hassle free and smooth conduct of examination without overlapping, an additional examination hall of 4300 sq.ft., encompassing a strength of 150 students at a cost of Rs.28 lakhs has been constructed recently and was declared opened by the Honourable Minister for Agriculture, Thiru Veerapandi S. Arumugam in the presence of



Honourable Minister for Rural Industries, Thiru Pongalur N. Palanisamy. The auxiliary purposes of these examination halls could be the righteous usage for night time studies besides, the admission of fresh students, conduct of job fair, conduct of

online examination and permitting to conduct competitive examinations by other organizations like ASRB, ICAR, BARC, MANAGE, NET, TANCET, TNPCEE and Group service examinations by Tamil Nadu Government etc.

RESEARCH SCHOLAR BAGGED BEST THESIS AWARD

Ms.V.S.Mynavathi, M.Sc (Ag) Scholar, Department of Agronomy, Coimbatore was conferred with ISWS Best thesis award (M.Sc) for the year 2007 - 08 by ISWS, Jabalpur. The award was conferred for her contribution in the field of Weed Science Research on **“Evaluation of manually operated weeders in irrigated Maize”** under the supervision of Dr.N.K.Prabhakaran, Professor of Agronomy, Coimbatore.

The salient finding of the thesis research was that manually operated weeders were superior in reducing the cost and time spent on weeding operation. The award was presented



by Dr.N.L.Maurya, Vice chancellor, Rajendra Agricultural University, Pusa(Bihar) in the 18th AICRP-WC Biennial Workshop held at Patna on February 27, 2008.

LITERACY PROGRAMME

A literary survey and awareness programme on computer education was conducted by the student volunteers of NSS unit, AC&RI, Coimbatore on 23.02.2008. The programme was organised in

CROSS COUNTRY LEARNING IN AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT)))



A total of 74 students and 12 faculty members from Cornell University, USA, four Universities of Thailand and four State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) of India including 7 students from Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore visited various research institutions and farms in South India and Thailand under the international agricultural development (INTAG) programme organized by Cornell University - Sathguru foundation.

The students have been divided into four theme groups viz., i. Agricultural systems, ii. Value addition and global marketing iii. Animal sciences and iv. Rural infrastructure and agricultural development

Agricultural Systems

Twenty six students of this theme group visited different research institutes, interacted with farmers and were exposed to advanced agricultural technologies. The visit to Directorate of Rice Research, Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture in

Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh has thrown light on the efforts taken to improve the marginal and drylands in India into productive lands.

Watershed management in Kothapally village of Andhra Pradesh gave a very good exposure on the various measures to be taken on raising the ground water level and conservation and storage of rain water. Visit to Monsanto cotton research centre, Hyderabad was exciting place where they could see the research plots and greenhouse facilities of *bt* cotton work. Bannari Amman biodiesel plant, Sathyamangalam, Tamil Nadu gave a vivid picture on the future of the biodiesel from jatropha, pongam seeds and are eco-friendly fuels. Visit to tea plantations and processing units and interaction with United Planters Association of South India (UPASI), self help group women in Coonoor was a wonderful experience in understanding the role of the Self Help Groups (SHG) in economic upliftment of small holding farmers.

Value Addition and Global Marketing

Eighteen students visited food processing industries and marketing systems in India and Thailand. Visit to Agri-business incubator in International Central Research Institute for Semi Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Hyderabad gave an idea on supporting entrepreneurs with agri-technology, consultancy, networking with management experts and physical infrastructure. In Rusni distilleries, Hyderabad they saw ethanol production from sweet sorghum and promotion of sweet sorghum through agricultural extension. Laila impex, Vijayawada visit was an eye opener in the field of nutraceuticals from herbs. Visit to Pune market yard, Pune gave a focus on auction marketing, commissioning system and various kinds of products for selling. In Chordia Food Park, Pune they studied commercial feasibility of food processing projects on rental basis. The visit to John Deere Manufacturing Unit, Nasik helped to know parts making and assembling techniques, and

the production of tractors. In National Agricultural Marketing Federation of India Ltd., Nasik they saw onion and seed storage systems. Visit to Radiation processing plant at Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Nasik widened the knowledge in irradiation of onions and mangoes for enhancing shelf life and exports. The visit to National Floriculture Unit, Nasik was helpful to know cut flower processing techniques and export market for cut flowers.

Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Development

Eighteen students visited many Self Help Groups in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu hearing the success stories explained by members themselves.

In Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, they visited CHIGURU- Navajeevan Bala Society, where, It was really interesting to meet some of those children and spend time talking with them and sharing their experiences. From the visits to mango farms, more idea on the working of farmers' co-operatives in the production

and marketing of mango were learnt. Interacted with the weaving community of Mangalagiri village and observed that the village women are highly benefited by the self help group activities. The rural infrastructure group had an opportunity to visit Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (DEMIC) of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU). The objective of this cell includes the forecasting of supply and demand of agricultural commodities, inform the farmers about the price situations and suggesting policy measures to the government. In Coonoor, visit to UPASI Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) was more informative sharing the experiences of the SHG members in tea plantation.

Visit to Thailand

Students of all the four theme groups visited Talad thai market, Bangkok wherein fruits and vegetables, sea foods, and poultry products are under one roof. Most of the products are cleaned, graded, preprocessed and packaged for selling. Visit to Air Orchid supermarket and

Bangkok flowers gave a clear cut picture on the tissue culture techniques in the orchid cultivation, hybrids production and export. Plant genetic resources conservation centre and Thai silk industry showed the potential at natural dyes and innovative Thai silk technology. An eco-walk through mangrove vegetation with different species was informative on the ecosystem conservation. Visit to CPF food processing plant showed its innovative advancement to become the “kitchen of the world” with their livestock food processing technology (ready to eat meat products). The most promising agro-industrial business in Thailand is related to aqua culture. Visit to orchards of fruits like Durian, Mangosteen, Sala etc gave a birds' eye view on their cultivation aspects and their export potential.

The INTAG programme has given a cordial bond with people of diversified culture, tradition and customs, besides giving the holistic knowledge on international agriculture. By and large, these trips opened eyes and mind to think globally and add a feather to our educational and research career.



NODAL OFFICER SMPB VISIT HSC&RI)))



Dr. Anaivaari R. Anandan, Nodal Officer, State Medicinal Plants Board visited Home Science College and Research Institute on 18th and 19th February, 2008 to

review the GOI, National Medicinal Plants Board funded schemes, **“Standardization of value added products from Amla”** and **“Therapeutic and**

Nutraceutical products from Bael fruits and leaves”. In this connection, an exhibition was arranged on value added therapeutic products from amla (Amla squash, sweet candy, spiced candy, ready- to- serve beverages, mouth freshener, jam and jelly), bael fruit (Bael fruit pulp, powder, refined wheat flour based bael fruit powder incorporated noodles, ragi based noodles, chapathi, Khakra and rotti) and bael leaves (Dried bael leaf, bael leaf powder, bael leaf powder incorporated noodles, chappathi and rotti) which were developed as part of the National Medicinal Plants Board scheme activities. The Nodal Officer, State Planning Board, appreciated the work done related to the scheme activities.

association with Sri Vengusa Sai Anandhasrama Trust, Theethipalayam. Twenty NSS student volunteers actively participated in the programme. The survey was carried out in three villages namely, Kalampalayam, Theethipalayam and Pachapalayam and information on social status, interest and awareness of the parents regarding the importance of computer education, coaching for mathematics, English and Hindi were collected using a questionnaire. The survey was done to know the awareness and response of the village people towards the Knowledge Centre run by the trust to provide free education to the school children, unemployed youth and homemakers. NSS programme

officers Dr.K.Bhuvanewari and Dr.S.Subramanian accompanied the students.

TNAU PUBLISHES A BOOK ON GM CROPS

The Agricultural Biotechnology Support Program II (ABSPII) is a USAID funded global consortium led by Cornell University. It focuses on the safe and effective development and commercialization of bio-engineered crops as a complement to traditional and organic agricultural approaches. The project helps boost food security, economic growth, nutrition and environmental quality in East and West Africa, Indonesia, India, Bangladesh and the Philippines. In India and Bangladesh, the project is managed by Sathguru Management Consultants, the associate of Cornell in India.

crops cultivated globally. India has reached a production level of 300 lakh bales of cotton in recent years primarily through the adoption of *Bt* cotton. However, predominantly the traits were provided by the private sector. Cornell University led virus resistant papaya is the only public sector led commercial product that is currently cultivated world over.

The ABSPII aims to strengthen the public research capacity in delivering economic and environment benefits to resource constrained farmers through the development of genetically modified crops, for which alternate solutions are less feasible. Fruit and shoot borer resistant eggplant (Brinjal), virus resistant groundnut, late blight resistant potato and drought and salinity tolerant rice are some of the traits that are currently supported by ABSPII for product validation and adoption by resource constrained farmers. The unique public private partnership championed by ABSPII provides opportunity for patent pooling by public and private sector for mutual



Genetically engineered crops have penetrated the global agriculture with over 120 million hectares of

advantage. The access to technology for resource constrained farmers is provided by the public research institutions through royalty free technology transfer and non-profit sale of seeds that would help farmers to access seeds at affordable cost for public varieties that are widely adopted by farmers.

For crops that are not commercially approved, but under development, it is important to study the prospects of adoption of such GM varieties and their potential economic impact (*ex ante* studies). A group of eminent economists from across the world carried out a study of the *ex ante socio economic impact* of the products that are currently under development with support from ABSPII.

The event planned by TNAU will mark the release of *Economic and Environmental Benefits and Costs of Transgenic Crops: Ex-Ante Assessment*, published by TNAU with financial support to conduct the study and publish the book from the ABSPII. The research studies are carried out by an eminent panel of economists drawn from USA, Europe and south Asia. The book is edited by an eminent editorial board consisting of Dr. George Norton of

Virginia Tech University, USA, Prof. C. Ramasamy and Dr. K. N. Selvaraj of TNAU and Mr. K. Vijayaraghavan of Cornell - Sathguru. The book provides compendium of studies that have adopted standardized set of methods to evaluate the impact of transgenic crops in the south Asian region, with particular emphasis on India and Bangladesh.

The book presents the results of a series of studies undertaken over the past four years to assess potential economic impacts of various traits that are under development by various partners of ABSPII. The book also summarizes the projected level and distribution costs and benefits associated with these products in south Asia.

Dr. Susan A. Henry, Dean of Cornell University, USA will release the book and the first copy of the book will be received by Mr. George Deikun, Mission Director of USAID New Delhi.

FARMERS' PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

The expectation of the scientists and the requirements of Dairy farmers



are blended while formulating the objectives of field experiments in the Department of Forage Crops, which resulted in evolving a high yielding, nutritious Cumbu Napier Hybrid TNCN 014. This culture gives green fodder yield of 382 t/ha/year.

FARMERS' TRAINING AT TRRI

The National Seeds Corporation, Chennai organized a farmers training programme and veterinary camp at TRRI, Aduthurai on 02.02.08 and 03.02.08. Dr.S. Jebaraj, Director, TRRI, Aduthurai inaugurated the training on 02.02.08 and Dr.N. Emayavaramban, General Manager (Prodn.) NSC, New Delhi presided over the function. The general meeting on 03.02.08 was inaugurated by Shri.B.B.Pattanaik, Chairman cum Managing Director, NSC, New Delhi, Smt.P.P.Ayisha, Regional

ISWS FELLOWSHIP FOR TNAU SCIENTIST >>>



Dr.C.Chinnusamy, Professor (Agronomy) & Principal Investigator (AICRP-WC), Department of Agronomy, Coimbatore was conferred with ISWS Fellowship for the year 2007 - 08 by ISWS, Jabalpur. The fellowship was conferred for his outstanding contribution in the field of Weed Science Research on Integrated Weed Management for sugarcane, major pulses, drum seeded and aerobic rice and for problem and parasitic weeds which have been incorporated in State Level Crop Production Guide for general adoption.

Manager, NSC, Chennai welcomed the gathering, Dr.S.Jebaraj, Director, TRRI, Aduthurai participated as the guest of honor.

TRAINING ON ICT SKILLS

A training on "Techno Managerial

Information Communication Technology Skills" to the newly promoted Assistant Directors of Horticulture and Horticultural Officers was organized at Horticultural College and Research Institute, Periyakulam and inaugurated on 18.2.2008.

A total of fifty three trainees participated in the first batch. The training has been programmed from 18.2.2008 to 16.5.2008 for eleven batches with fifty six trainees in each batch for a period of five days.

OUR STUDENTS BEYOND CLASS ROOM >>>



In this program, they are involved in learning the daily farming activities. A group of students who are placed in Santhur Village of Krishnagiri district are undergoing training under the guidance of Mr.M.C.Santhakumar, a progressive farmer of that locality.

The students training is mainly focused on the nursery production technology of Horticultural crops especially mango grafts.

In the training, the students were involved in learning different techniques on the successful production of mango graft and also marketing aspects.

As a part of the curriculum, the final year B.Sc Agri. Students of Tamil Nadu Agricultural

University, Coimbatore are attending the RAWE program in various districts of Tamil Nadu.

IMPORTANT VISITORS

- Dr.Joan Healey Shulver, UK visited Department of Plant Molecular Biology and Biotechnology on February 9, 2008
- Faculty of Cornell University, USA and USAID India Mission Team (Dr.Suasn A.Henry Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cornell University, USA Dr.Stephen Krosovich Vice Provost of Life Science Research, Cornell University, USA, George Deikun Director, USAID India Mission, Ms.Rebecca Black Director Office of Economic growth, USAID, Mr.K.Vijayaraghavan, Sathguru Management Consultant) visited Department of Plant Molecular Biology and Biotechnology on February 13, 2008.
- Hon'ble Agriculture Minister Th.Veerapandi S.Arumugam visited AC&RI, Coimbatore on February 27, 2008.
- Team from the NGO "Hand in Hand" visited AC&RI, Coimbatore on February 29, 2008.

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