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Women also trained in coconut plucking

Coconut plucking is no longer a male bastion as the first batch of all women 'Friends of coconut' in the state completed their six day training at the Peruvannamuzhi Krishi Vigyan Kendra of the Indian Institute of Spices Research (IISR) Kozhikode, Kerala.

A group of 20 women aged between 20 and 35 years from Perambra in Kozhikode district has proved that gender is not a barrier for them before the "heights" of coconut trees.

Training programme

The training was organised as part of the "Friends of coconut tree" programme being implemented by the Coconut Development Board, Kerala to train unemployed youth in the art of climbing coconut trees and caring for them.

"This is the first 'all women' training programme on coconut climbing conducted in the entire state," said Dr. M Anandaraj, Director, IISR.

The programme covered introduction to coconut palm, climate, soil requirements and varieties, sessions on climbing machine-main parts, working and trial, nutrient management, recycling of palm waste, intercropping and mixed cropping, etc.

Besides practical lessons, sessions were also held on harvesting, tender and mature nut identification, identification of pests and disease and their management, crown cleaning aspects, seed nut procurement, safe handling of seed and tender nuts, coconut nursery and its management etc.

Physical exercise towards the beginning of each day's training was another highlight of the programme. According the trainees, coconut climbing is an easy task and they felt

no physical exhaustion while using the machine. During the last session of the training, a “Coconut Olympics” was also conducted in which the trainees were able to climb the trees within 48- 50 seconds.

Climbers' bank

“KVK is now in the process of establishing a Coconut Climbers' Bank” in which people trained from KVK can register their names. Anyone who needs the services of a coconut climber can contact the bank and avail the services of registered coconut climbers in their own at a reasonable rate.

Thus this scheme will be beneficial to both the customer and climber,” says Dr. T Arumuganathan, Programme coordinator, KVK Peruvannamuzhi. For details contact Mr. Riyas on email: riyaskpa@gmail.com and mobile: 9048321644.

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