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To  
The Editor,

Date: 30-3-2016

Sir,

I request that the following matter may kindly be published in your esteemed daily:

### **Nematode Awareness Campaign to Guava Growers of Ayakudi**

A ‘Nematode Awareness Campaign’ was organized by the Department of Nematology, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore under the All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on Nematodes in Cropping Systems, ICAR, New Delhi on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at Ayakudi, Dindigul district for the Guava growers.

Ayakudi is the major guava growing area of Tamil Nadu and recently has been posed with an emerging root knot nematode problem, which has been causing major devastation of the guava crop. This root knot nematode is identified as a new record of *Meloidogyne* called *M. enterolobii* which has been observed to be disseminated mainly through propagating materials (both ground layers and grafts) from place to place.

The campaign was organized to create an awareness among the guava growers on the necessity to check the planting material (in poly bags) before they go for a large scale purchase, by way of themselves inspecting for presence of minute galls in the roots (by tearing open the polythene cover and removing the soil), which is the indication for presence of infestation by these root knot nematodes. The gathering consisted of 60 guava growers from Ayakudi and in and around villages, all of them who have been into guava cultivation from several years and are now facing this emerging new problem of nematode. The growers were enlightened on the microscopic nature of nematodes, how they make entry into root system and ways of managing them once they make an entry into the orchards. The biological method of managing this nematode using a beneficial fungal organism called *Paecilomyces lilacinus* (now called *Pupureocillium lilacinum*), which inturn parasitizes the root knot nematode eggs were explained. The method of

incorporation of this agent was demonstrated and pamphlets containing these informations were given to each of the participant.

The scientists working under the AICRP (Nematodes), Dr. K. Poornima, Professor and Scheme incharge, Dr. P. Kalairasan and Dr. N. Swarnakumari, Assistant Professors from Dept of Nematology and Dr. S. Prabhu, Assistant Professor (Nematology) from HC & RI, Periyakulam, were the resource persons for this training programme.

Asst. Public Relations Officer