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To

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The Editor,
Sir,

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

Tomato Integrated Pest Management –

Validation of treatments by Farmers & Extension officials

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore and World Vegetable Center, Taiwan jointly conducts research on “Integrated Pest and Disease Management in Tomato” with financial assistance from Plant Health Initiative. WorldVeg standardized “Tomato Grafting Technology” to protect the tomato plants from bacterial wilt, which is a severe disease during rainy season. In this, the desired tomato hybrid plants were grafted on disease resistant brinjal root stocks. This technology is being implemented in the experimental field of Mettubavi village, Kinathukadavu taluk, Coimbatore district.

Both pest and disease incidences are being monitored and evaluated regularly in the above experimental field. The main objective of this scheme is to validate the status of plant protection technologies followed in the three main growth stages of the crop, involving farmers and extension officials. The first two validations of treatment plots were carried out during November and December, 2023. The third validation was made on 02.02.2024 in “Tomato Integrated Pest and Disease Management experimental field.

Dr. M. Shanthi, Director, Centre for Plant Protection Studies informed the gathering that the tomato cultivation suffers huge yield loss during rainy season due to bacterial wilt. The application of fungicides will not give the desired results apart from increasing the plant protection cost. The tomato grafting technology offers good solution with minimum external interventions. Hence TNAU has taken initiative to implement this IPM programme in association with World Vegetable Center, Taiwan.

Kinathukadavu block Assistant Horticultural officer Mrs. M. Jamunadevi explained about the different schemes implement by the department for the farmers welfare. She emphasised that

the department works in tandem with the University in disseminating newer technologies to the farming community. The pest management technologies implemented in the experimental fields and their implications on plant health was narrated by Dr. M. Murugan, Professor & Head, Department of Agricultural Entomology. Dr. N. Manikanda Boopathi, Professor (Plant Biotechnology) explained about the importance of biotechnological interventions in the Integrated Pest Management. The increasing nematode issues in horticultural crops and their management was discussed by Dr. N. Seenivasan, Professor (Nematology).

The results of previous two validation was elaborated by Dr. P.S. Shanmugam, Associate Professor (Agricultural Entomology). The experiment participatory farmer Mr. Rajkumar shared his experience to the participating farmers. Critical input *Bacillus subtilis* was distributed to the participating farmers during the programme. About 45 farmers and 10 extension officials participated and evaluated the programme.

Public Relations Officer