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To
The Editor,
Sir,

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

TNAU conducts Awareness cum training on Integrated Pest and Disease Management in Coconut

Coconut, fondly known as 'Karpakavriksha' is constantly being affected by pest and diseases causing severe losses to growers. In Coimbatore district, particularly in Pollachi and Anaimalai taluks, root wilt disease and rugose spiralling whitefly are widely distributed. To address the issues and create awareness among farmers and the extension functionaries of state Department of Horticulture and Plantation Crops, awareness cum training programme was organized in the coconut garden of Th. Nandhagopal at Alangadavu Village of Anaimalai taluk.

The training was jointly organized by Centre for Plant Protection Studies (CPPS), Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore and Coconut Development Board, Kochi. Dr.M.Shanthi, Director, CPPS, TNAU, Coimbatore presided the programme and released a booklet on Integrated Management of Pest and Diseases in Coconut. In the presidential address, she explained about the action taken by the TNAU on the pest and disease management in coconut, ongoing research and demonstration programmes, future strategies and the need for coordinated efforts of TNAU, State Department of Horticulture and Plantation Crops and the farmers to contain the pest and diseases. Earlier Dr.K.Angappan, Professor and Head, Plant Pathology, welcomed the gathering. Smt.M.Bhuvaneshwari, Deputy Director of Horticulture, Coimbatore has felicitated the gatherings.

Technical session on Integrated Pest and Disease management was handled by Dr.G.Karthikeyan, Professor (Plant Pathology) and Dr.R.Arulprakash, Associate Professor (Agril. Entomology). During the technical session, different pests and diseases affecting coconut, their symptoms, mode of spread and the recommended management strategies were explained, along with video programmes.

The plant protection scientists, Dr.P.Latha and Dr.R.Arulpraksh of Coconut Research Station, Aliyarnagar, have arranged an exhibition showcasing the damage symptoms and different bio-inputs including parasites and predators used for plant protection in coconut. In continuation, an interactive session involving scientists, extension officials and progressive farmers was also held to discuss the issues related to pest and disease management in coconut. After the training, the trainees were taken to the field of demonstration plots. About 50 participants including farmers and extension functionaries have participated and benefitted from the training. Dr.S.Maruthasalam has proposed the vote of thanks.

Public Relations Officer