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To
The Editor,

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Sir,

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

Fundamental Studies and Practicality of Biological Control of Crop Pests Stressed – VC say

The inaugural function of annual group meet of All India Co-Ordinated Research Project (AICRP) on biological control of crop pest was conducted on June 2, 2015 at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore. More than 60 scientists from different parts of our country representing the ICAR institutes and state agricultural universities attended the two days programme.

Dr. Abraham Vergese, Project Co-Ordinator and Director, NBAIR, Bangalore presented the research findings of different AICRP centres for the year 2014-2015. He also presented the involvement of different centres in the training of tribal farmers.

In the programme, the special address on the potentials of bio control agents in pest management is delivered by Dr. K. Ramaraju, Director, Centre for Plant Protection Studies, TNAU, Coimbatore. He also informed the gathering that TNAU has pioneered the biological methods of pest management from the year 1917 onwards. He added that our university made long strides in biological control during the period of eminent entomologist Late Dr. S. Jeyaraj from 1970 onwards. Further, he projected the involvement of TNAU in the mass production of parasitoids *Acerophagus papayae* and the successful control of papaya mealy bug a menace on papaya, tapioca, cotton, mulberry, etc., as a recent example of classical biological control in our country.

Dr. K. Ramasamy, Vice-Chancellor, TNAU, Coimbatore presided over the function and delivered the presidential address. In his address he stressed the importance of integrating various bio inoculants in crop management. He added that, the status of

agriculture in our country is encouraging and progressing in a unique path. Our country is going to support the food requirement for 37 per cent of world population by 2025, since the other countries like USA are utilizing their land for Bio fuel production. He also added another statistics that in India only agricultural technologies reaches the farmer (end users) significantly up to 32 %. Whereas other technologies in the areas of engineering and medicine are reaching the end users at less than 15%. He stated that our agricultural practices are traditional which dates back to 3000BC.

He quoted the ancient literatures in Tamil Nadu, where in the land was divided into four categories and traditional methods in agriculture and indigenous seeds were followed in agriculture. He advised the scientist to orient a part of research on fundamental aspects of crop protection besides ensuring the quality of various bio control agents.

Earlier, before presidential address the chief guest of the function Dr. P.K. Chakrabarty, Assistant Director General, (Plant Protection and Bio safety), ICAR, New Delhi delivered the special address. In his remarks, he emphasized the need for sustainability of biological control of crop pests. The scientists are advised to do analysis step wise on the suitability and feasibility of using bio control agents in integrated pest management (IPM) programmes at national level.

During the function nine folders on the mass production and use of bio control agents prepared by scientists from different institutes of our country were also released.

Earlier, Dr. M. Maheshwaran, Director of Research, TNAU welcomed the gathering. Dr. B. Ramanujam, Principal Scientist, NBAIR, Bangalore proposed a formal vote of thanks.

Asst. Public Relations Officer