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To
The Editor,
Sir,

Date: 20.12.2023

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

Agri PitchFest'2023 at TNAU

The School of Post Graduate Studies of TNAU and BIRAC supported E-YUVA Centre functioning in the Department of Plant Biotechnology, Centre for Plant Molecular Biology & Biotechnology, TNAU, Coimbatore organized a one-day innovation competition in food and agriculture entitled “Agri PitchFest 2023” at TNAU on 20th December, 2023. The event was conducted to train the young talented minds to solve some of the pressing problems relevant to food and agriculture prevailing in the current scenario and give them an exposure to the startup ecosystem. The 30 student teams from constituent and affiliated colleges of TNAU submitted their novel solutions for the problems identified for the competition. After a preliminary screening, 12 teams were shortlisted for the final round.

In the inaugural address, Dr. N. Senthil, Dean, School of Post Graduate Studies (SPGS) & Director (Centre for Plant Molecular Biology & Biotechnology), TNAU emphasized the importance of entrepreneurship for the society and encouraged the young minds to come up with innovative startup ideas. E-YUVA centre of TNAU basically helps UG, post graduate and post doctoral students for validating their novel ideas. He also mentioned about the support services available at TNAU for startups and agri business entrepreneurs namely Directorate of Agri Business Development (DABD) and Centre of Excellence in Biotechnology. By citing the vision of Vice - Chancellor of TNAU, he persuaded students to entrepreneurs to take India to better position in the front of startup ecosystem.

Mr. Senthil Ramesh Subramaniam, Executive Director, M/s. Grenera Nutrients (P) Ltd, Erode, in his special address mentioned about three key points to the students who are aspiring to become entrepreneurs. The proposed novel ideas should solve anyone of the pressing problems prevailing in the world, initial funds should be mobilized from Banks/ Angel investors. Seeking funds from investors will help them gain visibility and popularity for their product.

Earlier, Dr. E. Kokila Devi, Professor & Head, Department of Plant Biotechnology, CPMB&B, TNAU, Coimbatore welcomed the gathering. Finally, Dr. Arul, Professor & Chief Coordinator, E-YUVA Centre, CPMB&B, TNAU proposed a formal vote of thanks.

Following the inaugural session, the 12 shortlisted teams presented their ideas to the panellists. The ideas include functional foods from coconut milk, bio packaging material from fruit and vegetable waste, ecofriendly soil nutrient management, quality storage of food grains, etc. The three best ideas (Rehumane, Molecular Maestros & Biomilk pack innovators) were awarded cash prizes of Rs.5000/-, Rs 3000/- and Rs.2000/- . The first place is AC&RI, Madurai campus, second place is AC&RI, Coimbatore campus and third place is AEC&RI, Coimbatore.

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