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To
The Editor,
Sir,

Date: 06.06.2026

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

TNAU organized the “Connect & Grow – Food Business Meet”

The Centre of Excellence in Biotechnology (COXBIT), Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore, organized the “Connect & Grow – Food Business Meet” on 05 June 2026 to strengthen collaboration among food processing MSMEs, researchers and industry stakeholders. In the inaugural session, Dr. L. Arul, Professor and Head, Department of Plant Molecular Biology and Bioinformatics & Biotechnology (DPMB&B), TNAU, welcomed the gathering and highlighted the importance of fostering innovation, value addition and sustainable growth in the rapidly expanding food processing sector.

Dr. N. Senthil, Director, CPMB&B and COXBIT, TNAU, highlighted the TNAPEX – Supporting MSMEs in New Product Development and Technical Assistance Initiative and emphasized the importance of industry–academia collaboration in fostering innovation, technology transfer and the development of high-quality, market-oriented food products. He noted that COXBIT, as the Technical Partner under TNAPEX, provides technical and financial support to MSMEs and startups through product development, testing, validation, regulatory guidance and commercialization, thereby enhancing the competitiveness and sustainable growth of the food processing sector.

Dr. S. Karthikeyan, Director, NRM, TNAU, emphasized the importance of collaboration between research institutions and entrepreneurs for scientifically validated product development. He highlighted the need for product testing, quality assurance and adherence to food safety standards, stressing the role of NABL-accredited laboratories and APEDA regulations in enhancing product credibility, facilitating market access, promoting exports, and building consumer confidence. He further noted that scientific validation helps ensure the delivery of safe, high-quality products from farm to market and ultimately to consumers.

Mr. A. Keerthivasan, Team Leader (Project Manager), Regional Hub and Export Enablement Center, TNAPEX, Trichy, elaborated on the comprehensive support available through TNAPEX for startups and MSMEs. He explained the end-to-end assistance provided by the programme, including new product development, manufacturing support, identification of suitable production facilities, product registration, licensing, regulatory compliance, import and export procedures, market linkages, buyer-seller meets, branding and

export promotion activities. He encouraged entrepreneurs to utilize the TNAPEx ecosystem to accelerate innovation, scale their businesses, and access new domestic and international markets.

Dr. R. Rajababu, Assistant Professor, Department of Plant Biotechnology, TNAU, proposed the vote of thanks and expressed his gratitude to the dignitaries, TNAPEx officials, entrepreneurs, participants and the COXBIT organizing team for their valuable support and contributions towards the success of the programme.

Public Relations Officer