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To
The Editor,
Sir,

Date: 29.08.2022

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

TNAU inks Sub-Grant Agreement with World Vegetable Center, Taiwan

The Centre for Plant Protection Studies, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore and World Vegetable Organization, Taiwan entered into a Sub-grant agreement to do basic and applied research in Vegetable Plant Protection. The Sub-grant agreement was signed on 26.08.2022 in presence of TNAU Vice-Chancellor Dr. V. Geethalakshmi and Dr. R. Srinivasan, Lead Entomologist and Flagship Program Leader for Safe and Sustainable Value Chains, World Vegetable Center, Taiwan. The Vice-Chancellor, during her presidential address emphasized the importance of involving global organizations in technology development and shared her experience about developing forecast models in collaboration with such institutions. She drew attention on the pivotal role of forecasting in effective pest management strategies and invited special focus to develop cost effective implementable technologies for farmer's adoption achieving economic goals of the farming community and our country as well.

Dr. S.V. Krishnamoorthy, Professor & Head, Department of Agricultural Entomology in his welcome address gave brief account of activities taken by the University to manage recent invasive insect pests viz., fall armyworm, tomato pinworm and rugose spiraling whitefly. He also highlighted the various research works to be jointly conducted by World Vegetable Organization and TNAU.

The Director, Centre for Plant Protection Studies Dr. M. Shanthi, narrated the road map of research activities to be taken up in the Sub-grant agreement project to combat the pest problems that were yield impeding in tomato and lablab cultivation. She also informed the gathering that farmers will be trained to adopt vegetable grafting technology through this project to overcome the loss caused by the soil borne bacterial

diseases in tomato. The cost effective integrated pest management technologies will be validated in tomato and lablab during the first year of the programme.

Dr. P.P. Murugan, Director of Extension Education emphasized the importance of involving farmers in applied research programmes and their need for vegetable chain management and added that in this Sub-grant agreement project 1600 farmers will be benefitted by exposure and training on the sustainable integrated pest management aspects in tomato and lablab.

Dr. R. Srinivasan, Lead Entomologist, WVC, Taiwan briefed about the initiatives taken by the WVC to manage the emerging insect pest and diseases in vegetables. Farmers' participatory approaches are important for the success of technology demonstration, he viewed. He assured that the technologies developed by WVC, Taiwan will be disseminated to farmers through TNAU, Coimbatore. Dr. S. Uthamasamy, former Director of Extension Education informed that the technologies should reach the farmers in time to harvest the benefit of the intervention. Integration of available technologies will reduce the input cost and also increase the productivity, he told. Dr. G. Karthikeyan, Professor & Head, Department of Plant Pathology thanked WVC for entering into farmers' participatory research along with TNAU. In this scheme launch event, University officials and project scientists were participated.

As part of the event, a book in Tamil language "Arukai Athisayangal" authored by Dr. R. Srinivasan, Lead Entomologist, WVC, Taiwan was released by the TNAU Vice-Chancellor. In commemoration of the project, farmers training was organized at the Department of Agricultural Entomology on the same day and 30 farmers from Thondamuthur block participated in Vegetable grafting and Dr. M. Ravishankar, Scientist, World Vegetable Organization has demonstrated grafting technology in Tomato and Brinjal. Also, he explained the materials needed, climatic factors and techniques to be followed for grafting along with their importance.

Public Relations Officer