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To
The Editor,
Sir,

Date: 05.07.2025

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

TNAU hosts 21st Annual Group Meeting of the All-India Network Project on Agricultural Acarology

The inaugural session of the 21st Annual Group Meeting of the All-India Network Project on Agricultural Acarology was held on 3rd July 2025 at 10:00 a.m. at the Department of Agricultural Entomology, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore. The session commenced with an invocation, the ICAR song, lighting of the ceremonial lamp, and the rendition of *Tamil Thai Vazhthu*.

Dr. M. Shanthi, Director, Centre for Plant Protection Studies, TNAU, extended a warm welcome to the distinguished guests, scientists, and delegates from across the country. In her address, she wished the participants a productive and enriching workshop, marked by critical scientific review, sharing of research outcomes, exchange of knowledge and experiences, and fostering of collaborative efforts. The session's Chief Guest, Dr. D.K. Yadava, Deputy Director General (Crop Science), ICAR, New Delhi, delivered an inspiring inaugural address. He spoke about the increasing significance of phytophagous mites as a major concern in crop cultivation, particularly under changing climatic conditions. Dr. Yadava urged that plant protection technologies be consolidated and widely popularized for adoption across centres. He also stressed the importance of assigning specific targets to each participating centre for more impactful outcomes.

In his presidential address, Dr. R. TamizhVendhan, Acting Vice-Chancellor of TNAU, greeted the esteemed delegates and set an inspiring tone for the proceedings. He encouraged participants to engage deeply with the subject and wished them fruitful deliberations during the two-day programme. The Guest of Honour, Dr. Poonam Jasrotiya, ADG (Plant Protection and Bio-safety), addressed the gathering on the growing threat posed by phytophagous mites to crop production and emphasized the need for heightened vigilance in plant quarantine to safeguard the biosafety of imported plant materials. She commended the progress of the AINP on Agricultural Acarology and suggested the inclusion of soil and storage mites in the future research agenda.

Dr. C. Chinnamade Gowda, Network Coordinator of Agricultural Acarology, presented a brief report highlighting the research progress and key outcomes of the network during 2024–2025. Delegates have come from the length and breadth of the country, representing, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Gujarat, West Bengal, Assam, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. University Officers, Heads of Department of Pathology and Nematology, Faculty, research scholars and students participated in the programme. The session concluded with a formal vote of thanks delivered by Dr. M. Murugan, Professor and Head, Department of Agricultural Entomology, TNAU. The event ended with the playing of the national anthem.

Public Relations Officer