

TNAU launches Consortium of Industrial Agroforestry

Forest College and Research Institute implemented a National Agricultural Innovation Project (NAIP) on Industrial Agroforestry from 2008 to 2014. To take advantage of the progress made in this project, the college has conceptualized a consortium of Industrial Agroforestry which helps to bring farmers, research institutes, wood based industries, nursery entrepreneurs, producer organizations, forest department, tree grower societies, NGOs, banks and insurance companies together on a single platform.

The consortium was officially launched at Forest College and Research Institute on Mar. 1, 2015.

Dr. K.T. Parthiban, Consortium Co-ordinator explained the developments made in Industrial agroforestry laying particular emphasis on creation of viable and sustainable linkages between the farmers and the wood based industries which has led to a win-win situation for both. Dr. M. Chinnadurai, Director (CARDS), Dr. M. Maheswaran, Director of Research and Mr. S. Natarajan, General Manager, NABARD felicitated the efforts of the college.

In his special address, Dr. R. Ezekiel, National Coordinator (NAIP), Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi informed that out of the 51 value chain systems created through NAIP, the value chain on Industrial Agroforestry created by TNAU ranked among the best. He stressed the need for conducting research which is driven by the needs of industry and the very success of this value chain was because of the active and meaningful participation of industries. He congratulated TNAU for having launched this consortium which is the first of its kind in the country.

Dr. N. Krishnakumar I.F.S. Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Administration) and Chief Guest of the function appreciated the efforts taken by the

institute which has enabled livelihood improvement of the farming community besides aiding in increasing the green cover of the state. With the mounting challenges for agriculture, the need for diversification was felt much and tree cultivation was one of the prominent options, he said. The success of any programme lay in bringing the different stakeholders in a production-consumption process together and this consortium would be an important step in achieving it, he said.

In his presidential address, Dr.K.Ramasamy, Vice Chancellor, TNAU emphasized the need for taking up mass tree planting by greening the villages and urged the scientists to adopt villages for this purpose. Such mass tree planting programmes would be successful only when tree species of people's choice were selected, he said. He suggested the consortium to take efforts for synchronizing mass tree planting with rural development. He requested all the consortium partners to coordinate their efforts and use the consortium to address the difficulties and share their experiences.

The meeting ended with a formal vote of thanks by Dr. I. Sekar, Professor (Forestry).

Public Relations Officer