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To
The Editor,

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Sir,

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

21 Days training for Scientists at TNAU

The inaugural function of the ICAR sponsored Centre of Advanced Faculty Training on "Ecological and molecular approaches for Host Plant Resistance to insect pests" for 21 days from 05.11.2019 to 25.11.2019 at the Department of Agricultural Entomology, Centre for Plant Protection Studies, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University was conducted on 06.11.2019. The trainees included were scientists from Agricultural Universities, National Bodies and ICAR institutes from ten different states of the country.

Dr.N.Kumar, the Vice-Chancellor, TNAU presided over the function and inaugurated the training programme. In his address, he informed the participants that the world population clock 7.7418 billions as on 5.11.2019 midday and is ever increasing and has to be fed. In India 2019 population is estimated at 1.371 billions people as on 5.11.2019 according to UN data. India population is equivalent to 17.71% of the total world population. To feed these population we need to produce more from limited lands, water, increasing threats and costs. India's arable land area of 159.7 million hectares (394.6 million acres) is the second largest in the world, after the United States. Its gross irrigated crop area of 82.6 million hectares (215.6 million acres) is the largest in the world. When human started agriculture, insects started colonizing those crops. Thus, selection of plant varieties with less damage might have begun.

Host-plant resistance (HPR) has been thought to give many answers to the scientists in the medieval and modern periods. Resistance of a plant to an insect is the 'relative amount of heritable qualities possessed by the plant which influences the ultimate degree of damage done by the insect. Plant resistance as an approach in pest management offers many advantages. Insect resistant cultivars have eliminated the use of millions of tonnes of pesticides that could have polluted the environment at a faster rate.

If we take the history of TNAU, this world renowned centre has greatly contributed to HPR science and GEB 24 rice accession forms the basis for most of the varieties released all over the world has contributed to the farming community by directly releasing resistant varieties (Rice: Co 25, ASD 5 Co 42, ADT 36, PY 3, ADT 37, ADT53 etc are resistant to brown planthopper) including flower crops like Pari Mullai. TNAU has adopted the policy to work for new varieties that are always carrying genome backgrounds resistant to key pests and diseases and the varieties are durable.

In his special address, Dr.M.Gopalan, former Dean (PG Studies) and also former Director (Plant Protection) and former faculty of the department narrated the history and development of the science of host plant resistance for the management of pests and diseases of crop plants. He urged the scientists to build up the novel methods of pest control using Host Plant Resistance as the principal method in it.

Dr.K.Prabakar, Director, Centre for Plant Protection Studies mentioned that the Host Plant Resistance forms the basis for any IPM programme in Crop Protection and Integrated Crop Management. TNAU, the pioneering University in our country has conducted many IPM programmes through our CPPS from early 1980 onwards.

Dr.N.Sathiah, the Director, CAFT & Professor and Head, Department of Agricultural Entomology explained the areas and contents of the training module and indicated that the lecture schedule is well structured in order to cater to the needs of the participants.

Dr.M.Muthuswami, Professor (Entomology) welcomed the gathering. The trainees, scientists and Post graduate students attended the function. Finally, Dr.M.Murugan, Professor (Entomology) proposed a vote of thanks.

Public Relations Officer