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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:

**Government of Tamil Nadu Extension Officials got Trained for
Biocontrol Agents Production Technologies**

Centre for Plant Protection Studies, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University organised refresher course “Hands on Training on the Production Technologies of Biocontrol Agents for Crop Pests, Diseases and Nematodes” to twenty two extension officials associated with State Biocontrol Laboratories across the State from 27.09.2021 to 01.10.2021 with the financial assistance from the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu.

The major thematic areas covered in the refresher course are equipment required for establishing microbial biocontrol laboratory, mass production of *Trichoderma viride*, *Bacillus subtilis*, *Purpureocillium lilacinum* and *Pochonia chlamydosporia*, facilities required to establish laboratory hosts *Corcyra* & fall armyworm, mass production of predators viz., *Chrysoperla*, *Cryptolaemus*, *Mallada* spp., parasites viz., *Trichogramma*, *Bracon* spp., *Telenomus remus*, *Encarsia guadeloupe*. Field sessions to demonstrate the release of *Telenomus remus* against fall armyworm and *Encarsia guadeloupe* against rugose spiralling whitefly were arranged for the trainees. Preparation of different type of formulations for bio agents and their field application were also discussed during the refresher course. The trainees practised different techniques of mass production at Department of Agricultural Entomology, Department of Plant Pathology and Department of Nematology.

A separate interaction session was also organised at Department of Agricultural Entomology and Department of Plant Pathology to clarify the doubts of the trainees. The queries raised by the trainees on different aspects were attended by a panel of faculty.

The valedictory session of the training programme was held on 01.10.2021. Dr. N. Kumar, Vice-Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University elaborated the efforts

taken by the University in managing invasive insect pests and native insect pests using biocontrol agents. He also informed that the biocontrol agents are mass produced at Coimbatore Main campus and also in sub campuses for the benefit of farmers. He advised the trainees to utilize the opportunities and improvise their skill and biocontrol agents being unique and technology oriented, the Officers have to focus fully on the daily schedules and follow SOPs without deviation. Vice-Chancellor distributed certificates and training manual to the trainees.

Dr. N. Sathiah, Professor and Head of the Department of Agricultural Entomology presented training report. Dr. J.S. Kennedy, Dean (School of Post Graduate Studies), Dr. M. Kalyanasundaram, Dean (Agriculture) and Dr. T. Raguchander, Dean (Students' Welfare) delivered felicitated the gathering. Director, Centre for Plant Protection Studies Dr. K. Prabakar in his presidential address emphasized the importance of quality biocontrol agents' production for their success at field level. The trainees gave feedback about the training programme.

Earlier, Dr. G. Karthikeyan, Professor and Head, Department of Plant Pathology, TNAU, Coimbatore welcomed the gathering. Finally, Dr. A. Shanthi, Professor and Head, Department of Nematology proposed the formal vote of thanks.

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