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To
The Editor,
Sir,

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

TNAU offers New Certificate course in Open Distance Learning

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) is the pioneer among the Agricultural Universities in India to start the Distance Learning programme. TNAU is offering various Open and Distance Learning courses viz., Agricultural based certificate courses, Diploma in Agri Inputs and **Diploma courses in Agriculture and Horticulture** to school dropouts, farming community, self help groups and other unemployed youth with a view to empower them for self employment and to develop as entrepreneur.

The Directorate of Open and Distance Learning, TNAU is re-launching the certificate course for Urban Dwellers after 10 years. This course mainly focus on the Urban Dwellers who aspire for distance learning and interested in starting self employment programme in limited land areas of urban cities with efficient usage of land, transportation, infrastructure, public spaces, sanitation, air and water quality *etc.* The courses viz., Landscape and Ornamental Gardening, Nursery technologies, Roof and Kitchen Garden and Solid Waste Management are being launched now.

Since, 2005, TNAU has ventured to impart technical knowledge on 44 nos. of agricultural based certificate courses and among them for the courses viz., Coconut Cultivation Technology, Mushroom Production, Medicinal plants, Bakery and Confectionary products, Sericulture, Sugarcane Production Technology, Nursery Technology and propagation of horticultural crops, Waste recycling and vermicomposting, Organic Farming, Bee Keeping and Landscaping and Ornamental

Gardening has gained more importance among the learners and the courses are being offered at various centers of TNAU regularly.

As per the Central Government amendments regarding the Fertilizer Order and Pesticide, 2015, the basic educational qualification for the input dealers was fixed as Diploma in Agriculture. Hence, based on the need of the input dealers, the Diploma in Agri Inputs course has been designed and is being offered since, 2016.

In continuation of gaining of adequate momentum by the Diploma in Agri Inputs course among the learners, furthermore 12 Diploma courses had been initiated from 2021. Among 12, the courses *viz.*, Diploma in Horticultural Technologies, Herbal Sciences, Coconut Production Technologies, Sugarcane Technologies, commercial production of Bio-fertilizers and Bio-control agents and Tea Plantation Management are being enrolled by more number of learners and are offered at various centers of TNAU regularly.

The Directorate of Open and Distance Learning is taking constant efforts in preparing Self Learning Materials (SLM) with active participation of scientists of respective disciplines for the benefit of learners.

Besides this, the course materials were prepared with utmost care and included with illustrations, pictures, tables *etc.* to promote continuous learning.

All the courses of Directorate of Open and Distance Learning are being offered all over Tamil Nadu. The contact classes will be conducted only during Saturdays and Sundays for the benefit of the candidates at TNAU Main campus and all sub-campuses, KVKs and Research Stations of TNAU.

Hence, the farming community, entrepreneurs, self-help groups and other learners who aspire for education and interested in establishing agro based industries in rural areas are requested to get enrolled in this directorate and reap the benefit.

For further details

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