

President Droupadi Murmu confers 5th National Water Awards; TNAU bags first prize in Best Institution Category

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University won first prize in Best Institution (other than school or college) category in the 2023 National Water Award for innovative water harvesting engineering practices, agricultural water management technologies and organizing water awareness campaigns.

President Droupadi Murmu presented the 5th National Water Awards 2023 at New Delhi and Prof. V. Geethalakshmi, Vice-Chancellor of TNAU received the First Prize in Best Institution (other than school or college) category along with Dr. A. Raviraj, Dean of Agricultural Engineering. The award was conferred with a citation and a trophy as well as cash prize of rupees two lakhs.

National Water Awards 2023 highlight the commendable work and efforts done by people and organizations nationwide to realize the government's vision of a "Jal Samridh Bharat," and Union Minister of Jal Shakti C.R. Patil announced the 5th National Water Awards 2023 on 14.10.2024 and commended the recipients for their outstanding work and initiatives to raise awareness of the significance of water management.

In nine categories—Best State, Best District, Best Village Panchayat, Best Urban Local Body, Best School or College, Best Industry, Best Water User Association, Best Institution (other than school or college), and Best Civil Society—the Department of Water Resources, River Development, and Ganga Rejuvenation (DoWR, RD & GR), which is part of the Ministry of Jal Shakti, announced the 38 winners, including joint winners, for the 5th National Water Awards, 2023.

686 applications in all were received. The awards are for creating awareness among the people about the importance of water and motivating them to adopt best water usage practices.

- ✓ Tamil Nadu Agricultural University has created 9 underground sumps with a total capacity of about 2,300 cubic meters, for harvesting rainwater which is being used to meet water demand for laboratories, agriculture and allied activities. Almost 100% of rainwater is harvested and used effectively.
- ✓ Further, run off water is also harvested in a Farm pond holding a capacity of 400 cubic meters. Also, Percolation ponds (1 No.), recharge shafts (3 Nos.), recharge pits (15 Nos.) are available in the campus which are used for recharging groundwater effectively and annually about 4.4 million litres of rainwater is being recharged into groundwater.

- ✓ In addition, about 12,500 trees have been planted in the campus. Drip irrigation system, Rain hose irrigation system and Pot watering have been installed for watering the tree saplings.
- ✓ An underground carriage system has been developed for transporting sewage through pipes from all buildings and hostels within the university campus to a sewage treatment plant (STP) of 175 KLD capacity to treat the wastewater. About 75 percent of treated wastewater from STP is used for irrigating the fodder crops, agroforestry trees etc. through drip irrigation.
- ✓ Also, awareness programmes, field demonstrations, meetings related to water management activities are being organised on regular basis. Two policy documents, one on rainwater harvesting through abandoned wells recharge technology, and the other on accelerated recharge through recharge shaft technology have also been published by University.