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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:

Awareness Programme to School Children

NSS School Camp of Agri varsity was held a Sokkanur Panchayat near Kinathukadavu in Coimbatore for a period of 7 days from 23-5-2015 to 29-5-2015. Technology demonstrations, Rallies, Madurai camp, cleaning of premises were the features of the camp.

Food and Agriculture organization in Rome has announced the year 2015 as the International year of soils, soil erosion, low soil organic matter and consequential impaired microbial activity and yield decline in crops, soil physical and chemical constraints, improper input management leading to soil problems, impairment of ground water quality, salinization of soil and irrigation water has raised here and cry for protection of soil resources since it is not only a basic need for agriculture but also life as a whole. Food production has to be raised to 450 million metric tonnes in another decade for which soil health improvement is the imminent need.

Apart from transfer of technologies on soil management to farmers, the department of Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry planned to sensitize the school children, the future citizens on soil health. A programme to create awareness to school children was held during the NSS special camp at Muthugoundanur. 25 children from 3rd to 11th standard participated.

Dr. A. Vadivel, Professor, Dept. of Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry (SS&AC), TNAU, Coimbatore told the children about the five functions of soil including anchoring crop growth and supplying nutrition, decomposing crop and animal waste, filtering water, acts as an engineering medium and services as a habitat for micro organisms. He made a presentation on types of soil, functions of soil, effects of improper soil management etc.

In the practical session, different types of soil like red, black, alluvial, laterite, peat were shown to the students. Grittiness, soapiness, stickiness of sand, silt and clay

fractions were shown. Inflation of water in a sandy and clayey soil were demonstrated and the fact that different soil need different management were reiterated. Effervescence with addition of hydrochloric acid to find out calcareousness in soils were demonstrated. Students interested with the professors and got their doubts cleared. Te programme was organized by Dr. M.R. Latha, Asst. Professor, Dept. of SS&AC, TNAU, Coimbatore and NSS programme officers with a view that students are the future citizens and they should be made responsible persons and only if soil is protected, there can be life on earth. Students should be made part of sustainable natural resource management and the programmes will be extended to government aided schools in Coimbatore.

An awareness rally on soil health followed with 300 NSS volunteers rousing slogans on protect the soil protect the life, no soil, no food, plant trees, prevent soil erosion, integrate the use of manures and hiofertiless etc to sustain soil health. The rally started at Veerappagoundanur and terminated in Sattakalpudur. Soil science Professor, Dr. A. Vadivel, Dr. D. Vasanthi, Dr. MR. Backiyavathi and Asst. Professor Dr. M. Gopalakrishnan and NSS program officers participated.

Asst. Public Relations Officer