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To  
The Editor,

Date: 16-12-2015

Sir,

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

**National Symposium on Spices and Aromatic Crops (SYMSAC VIII) 2015**

The inaugural function of the National symposium on Spices and Aromatic Crops (SYMSAC – VIII) jointly organized by Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore and Indian Society for Spices, Kozhikode with the theme “Towards 2050-Strategies for sustainable Spices Production” was held on Dec. 16, 2015 at TNAU Campus, Coimbatore.

The symposium was inaugurated with the lighting of lamp by Dr.N. K. Krishna Kumar, Deputy Director General (Hort. Science), ICAR, New Delhi. Addressing the inaugural function Dr. N. K. Krishna Kumar highlighted that Indian spices face the challenge of high level of microbial contaminants including mycotoxin in the finished product. He stressed the need for higher productivity, clean spices through improved post harvest processing, packaging and storage systems for sustainable spices production.

Dr. K. Ramasamy, Vice - Chancellor, TNAU in his presidential address stated that both agricultural and horticultural sector provide opportunities for alternate systems of medicine and suggested that studies may be thrust towards indication of maturity index and right time of harvest that may have positive effect on the alternate systems of medicine. Further, the Vice- Chancellor advised the forum to suggest suitable strategies for marketing of spices products and to work more on quality parameters of the spice products.

In his key note address, Professor R.R. Hanchinal, Chairperson, Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Authorities (PPV&FRA), New Delhi said that Indian spices have nomenclature with geographical indicators such as Malabar Pepper, Alleppey Green Cardamom, Coorg Green Cardamom, Naga Chilli and Erode turmeric. He stressed the need for protecting the varieties developed by State Agricultural Universities and farmers

through PPV&FRA. He appreciated Tamil Nadu Agricultural University for its systematic work on protecting the varieties of this region.

Dr. M. Anandaraj, Director, ICAR-IISR, Kozhikode, Dr.V.A. Parthasarathy, Former Director , ICAR-IISR, Kozhikode, Dr. Jitendra Kumar, Director, ICAR-DMAPR, Anand, Gujarat, Dr. S. Mariappan, Dean(Hort.), HC&RI, TNAU, Coimbatore and Dr. Homey Cherian, Director, DASD, Kozhikode felicitated the symposium and cherished the efforts of the organizers.

This was followed by the ISS award ceremony which included Sugandha Bharathi Award to eminent scientists for their outstanding contribution in the field of spices research, ISS Fellowships for distinguished scientists who have made signified contributions through technology development, filing of patents, publications and other recognitions, Sugandhasree Innovative Farmer Award for farmers who have made significant contributions through involvement in spices cultivation, Dr. V.S. Korikanthimath Award for the best Ph.D. thesis, Smt. Vijaya V. Korikanthimath Award for the best M.Sc. thesis and Dr. J.S. Pruthi Award of the best research publications.

On the occasion, a Souvenir of the Symposium and Nilavembu powder, a TNAU product was released.

Earlier, Dr. K. Nirmal Babu, President, ISS, Kozhikode welcomed the gathering. Dr. J. Suresh, Organizing Secretary and Professor and Head, Dept. of Spices and Plantation Crops, HC&RI, Coimbatore proposed a formal vote of thanks.

The inaugural function was followed by an award lecture and inauguration of exhibition.

Asst. Public Relations Officer