

Coconut board trains 5,000 in farming tasks

Special Correspondent

KOCHI: The Coconut Development Board has achieved a landmark in the execution of a project called Friends of Coconut Trees. The number of persons who have been trained under the scheme has crossed 5,000.

As many as 5,010 people including 204 women were trained in 225 batches since the inception of the programme in August last year. The trainees belonged to Kerala, Maharashtra and Lakshadweep. This project is an attempt of the board to bring back the lost glory of the coconut sector which has been facing acute shortage of trained hands to perform farming tasks including harvesting and pest control.

The six-day programme includes training in palm climbing, scientific management practices of coconut, pest control, dealing with diseases, harvesting, collection of seed nuts, management of coconut nursery, irrigation and fertiliser application. Classes on human resource development, banking, yoga and healthy way of living are also conducted.

The concept was mooted by the board, with the intention to elevate the profession while farmers were in dire need of coconut pluckers. Apart from training, the board is providing specialised machine and two set of uniforms to the trainees.

The board envisages a worthy occupation for those who have completed the training successfully. The approved charges are Rs.10 for a normal tree (40-foot height) and Rs.15 for taller trees. The trainees are making Rs.300 to Rs.1,000 per day, according to the board.