



National Meet on Prospects of Coconut Sector and Kisan Mela-2106

Shri Radha Mohan Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Govt. of India inaugurated the National Meet on Prospects of Coconut Sector and Kisan Mela-2106 organized by Central Plantation Crops Research Institute at the Regional Station, Kayamkulam, Kerala during 29-30 September, 2016. The programme was organized as part of the celebrations of 100 years of coconut research dating back to 1916.

Shri Radha Mohan Singh in his inaugural address complimented the research achievements made by ICAR-CPCRI to make coconut sector more vibrant during the 100 years of research. He opined that low productivity and high labour wages are some of the problems presently faced by the coconut farmers, and therefore, 'comprehensive coconut care' should be the focus for sustaining income.

Hon'ble Minister further spoke on the need for maintenance of soil health which is considered as the backbone of agriculture and informed that the Govt. of India is taking necessary steps to distribute soil health cards to all farmers in the country by 2017-18. For this purpose, the union government is planning to set up soil testing laboratories in each panchayath in the country with necessary financial support.

The Minister further informed that the government will give priority to the lab-to-

land programme for transfer of technology to farmers. The Central Government would take initiatives to ensure that the new technologies and research results evolved in agricultural research stations and universities in the country reach the farmers at his doorstep when he needs it most. He called upon for the production of quality planting materials and judicious use of water for enhancing productivity and urged the researchers and farmers to focus on crop pluralization and product diversification for sustained income and better profitability of farming.



Shri Radha Mohan Singh inaugurating the National meet. Seen are Shri. Raju Narayana Swami IAS, APC, Kerala and member of CDB Shri. K.C Venugopal, M.P, Alappuzha, Dr. P. Chowdappa, Director, CPCRI and Shri. V.S Sunil Kumar, Minister of Agriculture, Kerala

The Minister launched 'e-Kalpa', a mobile app, for quick retrieval of ICAR-CPCRI technologies and user-friendly farm-problem diagnosis and remedial measures, and two value-added products under the brand, 'Kalpa crunch' and 'Kalpa sugar'. These value-added products from neera can further enhance the viability and profitability of the neera industry, directly benefitting all the stakeholders in the value-chain. He also released a book on 'Production of Quality Planting Material'. A national level exhibition organized as part of the National Meet was inaugurated by the Minister wherein ICAR institutes, KVKs, Coconut Development Board, Kerala Agricultural University, FACT, State Department of Agriculture and private entrepreneurs displayed latest technologies and value-added products.

Shri. V.S. Sunil Kumar, Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture, Govt. of Kerala, in his keynote address, urged to consider coconut as a sensitive commodity and requested the Central government to take the state government in to confidence, while formulating export - import policies with far-reaching consequences for farmers in the state. He called for synergized research between central and state research organizations keeping 'Farmer First'. He informed the government's plan for establishing a chain of agro-parks to produce value-added products from agricultural produces in all districts of Kerala, of which four would be coconut-based parks. The state Minister also released a book Compendium of Phytophthora Diseases and a Souvenir Gleanings of Coconut.

Shri. K.C. Venugopal, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Alappuzha presided over the function. Dr. P. Chowdappa, Director, ICAR-CPCRI, Kasaragod welcomed the gathering and Dr. V. Krishnakumar, Head, ICAR-CPCRI, Regional Station proposed vote of thanks. Shri Raju Narayana Swamy, IAS, Agricultural Production Commissioner & Principal Secretary (Agriculture),



Shri Radha Mohan Singh planting coconut seedling in the CPCRI premises

Shri. Biju Prabhakar IAS, Director of Agriculture, Govt. of Kerala and Shri. C.R. Muraleedharan, Member, Coconut Development Board attended the programme.

More than 3,500 farmers and delegates attended the meeting. Various central and state government agencies like ICAR institutes and Krishi Vigyan Kendras in the state; Coconut Development Board; NABARD; Kerala Agricultural University; Department of Agriculture, Kerala; ATMA; Coconut Producers' Companies and Federations and various private entrepreneurs and input agencies were partners of the two- days programme.

An interactive session on prospects of coconut sector was held as part of the programme wherein experts spoke on value addition in coconut, production strategies and pest management strategies in coconut. ■



Shri Radha Mohan Singh in CDB stall