

Need to empower coconut FPOs to enhance availability of quality seedlings

Representatives of award winning Coconut Producer Federations opined that Farmer Producer Organisations need to be strengthened in coconut sector to enhance availability of quality seedlings through decentralised coconut nurseries. This would greatly help the coconut growers who are exploited by various agencies. Currently many nurseries cheat the farmers by supplying inferior quality seedlings at exorbitant rates. The situation is continuing because of the lack of strict regulatory mechanisms to ensure quality control in coconut nurseries. Representatives of coconut FPOs were giving their feedback in the online function on 8th October 2020 organised by Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (ICAR-CPCRI) in connection with the World Coconut Day.

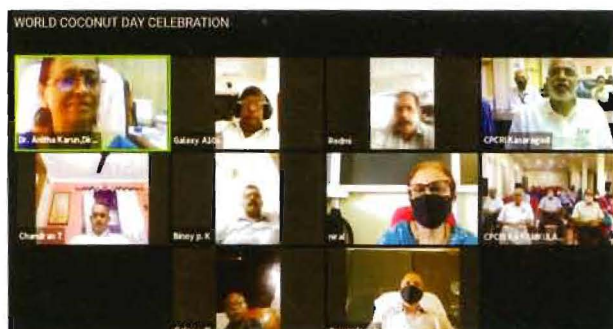
Programme scheduled in connection with World Coconut Day to be held on 2nd September 2020 was postponed to 8th October 2020 due to the demise of former president of India, Dr. Pranab Kumar Mukherjee. The focal theme of World Coconut Day celebration during this year as declared by the 'International Coconut Community', the organisation of coconut producing countries in the world, was 'Invest in coconut to save the world'.

Dr. Anitha Karun, Director, CPCRI inaugurated the programme conducted through video conferencing. In her inaugural address Dr. Anitha Karun reiterated the viewpoint that community nurseries managed by coconut farmer producer organisations is a prudent strategy to enhance availability of quality coconut seedlings.

Awards to the best performing decentralised coconut nurseries managed by Farmer Producer Organisations with the technical support of CPCRI and financial support of State Department of Agriculture Development & Farmers' Welfare was distributed by Dr. Anitha Karun in the online programme.

Cash awards to the winning community coconut nurseries were sponsored by the Coconut Development Board (CDB), Kochi.

Kunnamangalam Federation of Coconut Producers Society from Kozhikode District won the first prize and cash award of Rs 30,000/-, Changaroth Federation of Coconut Producers Society also from Kozhikode District won the second prize and cash



award of Rs20,000/-, and Bharanikkavu panchayat Federation of Coconut Producers Society, from Alappuzha District won the third prize and cash award of Rs 10,000/-.

Shri. Chandran Thiruvallath President of Kunnamangalam Coconut Producer Federation, Sri Rajan Master, President of Changaroth Coconut Producer Federation and Sri Thomas Mathunni, President of Bharanikkavu Coconut Producer Federation presented their experiences of managing decentralised coconut nurseries and gave suggestions for sustaining the activities with more support from state Department of Agriculture and other agencies.

Smt. D. S. Resmi, Assistant Director, Coconut Development Board offered felicitations in the inaugural programme.

Representatives of Bharanikkavu panchayat Federation of Coconut Producers Society who were attending the online function were honoured by Dr. S. Kalavathi, Head CPCRI Regional Station, Kayangulam.

Two publications on Coconut Nursery Management and Coconut Plant Protection prepared in Malayalam were released during the inaugural function.

Coconut growers, representatives of Coconut Farmer Producer Organisations and other stakeholders attended the programme through video conferencing. Dr. K. Muralidharan, Head, Division of Social Sciences welcomed the gathering and Dr. Thamban. C., Principal Scientist (Agrl. Extension) and co-ordinator of the programme proposed vote of thanks.

(Report: Dr. Thamban. C, Principal Scientist (Agrl. Extension), ICAR-CPCRI, Kasaragod) ■