

Systematic Voters 'Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) Programme and Workshop on Technological Solutions for Productivity Enhancement in Coastal Agriculture

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DHAN Foundation collaborated with the Agricultural College and Research Institute (AC&RI), Kurukkaththi, Nagapattinam, to commemorate World Water Day at Keezhvelur. The events aimed to rally various stakeholders involved in water resource management across Tamil Nadu to address the looming challenges of water scarcity and its implications on food production.

Dr. D.Dhamodaran, Ph.D., Professor & Academic Coordinator at AC&RI, delivered the welcome speech, extending a warm welcome to farmers, executive engineers from the Agriculture Engineering department and Tamil Nadu Water Supply And Drainage Board (TWAD), college staff, DHAN colleagues, and students.

During his felicitation, Mr.V.Venkatesan, Chief Executive Officer of DHAN Vayalagam Tank Foundation, highlighted the global importance of water, emphasized efficient water usage practices, and highlighted the community-led initiatives of the Vayalagam nested institutions and their impacts.



Mrs. Ilavarasi, Senior Team Leader-Human Resources Department at DHAN Foundation, enlightened participants during the technical session about traditional water body names, cascades, water supply methods for farming, and the significance of irrigation tanks and water bodies. She also shed light on other DHAN Foundation initiatives like Kalanjiam, Mutual, and Farmer Producer Organization, emphasizing community-led programs. Her session concluded with a song celebrating water and agriculture.

Mr. K. Murugesan, M.Tech, MBA, PhD, Executive Engineer of the Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage Board, discussed water management and the current water source situation in Nagapattinam. He generously sponsored 100 tree saplings to be planted around the college campus.

Mr. Palanisamy, B.E. Agri, Executive Engineer, Agriculture Engineering department, Nagai, shared insights into global water levels, the drawbacks of unlevelled farmland, the benefits of laser leveling, and advocated against excessive water usage in farming. Following these speeches, college students delivered a special address on Water and the Right to Vote.

Concluding the function, Dr. Ravi, PhD, Dean of AC and RI, explained the institute's infrastructure and emphasized collaboration with DHAN Foundation. He encouraged farmers to cultivate millets instead of paddy, stressing their value-added products and marketing strategies. AC&RI are in the process of releasing a saline-tolerant variety of small millets.

The forenoon session ended with a vote of thanks by Dr. A. Anuratha, Ph.D., Associate Professor (Soil Science) at AC&RI, Keezhvelur, Nagapattinam.

After lunch, the college organized a field visit to Pioneer farmers' fields for hands-on experience sharing. Farmers have gained valuable insights from this visit.

Declarations and Way forward of this Programme:

1. Students are encouraged to take social responsibility by learning from farmers and traditional technologies, enriching their education while contributing to sustainability and cultural preservation.

2. Collaboration among academic institutions, NGOs, government departments, and farmers is crucial for developing technological solutions to enhance productivity in coastal agriculture.
3. By adopting technologies like laser leveling and improving saline water quality, supported by government services, farmers can optimize resource use and mitigate challenges in coastal agriculture.
4. Recognizing the significance of voting as a civic duty, making voting compulsory encourages citizen engagement in decision-making processes.
5. Integrating native wisdom with current agricultural technology is essential for sustainable farming practices, promoting resilience, innovation, and economic development in rural communities.