

## DBT funds a biotech-kisan hub at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University

By Sunderarajan Padmanabhan

Twitter handle: @ndpsr

New Delhi, January 09 : The Department of Biotechnology in the Union Ministry of Science and Technology has provided funds to Coimbatore-based Tamil Nadu Agricultural University to set up a biotechnology-KISAN hub under its farmers-centric mission Biotech-Krishi Innovation Science Application Network (Biotech-KISAN) programme to link India's farmers with Indian and global best in science.

The hub has a low cost hydroponic demonstration unit, silage making facility, moisture meter, a nutritional forage cafeteria and a power back up facility to ensure uninterrupted power supply to the demonstration unit. The hub has been established at a cost of Rs. 11.14 lakhs at the Department of Forage Crops in the Centre for Plant Breeding and Genetics at the University.

Six scientists from the partnering institutes were selected and trained on improved fodder varieties and its cultivation and preservation.

Seed and planting materials of several improved fodder crops -- Fodder Sorghum CO (FS) 29, Fodder Maize (African Tall), Stylosanthes, Desmanthus (CO2), Lucerne (CO 2), Fodder Cowpea (CO 9), Cumbu Napier (CO (BN) 5), Guinea grass (CO (GG) 3) and Cenchrus (CO 1) were distributed to the partnering institutes towards the establishment of nutritional fodder cafeteria. In addition, they have been supplied with vacuum machines for creating silage making facility.

Twenty beneficiaries from the nearby Erode and Tiruppur districts were selected (10 from each district) based on an extensive survey conducted by the hub. The seed/ planting materials of improved fodder crops were distributed to these beneficiaries also for the establishment of nutritional fodder cafeteria in their areas.

Keywords: seed, planting material materials, nutritional fodder cafeteria, silage making facility  
fodder