

KAU bid to get patent for fertiliser from human hair

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FOR barbers, hair is no more waste that needs money and effort to be managed. It will help them earn profits as the Kerala Agricultural University (KAU) has developed technology to make fertilizer from human hair. In a recent development, the KAU approached the Inter University Centre for Intellectual Property Rights Studies of Cusat seeking steps to get patent for the product. "With the process for getting patent on, we are unable to explain further details of the technology," said D Griija, who is leading experiments in this regard.

The plan is to hand over the technology to the Kerala State Barbers and Beauticians Association (KSBBA), which will help its members produce fertilizers from hair. According to the KSBBA state general secretary U N Thampi, the research was carried out by the KAU after a memorandum and proposal were submitted to Agriculture Minister V S Sunil Kumar in July, 2016. The memorandum urged steps to bring an end to the mounting waste management issues in barber shops.

The plan is to convert human hair into liquid form using certain chemicals and spray it on plants.

Earlier, an experiment conducted by the Department of Agricultural Microbiology, was successful after the liquid was applied on some of the plants on the Vellanikkara campus. Hair was used after washing with chemicals and heating them in high temperature. Researchers here found healthier changes and early flowering in the plants after the liquid was sprayed on plants.

"The presence of nitrogen in high quantity will help plants grow vigorously," said Girija. Human hair also contains low percentage of potassium, phosphorous, calcium, magnesium and sulphur. Meanwhile, KSBBA hailed the move citing it will ease the waste management woes being faced by barber shops across the state. "We are looking to implement it as a state-level project after making barbers and beauticians aware of the cause," said Thampi.

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