

# Wayanad to be made floriculture hub

10 ha at RARS to be set apart for floriculture research



Minister for Agriculture V.S. Sunil Kumar viewing plants exhibited at Poopoli-2018, an international florifest and exhibition being held at the Regional Agricultural Research Station (RARS), Ambalavayal, Wayanad.

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Minister for Agriculture V.S. Sunil Kumar has said that the government has initiated a series of efforts to develop Wayanad district as the floriculture hub of the State.

Speaking after inaugurating the fifth edition of Poopoli, the international florifest and exhibition, at the Regional Agricultural Research Station (RARS), Ambalavayal, on Monday, Mr. Sunil Kumar said that Wayanad had been designated as special zone for floriculture and aromatic rice cultivation.

The 18-day fete is being organised jointly by the Kerala Agricultural University (KAU) and the Department of Agriculture Development and Farmers' Welfare.

"The RARS will host an international floriculture symposium, organised by the Indian Orchid Society, by the first week of March and 10 hectares of land of the research station will be set apart for research on floriculture as a part of tapping the floriculture potential of

the district," the Minister said.

## Jackfruit fest

"Apart from making Poopoli an annual event figuring in the tourism calendar, it has also been decided to host an international jackfruit fest at Ambalavayal," he said.

Mr. Sunil Kumar said steps had been initiated to ensure the quality of planting materials.

The Agriculture Department would procure seeds and planting materials only from government agencies such as KAU and public sector undertakings.

"The KAU has initiated a process of fixing QR code and barcode to materials produced in its farms," Mr. Sunil Kumar said adding that similar procedure would begin in Ambalavayal RARS too.

"The KAU has made significant contributions to the development of farming sector and 66 technologies developed the university have been released to the farmers. All research stations of the university are stepping

up their activities. The agri clinic initiated by the university's extension wing is a novel programme to reach out to farmers," the Minister said.

## Farmers honoured

KAU Vice Chancellor C. Chandrababu highlighted the potential of cut flower export and economic importance of horticultural entrepreneurship. Dr. Chandrababu honoured six progressive farmers in the district.

I.C. Balakrishnan, MLA, presided. District panchayat president Ushakumari; Ambalavayal grama panchayat president Seetha Vijayan; KAU general council member Cheruvayal Raman; KAU registrar S. Leenakumary; Director of Research P. Indira Devi; Director of Agriculture M. Sunil Kumar; and people's and farmer representatives spoke.

In addition to the exhibition, cultural programmes and competitions for students are also being held as part of the Poopoli, which will close on January 18.