

VAIGA opens up avenues for farming sector

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Thrissur

VAIGA has opened an avenue for prosperity of farmers, said Kerala Assembly Speaker P Sreeramkrishnan. Speaking at the inauguration of the valedictory function of 'VAIGA 2017' at the Kerala Agricultural University (KAU) central auditorium, he highlighted the role of value addition and marketing avenues to extricate farmers from financial burdens. "There is a gross mismatch between the amount of research and extension programmes undertaken by different agencies and growth rate in the sector. Agriculture will prosper only if it is remunerative and post harvest processing is inevitable to enhance farmers' income," he said.

Industries Minister A C Moideen, who distributed prizes for best pavilions, said the government is keen to support agri-business enterprises. "The current economic policies in the country have broken the backbone of the farming sector. Alternative options have to be explored to help farmers. The government is striving hard to make the state entrepreneur-friendly and a new legislation to facilitate industry licence within 30 days is being enacted," he said. Moideen also released four processing technologies developed by the KAU.

Agriculture Minister V S Sunilkumar announced concrete steps will be initiated to boost processing industry in Kerala. "Technologies for value addition of every crop has been developed by the KAU. As many as 66 such technologies are available now. These technologies will be propagated to farmers across the state through the ATMA units in districts," he said. The KAU bagged the first prize for stalls put up by research organisations while VF-PCK got first among public sector undertakings.