

Stress on improving farm income

Governor says better processing facilities needed The Hindu 28.12.17

STAFF REPORTER
THRISSUR

Governor P. Sathasivam has called for value addition of farm produces for sustainable development of agriculture sector and augmenting farmers' income.

Speaking after inaugurating the VAIGA (Value Addition for Income Generation in Agriculture) international workshop and exhibition at Kerala Agricultural University, Vellanikkara, on Wednesday, the Governor said only value addition could help regain the lost glory of the farm sector.

Key role

"The farm sector has an important role in the economic growth of the country. But the recent growth rate of the sector is not encouraging.

Though the country has the second place in production of fruits and vegetables in the world, 15-30% of the produce is getting spoiled. We need to improve processing and cold-storage facilities. Agro industries should be strengthened," the Governor said.

Better market

Presiding over the function, Minister for Agriculture V.S. Sunil Kumar said the government wanted to ensure a decent income for the farmers by providing them with better market.

"Only 10% of the farm products of the State is getting processed now. We have a huge potential in the sector. Our objective is to achieve 30% growth in value addition. We want to en-

courage the farmers to become agro-entrepreneurs. This will avoid exploitation by middlemen."

A platform

VAIGA aims at creating an ecosystem for farmers and young entrepreneurs.

It will provide a platform for farmers, trainers, and entrepreneurs to address the problems in the farm sector.

This edition of VAIGA will focus mainly on honey, banana, coconut, and millets.

Apart from farm experts from across the country, delegates from the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand are taking part.

There are about 300-odd stalls in the agriculture exhibition.



Governor P. Sathasivam and Agriculture Minister V.S. Sunil Kumar at VAIGA in Thrissur on Wednesday. ■K.K. NAJEEB