

Farmers told to explore export potential of banana

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'Huge quantity being wasted due to lack of storage facilities'

STAFF REPORTER

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Experts at the technical session on banana processing at VAIGA-2017 have called for a concerted effort to explore the enormous export potential of the fruit.

P. Rajendran, Associate Director of Research, Kerala Agricultural University, pointed out that less than 15% of bananas produced in India is being exported, while nearly half of the re-

maining quantity is being wasted due to lack of proper storage facilities and lacunae in post harvest handling.

"Banana, the largest non woody plant and the biggest fruit in terms of nutritive value, can bring more revenue if more stress is laid on value addition.

"At present only 2% or less of the total production in India is used for value addition, whereas in developed countries at least one

third of the production is processed. With effective intervention in collection, transportation and storage this can be considerably improved and additional income of ₹1 lakh crore can be achieved from Kerala alone."

R. Ravindra, regional head, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Agency (APEDA), Bengaluru, said a new regional station would be set up at Wayanad.