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Bridging Farmer-Scientist gap a priority : VC



Dr.P.Rajendran addressing press persons at KAU HQ after taking over as Vice-Chancellor

Bridging the farmer-scientist gap and bailing out the University from financial crisis are priority action plans, said Dr. P. Rajendran, new Vice-Chancellor.

Addressing presspersons after taking over as the 10th Vice-chancellor of KAU, he said that the ties between the University and line departments should be strengthened to ensure that benefits of research reach the farmers.

'The University has been discharging the mandates of teaching, research and extension in farm science. The standard of education is pretty good and we have also achieved several vital research outputs. The extension wing is meant to transfer the technologies developed by the University to line departments which have to be popularised among farmers. Though KAU extension wing has been active, this mode has not been working

as efficiently as it was envisaged, probably because of lack of coordination with line departments and hence lacunae have surfaced in taking advanced technology to farming community. My first priority would be to address this issue as boosting agricultural production cannot be achieved without technological advancement' he explained.

Vice-Chancellor said that all possible steps will be taken for enhancing internal revenue. 'The land available with the University will be fully utilized to increase seed production and the expertise of KAU scientists would be fully tapped to augment consultancy services.' Dr. Rajendran said.

Minister moots expert centres to boost Agricultural Prosperity



Minister for Agriculture, K.P. Mohanan has said that a adoption of hi-tech farming is inevitable for sustainable agriculture. Inaugurating a national seminar on Hi-tech Farming-Marching towards sustainability held at Kozhikode on 21 January 2013, he pro-posed three expert centres at Thiruvananthapuram, Palakkad and Thrissur to promote the production and marketing of flowers, fruits and vegetables.

Dr. P. Rajendran, Honorable Vice-Chancellor, Kerala Agricultural University presided over the inaugural function. Dr. Krish S Iyengar, Joint Secretary, National Committee on Plasticulture Application in Horticulture

(NCPAH), New Delhi, delivered the Key Note address. Dr. M. Sivaswamy, Dean (Agri. Engg); Dr. T.R. Gopalakrishnan, Director of Research, KAU; Dr. E.K. Mathew, Registrar, KAU and Dr. Abdul Hakkim, PI, PFDC participated.

The Seminar was organized by Precision Farming Development Centre (PFDC), Kelappaji of College of Agricultural Engineering and Technology under KAU and SHM, Govt. of Kerala with financial support from National Committee on Plasti-culture Applications in Horticulture (NCPAH), Dept. of Agriculture and Co-operation, Govt. of India.

The two-day seminar saw experts, agricultural scientists and lead farmers making presentations on a range of topics related to hi-tech farming. The

seminar observed that low productivity and shrinkage of area under food crops had resulted in reduced food production during recent years.

Dr. K.Prathapan, MD, SHM; Dr. Jim Thomas, Prof. & Head, communication centre, KAU; Dr. P. Rajendran, Prof. & Head, ARS, Anakkayam; Dr. K.P. Visalakshi, Professor (Agri. Engg); Dr. P.K. Rajeevan, Former Registrar, KAU; Dr. S. P. Dahiwalkar, PFDC Rahuri; Mr. Kamaleish Doot, M/s Lamifabs Papers Pvt. Ltd., Aurangabad; Dr. Dharendra Singh, GBPUAT, Pantnagar and Anu Varghese piloted technical sessions. Digaul Thomas, a progressive farmer of Wayanad also made a presentation.

Various publications by PFDC were also released during the Seminar in which farmers, officials and scientists participated.

Executive Committee Re-constituted

Thomas Unniyadan MLA, I.C. Balakrishnan MLA, Sri.P.A.Salam, Adv. Sony Sebastian, and Smt. Baby Balamprath (Non Official members) and Dr. Jose Joseph (Teachers' representative) were elected to the Executive Committee of KAU. M.P.Vincent MLA, Agricultural Production Commissioner, Secretaries to Government in Finance and Agriculture Departments and Dr.N.V.Nair, representative of ICAR are other members of EC. Vice-Chancellor Dr. P. Rajendran chaired the special meeting of the GC held at Government Guest House, Thycaud on January 19. 38 members in the 49 member council exercised franchise. Dr.E.K.Mathew, Registrar was the Returning Officer. The GC also constituted statutory sub committees such as Statute Committee, Assurance Committee and Accounts Committee. Smt.P.A.Ramanibai will head the Statute Committee while I.K.Raveendraraj and Dr. S.Devanesan will be chairmen of Assurance Committee and Accounts Committee respectively. Dr. Mary Regina and K.Gireendra Babu were nominated to the KAU welfare fund Trust.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Page 2
New Registrar, Academic Council
RAWE, Book fair
Agri web portal

Page 3
Cooperative seminar
General Council
KAU Bed Former
New Fertiliser
Nigerian team in KAU

Page 4
Metagenomics Training Programme
GC Sub-Committees
Awards and recognitions
Retirements

Academic Council Moots Agri Polytechnics

KAU Academic Council meeting held on 14 November 2012 mooted Agricultural Polytechnics attached to the Six Regional Agricultural Research Stations at Vellayani, Kayamkulam, Kumarakom, Pattambi, Ambalavayal & Pilicode.

Addressing the 119th meeting of the Academic Council held at KAU HQ, the Vice-Chancellor Dr. P. Rajendran said that a major reorientation of Agricultural Education programmes and Technology dissemination modes is indispensable in the evolving scenario. 'He proposed polytechnics under Plan mode are intended to provide the supporting and technical man-



Vice-Chancellor addressing Academic Council

power resources in farm mechanization and productivity enhancement' - he said.

The Vice-Chancellor also said that improving academic standards is a priority area. An academic workshop will be organized to facilitate threadbare discussions on the recommendations of the sub-committee appointed to propose amendments to academic regulations.

The Council also approved a fast track system to provide Degree certificates to those who are in urgent need. As per the new system a student can get the Degree certificate within three days by paying an extra fee of Rs. 5000 while payment of Rs. 2000 will enable the issuance of the same within seven days. As another welfare measure, the Council decided to sanction maternity leave to the PG girl students. It also decided to reserve 5 percent of total seats for BSc (Hons) Agriculture to VHSE(Agriculture) students. The meeting presided over by the Vice-Chancellor was attended by University Officers and members of the Council.

NEW REGISTRAR FOR KAU



Dr. E.K. Mathew, Professor in Agricultural Engineering and an alumnus of IIT, Kharagpur took over as KAU Registrar.

He took over from Dr. P.K. Rajeevan, who retired from KAU Service on 23 November 2012. Dr. Mathew was serving as Professor & Head, Precision Farming Development Centre at Kelappaji College of Agricultural Engineering & Technology, Tavanur.

Book Fair at Horticulture College

Prof. Sarah Joseph inaugurated the Annual book fair conducted at College of Horticulture (CoH), Vellanikkara on 18 October 2012.

In her inaugural address the eminent writer and social activist opined that Governments should lend maximum support to Libraries and Reading rooms so as to encourage People to go back to books and refine themselves.

Dr. P.K. Rajeevan, Registrar, Kerala Agricultural University (KAU) presided. C. Abdul Razak, Former University Librarian, KAU delivered Key Note Address. The book, "Re-engineering and Re-defining University Libraries in the context of modern ICTs", authored by Dr. A.T. Francis was released by Prof. Sarah Joseph.

KAU GC member Avinash Reji Thomas and Horticulture College Students' Union President A. Jamaludheen spoke. Associate Dean Dr. C.T. Abraham offered welcome and College Librarian Dr. A.T. Francis proposed vote of thanks.

RAWE PROGRAMME 2013 SET IN TO MOTION

'Be just, honest and committed, results will follow' Dr. M. Abdul Salam, Vice-Chancellor, University of Calicut told students of KAU, his alma matter.

Inaugurating the Rural Agricultural Work Experience programme of the agricultural students Dr. Salam reminisced the days he spent in KAU - as a student, teacher and researcher. He advised the students to keep pace with the developments and changes

occurring around.' Development can only be technology centric. Unless we succeed in using technological advancements for our purposes, we will fail to usher in development.' he said.

Another alumnus of KAU, Dr. J. Thomas, Rubber Production Commissioner, advised the students to be positive.

'You are the best judges of your strengths and weaknesses. You have to be positive, hard working and confident. Then no

one can beat you.' He said while launching the online courses from KAU's Centre for e-learning.

Dr. P. Rajendran, KAU Vice-Chancellor; Dr. T.R. Gopalakrishnan, Director of Research; Dr. E.V. Nybe, Director (Academic); Dr. P. Ahamed (Director, CeL); Dr. C.T. Abraham, Associate Dean, CoH; Dr. F.M.H. Khaleel (Head, Dept. of Extension); Dr. Jim Thomas; Dr. Sakeer Hussain and Akshay Sasidharan participated.

KAU Agri -InfoTech web Portal Dedicated to Farming Community



Dr. P. K. Jayasree, Deputy Collector and Additional District Magistrate, Thirssur speaking after dedicating agri infotech portal

The innovative agri infotech portal developed by KAU was dedicated to farming community by Dr. P. K. Jayasree, Deputy Collector and Additional District Magistrate, Thirssur in a function held at Regional Theatre on 30th October.

Dr. Jayasree, an agri scientist herself, described the portal as an effective bridge between technology production and technology dissemination.

'I know how much time and energy is being spent on agricultural technologies and also the insufficiency of Technology Transfer protocols at hand. Adoption of ICT for bridging the gap is bound to be effective and useful,' she said.

Dr. K.R. Viswambharan, Former KAU VC, who was instrumental in the establishment of CEL which developed the portal, described the new venture as a transformation of know how to do how.

The function was presided over by Dr. T.R. Gopalakrishnan, Director of Research. District Panchayath Development Standing Committee Chairman Anil Akkara ; KAU GC members Dr. Jiju. P. Alex and Avinash Reji Thomas; PAO Jessy. P. Jacob; KAU Comptroller Dr. Joy Mathew; Assoc. Director of Extension Dr. Jose Mathew; Forestry College Assoc. Dean Dr. B. Mohankumar; Mannuthy ARS Head Dr. U Jaikumaran ; Communication Centre Head Dr. Jim Thomas; ATMA District Officer Mercy Thomas and Agripreneur Rayirath Sudhakaran spoke. CeL Director Dr. P. Ahamed offered welcome and Dr. Zakir Hussain proposed vote of thanks.

Seminar Highlights importance of Efficient Marketing and Credit system

The national seminar on Agricultural Cooperatives – key to feeding the world held at KAU's College of Cooperation, Banking and Management resolved that Optimum production at lowest input costs, highest product prices through successful and sustainable marketing efficiency and a conveniently operational credit system are essential ingredients for a sustainable agri production scenario.

The seminar organized as part of 32nd Foundation Day celebrations of CCBM inaugu-

rated by M.P.Vincent MLA, KAU Executive Committee member. Dr. P. Rajendran, KAU Vice-Chancellor in his presidential address said that the cooperative education should formulate feasible projects and programmes to uplift the small and marginal farmers. He said that state's cooperative sector is omnipresent in the sense that each and every person, directly or indirectly, is connected to it.

Dr. Jose Joseph, Dr.S. Devanesan and K.Gireendra babu, members of KAU GC;

Management Expert M. Sethumadhavan; PTA President P.G. Thankappan, MBA course director Philip Sabu; Alumni representative Dr.K.N.Ushadevi and students' union president Sathyajith spoke.

Lead cooperator M.M. Monayi, VAMNICOM Professor Dr.T. Paramjyothi and cooperative law expert Adv.P.N.Mohan presented lead papers in the technical sessions. Dr.A. Sukumaran, Associate Dean, CCBM offered welcome and Dr. E.Vinaikumar, proposed vote of thanks.

NIGERIAN TEAM VISITS KAU

An eight member Research Management Team from Nigerian Stored Products Research Institute (NSPRI), Ilorin, Nigeria has been on a study visit to Kerala Agricultural University in December 2012. The Team headed by Dr. Joseph O Williams, Executive Director and Dr. Ozioma N Ubani, Director of Research came with the mission of learning the Post-Harvest technology of rice and visiting small scale as well as modern rice milling units. The visit was facilitated by AICRP on PHT of ICAR, KCAE&T, Tavanur and NSPRI. Dr. Joseph O Williams said the mission was to facilitate creation of small scale rice milling units along with value added products from rice to help small and medium entrepreneurs and enhance the food security in Nigeria. Dr.T.R.Gopalakrishnan, Director of Research, KAU received the team in KAU and they were introduced to the E-Crop Doctor- A decision Support System for Insect Pest Diagnosis and Prescription by Dr. P.Ahamed, Director, Centre for E-Learning. George Mathew, PI, AICRP on PHT, Dr. K.P.Sudheer, and Prince M.V, Department of PHT coordinated the visit.

New Fertiliser Mixture



Vice-Chancellor unveils FACTMIX

Dr. P. Rajendran, KAU Vice-Chancellor launched FACTMIX, a new high efficient and ecofriendly fertiliser mixture to enhance paddy productivity at a function held at CTI, Mannuthy.

The field trials conducted by KAU has found that the new product of FACT with a balanced N-P-K-Ca-S content increase the yield by 20-36% on a 30% reduced dosage compared to other fertilisers.

Later the Vice-Chancellor inaugurated the specialised training in organic farming conducted for master farmers from Odisha at CTI. The audio CD of KAU invocation song prepared by University Public Relations wing was also released in the function.

The function presided over by P.K. Chandrasekharan, Director (Marketing), FACT was attended by Farmers, Officials of FACT and Officers of KAU.

KAU to formulate Climate Mitigation Strategies

KAU General Council meeting held on 17 November 2012 was assured that steps to formulate and propagate scientific practices to mitigate challenges posed by climate change will be expedited. Replying to a resolution moved by Adv. Sony Sebastian, the Vice-Chancellor said has already begun earnest efforts in this regard.

Replying to a question from V.S.Sathyaseelan, the Vice-Chancellor informed the house that no decision has been taken to forbid recruitment of staff. M.P.Vincent MLA said that the Executive Committee has decided to fill up all vacancies in the University in a phased manner. Dr. Mary regina and

others were informed that Career Advancement Promotions as well as recruitment of teaching staff will be completed in a time bound manner. Labour recruitment will also be completed.

Six scientists, Dr.U.Jaikumaran, Dr. Gregory Zacharia, Dr. N. Kishor kumar John, Dr. Abdul Kareem and Dr.Gavas Ragesh were honoured by the General Council for winning national recognition.

The meeting presided over by Dr. P. Rajendran, Vice-Chancellor was attended by Spl. Secretary to Govt-Finance), Dr. P.K.Rajeevan, Registrar, university officers as well as elected and nominated members of the Council.

KAU Bed Former - A Friend for Farmers

A bed former suitable to reduce the drudgery and cost of operation involved in mound making for vegetable cultivation was launched in the function held at KAMCO on 18 November. The device developed by FPME Department of Kelappaji College of Agricultural Engineering under KAU was handed over to KAMCO by Dr. P. Rajendran, KAU Vice-Chancellor in the presence of Minister for Agriculture, K.P.Mohan and a host of dignitaries.

Dr.P.Rajendran said that the device belongs to a series of ventures being designed by KAU to aid successful rural farming.

Dr. M.Sivaswamy, Dean (Agri. Engg) and Dr. P.R.Jayan, Assoc. Professor & Head, FPME explained that the device, easily attachable to mini tractor, can be used to make mounds/bunds for tapioca, ginger and coleus, etc. The bed former has a provision to vary the width and breadth

of seed beds from 30 to 45 cms. The cost of mound preparation using the bed former is

around 1500 rupees per acre whereas the conventional manual method would cost 5000 rupees per acre.



KAU Bedformer

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

Scientists of KVK Kannur bagged Best Oral Presented Paper Award in National Seminar on Futuristic Agricultural Extension for Livelihood Improvement and Sustainable held at ANGRAU, Rajendranagar during 19- 21 January 2013. The paper *Impact of Creative Extension and e - Extension - Two Novel ICT Based Strategies Evolved By KVK Kannur* authored by Rafeekher M., SMS (Hort) and Dr. (Veterinary) received the award in the seminar was jointly organised by INSEE and Society of Extension Professionals, Hyderabad.

Dr. Vanaja, T., Asst. Professor (SS), Department of Plant Breeding & Genetics, College of Agriculture, Padannakkad, KAU received best poster award in the "International conference on sustainable agriculture for food and livelihood security" held in Punjab Agricultural University during November 27-29 under the theme area: Breeding crops for food security and climate resilience.

Dr. P.O. Nameer, Associate Professor (Wildlife), College of Forestry has been nominated to Kerala State Wildlife Board by the Govt. of Kerala. He has been nominated as a representative of non governmental organisations in the twenty eight member body. The nomination is for a period of three years.

Dr. Sajeena, A., Assistant Professor (Plant Pathology) of ARS, Tiruvalla was awarded Best Paper presentation Award in Agriculture during the 25th Kerala Science Congress, 2013 organized by Kerala State Council for Science, Technology and Education during 29th January to 1st February, 2013 at Techno park, Thiruvananthapuram.

Dr. U. Jaikumar, Professor & Head, Agricultural Research Station, Mannuthy has been awarded 'ASHOKA Fellow' 2011 by the foundation ASHOKA -Innovators for the Public, recognizing him as 'change makers of the world'. He was selected for the recognition on the basis of contributions such as Food Security Army and developmental works addressing the issues of labour, agriculture and livelihood security. Dr. Jayakumar joins 350 Fellows selected across the country in the fields of education, human rights, environment, governance and health.

Training Programme on Meta genomics

A national training programme on Microbial diversity and gene prospecting through Meta genomics began at College of Horticulture, KAU on January 16.

The three week long programme sponsored by Department of Bio technology (DBT), Government of India was inaugurated by KAU Vice-Chancellor Dr. P. Rajendran. The Vice-Chancellor highlighted the importance of microorganisms in the world of living beings and relevance of advanced study on them.

'But for the microbes life as we see today would not have existed. Their contribution to make this a better world makes them the most invaluable organisms in the universe. Though there are harmful microorganisms they are outnumbered by the beneficial ones. Advanced studies on them have become imperative and most relevant and hence this training programme assumes greater importance', Dr. P. Rajendran said.

The training programme is designed to impart hands on training to young and aspiring researchers



Vice-Chancellor inaugurates Micro Biology workshop

from different states on the metagenomic approach for analyzing diversity of microbial communities and for gene prospecting. Metagenomics coupled with PCR techniques and bio informatics, is a powerful tool to study the phylogeny and taxonomy of microbes.

The inaugural function was presided over by Dr. P.V. Balachandran, Director of Extension. Dr. P.U. Krishnaraj, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad delivered key note address and Dr. T.R. Gopala-krishnan, Director of Research released the technical bulletin. Dr. C. T. Abraham, Assoc. Dean; Dr. D. Girija, Course Director and Dr. Surendragopal spoke.

SUB-COMMITTEES OF GENERAL COUNCIL

Statute Committee

Smt. P.A. Ramanibhai (Chairperson), V.V. Muralidharan, Dr. Abraham P Mathew, Raveendraraj I.K, Francis Kombara, Dr. A. AnilKumar, Dr. R. Krishnakumar, Dr. Mary Regina, F, Dr. Arthur Jacob, K. Sunilkumar and K. Gireendrababu. Convenor - Registrar.

Accounts Committee

Dr. S. Devanesan (Chairman), P. A. Madhavan MLA, Prof. C. Raveendranath MLA, V.V. Muralidharan, Dr. V. M. Abdul Hakkim, Dr. Mary Rejina, F, Dr. Jiju P Alex, K. Gireendrababu, V.S. Sathyaseelan, M.N. Mohanan. Convenor - Comptroller.

Assurance Committee

Raveendraraj. I.K, Dr. Arthur Jacob, Dr. R. Krishnakumar, Francis Kombara, Dr. V. M. Abdul Hakkim, Avinash Reji Thomas, Achyut Sankar, M. N. Mohanan, P. G. Baburaj, Convenor - Registrar

SENIOR ACADEMICS BID ADIEU TO KAU

Dr. P.K. Rajeevan, Registrar i/c, Dr. P. K. Asokan, Academic Director, Dr. A. Augustine, Assoc. Director of Research (AE& T) and Dr. P. Sivaprasad, Assoc. Director of Research (SR, Vellayani) were given fitting farewell on their retirement from KAU service.

Dr. Rajeevan, Professor of Floriculture and Pomology had served KAU in various capacities for more than 30 years before retiring on 23 November.



He had served as the member of Academic council of KAU and TNAU as well as General Council of KAU.

Dr. Asokan was instrumental in promoting Forestry education in KAU.



KAU secured top rank in the country for academic excellence for five years in a row during his tenure as Director (Academic & P G Studies) which ended on 24 December.

Dr. A. Augustine, Associate Director of Research, retired on 4 January after serving the University for 34 years. He possesses three patents pertaining to processing of Cashew apple. The farewell functions were presided over by the Vice-Chancellor.



Officers of the University, representatives of service organisations and labour unions felicitated the retiring academicians.

Dr. P. Sivaprasad retired from service on 14 December 2012. He was accorded a farewell at Vellayani.