

KAU group for US model of farming

Three students, teacher attend course at Cornell University

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
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Scientific, problem-based, and market-driven farming in the United States is a model worth emulating while rebuilding Kerala's agriculture sector, says a Kerala Agricultural University (KAU) group that had a first-hand experience.

A group of four students and a faculty member of the KAU went to Cornell University last month as part of a student-and-faculty exchange programme between the universities.

Three postgraduate students – Anirudh K.C. (Agricultural Economics) and Anunayana T. John (Agricultural Meteorology) of College of Horticulture, Vellanikkara; Deepa R. Chandran (Plant Pathology) – and Sanoop Skaria Varughese, a third-year undergraduate student of College of Agriculture, Vellayani, along with



New lessons: Students and a faculty member of Kerala Agricultural University in the US.

Rose Mary Francis, Professor and Head, Department of Seed Science and Technology, College of Horticulture, spent two weeks in the US for the second module of the International Agriculture and Rural Development (IARD) course 2019 of Cornell University.

“The primary objective of

Agriculture graduates in the US is not a job.

They become entrepreneurs and enjoy lesser land value, large-sized farms, mechanisation, and wide support from the public.

Another characteristic is that the farmers, landowners, and farms are classified on the basis of income. Noth-

ing comes for free. GM crops are aplenty and bio-control is promoted. Crop rotation based on profitability and sustainability, science-based and technology-driven farm innovation, optimum value addition, and waste management are lessons worth replicating here. The branding and marketing strategies ensure higher income from farms,” Dr. Francis pointed out.

Different approach

“There are lessons to follow from the curriculum as well. Courses are interdisciplinary and students have freedom to attend classes of their interest. Assessment is online. Cornell is willing to accept KAU students and this opportunity should be explored to the maximum,” the students said.

The IARD course comprises three modules spread over nine months.