NAAS Coimbatore Chapter, ICAR-SBI, Coimbatore

NAAS Coimbatore chapter meeting

A meeting of NAAS Fellows in Coimbatore was held on 24.08.2019 at ICAR-SBI, Coimbatore. Dr. S. R. SreeRangaswamy, Dr. C. Ramasamy, Dr Bakshi Ram, Dr. R. Visvanathan and Dr. R. Viswanathan attended the meeting. The issues pertaining to the region was discussed during the meeting. The following major issues 1. Depletion of ground water and increasing salinity of soil and water, 2. Climate change issues especially on unpredictable North East monsoon, 3. Developments in food processing and value addition, 4. Agri Strat-ups were identified for one day interaction meeting/brain storming session by the Regional Chapter. The first one day workshop will be held on ‘Food processing and value addition’ during the last week of October and details of the outcome will be communicated to NAAS, New Delhi.

I. One-day workshop on “Post-harvest Technology and Value Addition”

held at ICAR-SBI, Coimbatore on 04.12.2019

NAAS Regional Chapter, Coimbatore has organized one day meeting on “Post-Harvest Technology and Value Addition” on 04.12.2019 in association with Society for Sugarcane Research and Development (SSRD) at ICAR-SBI Coimbatore.

Apart from NAAS fellows, about 80 delegates from various institutions viz. ICAR-SBI, Coimbatore, ICAR-CIAE RS, Coimbatore, TNAU, Coimbatore, Veterinary College, TANUVAS, Namakkal, KVK, Erode, Suguna Institute of Poultry Management, Farmers organizations, NGOs and entrepreneurs have participated in the meeting.
Prof S.R. Sree Rangasamy FNAAS welcomed the delegates. After the ICAR song a video message from Prof. M. S. Swaminathan founder of NAAS was played. In which he congratulated the NAAS for instituting Coimbatore chapter and wished good future for the regional chapter. He also highlighted significance of Coimbatore as many innovative and historical agricultural research outcomes have from this place in the country. He has also wished to attend the meeting but for his health. Before the scientific sessions Dr. Bakshi Ram FNAAS, Director, ICAR-SBI, Coimbatore welcomed all the delegates.

Session I: Inaugural lecture on “Future Foods

The Inaugural session was chaired by Dr. Sree Rangaswamy and Dr. C. Anandharamakrishnan FNAAS, Director, IIFPT, Thanjavur delivered the inaugural lecture on “Future Foods”.

He emphasised the future focus in food processing industry including traditional foods, processing machinery, plant-based meat analogues, non-thermal processing, waste utilisation, active, smart and bio-degradable packaging, food structure, digestion and health, block chain management, artificial intelligence and robotics, food 3D printing, nutraceuticals and functional foods and nanotechnology in value addition. For success in food processing industry, he advised the scientists and entrepreneurs to acquire knowledge on technology upgradation, product strategy, supply chain, marketing and regulation. Finally he has concluded that the way forward is ‘customised designer foods’. The farmers and entrepreneurs were benefitted from his elaborative and informative talk on the current focus on food processing which will lead to doubling the farmer’s income.

The Session II: Focussed Group Discussion on Sugarcane Products

The session was chaired by Dr. S. D. Shivakumar, Director, Agri Business Development, TNAU, Coimbatore; three lectures i. Sugarcane juice powder, granulated jaggery and other value added products, ii. Liquid jaggery and iii. Sugarcane based jam, jelly and other products were presented. In the brief presentations, the processing technologies for producing sugarcane juice powder, granulated jaggery and its constraints, use of molasses for food purpose, technology of liquid jaggery production and its advantages, various value added products from sugarcane such as jam, jelly, wine, vinegar, caramel, ice cream and sugarcane dietary fibre bread were explained. Importance of bagasse based products as viable alternatives to plastics was discussed. From the discussion the following points emerged grading of jaggery for trading purpose, FSSAI standard for jaggery, supply of molasses to school children to address malnutrition and value chain solution to industry and farmers.

Session III: Brainstorming session on Post-Harvest Technology and Value Addition

The session was chaired by Dr. R. Visvanathan FNAAS, Professor (Agricultural Processing), ADAC & RI, Trichy. The following invitees Mr. Venkateshwaran, Vice-Chairman, Ulavan Producer Company Ltd., Erode, Dr. R. Visvanathan, Dr. V. V. Kulkarni, Professor and Head, Dept. of Livestock Products Technology (Meat Science), Veterinary College and Research Institute, TANUVAS, Namakkal, Mr. A. Neethiraja, Suguna Institute of Poultry Management, Dr. R. Gowdhaman, Agricultural Technology Company, Coimbatore, Shri M.P. Krishnamoorthy, Erode, ‘Farm to Juice’, Dr. Siva, Scientist (Home Science), MYRADA KVK,
Erode Dt and Mrs. Tamilselvi, Progressive farmer, Athani village, Erode Dt shared their experiences in food processing, value addition, marketing, branding, profitability and sustainability.

The following points emerged after brainstorming session and discussion

- To create awareness about the farmers and conduct training programme on value addition technologies to farmers and entrepreneurs.
- To create awareness about start-ups/ first generation entrepreneurs to avail incubation facilities created in the Institutions.
- Standards to be fixed for the traditional foods for commercialization.
- To develop technologies for utilization of non-utilization of non-edible portions and by-products towards commercial venture. Eg bagasse from sugar industry for disposal plate/ jack fruit waste to edible plates, etc.
- To create awareness among the farmers and entrepreneurs on traceability in farm level value addition process.
- Need to establish specifications for multiple grades for various agricultural produces to meet edible and other requirements.
- Importance of trust in the value added products, non-tangible value addition and the future of block chain management

Dr. R. Viswanathan FNAAS, Head, Division of Crop Protection, ICAR-SBI, Coimbatore & Convener, NAAS Coimbatore Chapter and Convener of the Meeting presented the formal vote of thanks and with that the meeting came to an end.
Brainstorming session is in progress.
II. Career Guidance Workshop for undergraduate students of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore on 15.11.2019.

Centre for Students Welfare, TNAU, Coimbatore organized Career Guidance Workshop 2019 for undergraduate students on 15.11.2019. Dr. R. Viswanathan FNAAS, Convener of NAAS Chapter, Coimbatore delivered lecture on Career Opportunities in ICAR and preparation for ICAR JRF/SRF examinations during the meeting. In his talk he encouraged the students to avail opportunities in different CAUs, Deemed Universities of ICAR and SAUs through JRF/SRF exams and appraised about career benefits in ICAR. Also informed the role played by NAAS in spreading agricultural education, policy decisions and innovations in agriculture.

Dr. R. Viswanathan FNAAS, addressing the students at TNAU, Coimbatore.