

## ICAR commercializes Arecanut tissue culture technology

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A memorandum of understanding (MoU) on Arecanut tissue culture technology was signed between the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute, Kasaragod and Sunglow Biotech, Coimbatore. The MoU was handed over by Dr N K Krishna Kumar, DDG (Horticulture Science), ICAR to Mr TS Chelliah, Sunglow Biotech in a function presided over by Dr George V Thomas, director, CPCRI.

Arecanut tissue culture protocol using inflorescence explant, standardized at CPCRI, has commercial value for rapid multiplication of elite genotypes such as Yellow Leaf Disease (YLD) resistant palms and dwarf hybrids. More than 60 arecanut palms that were propagated using this protocol have been planted in different locations. Their growth and reproduction are similar to seed-borne plants.

In addition, a MoU was signed with DJ Farm, Bangalore for commercialization of coconut embryo culture protocol. Embryo culture protocol of coconut was standardized at CPCRI during 1992-1996 and was successfully used for the collection of exotic germplasm since 1997. The protocol has received international acclaim and is being used in different coconut growing countries. A total of 45 accessions have been collected using this protocol from eight countries.

During the function, a promising technology for the collection of fresh and hygienic neera and the production of natural coconut sugar was handed over to Mr Sunny George, chairman, Thejaswini Coconut Farmers Producer Company, Cherupuzha, Kannur.

As part of the BPD Unit in CPCRI, an Agribusiness incubation center was inaugurated by the DDG on the occasion. The BPD unit attracted over 85 walk-ins, interested in coconut-based technologies of which 24 registered as incubatees. Facilities are a part of the center to enable practical experience for the incubatees on processing, packaging, selling, marketing, and revenue generation of selected coconut value added products such as virgin coconut oil, coconut chips, desiccated coconut etc.

(Source: CPCRI, Kasaragod)