

## Press note

### 24th Foundation Day of ICAR-National Research Centre for Banana

National Research Centre for Banana, is entering 25<sup>th</sup> year of its establishment. NRCB celebrates its Foundation day as Farmers Day to have a two-way scientific interaction and disseminate the Centre's technologies for a better adoption. Moreover, each year NRCB focus a Theme of the Farmers day, in that series this year, it is on **Banana and Plantain to meet the Nutritional security** of millions of people in India. Banana like Nendran, gives wholesome food including the macro, micro nutrients, vital minerals, vitamins and it (Nendran) has reasonably low glycaemic index compared other fruits. This Farmers day shall be illuminated by the august presence of the Chief guest, Dr Anandamakrishnan, Director, IIFPT and, Dr Rony Swennan and his team from IITA, Nigeria /NARO, Uganda.

The last year achievements of the centre includes identification of a new banana variety namely Namwa Khom (Dwarf Karpuravalli) which can withstand wind damage and does not need bunch support. Technology to export of Nendran banana to UAE (Dubai and other middle east countries) through seaport which could save the cost of transport 10 times and is expected to increase the prizes of Nendran in coming years. The NRCB in association and the support of APEDA, Fair exports, Cochin has successfully shipped 10 tons of Nendran banana in ship via Cochin seaport. Viruses is a major problem in tissue culture banana, to detect the virus NRCB has developed a two minutes test kit cheaper, reliable kit which can be used even by farmers or Tissue Culture banana companies in the farm itself. Another technology is quick production of tissue culture plants using bioreactor which is going to make the TC industry to have a leapfrogging growth on the supply of quality plants to the farmers. Unfortunately, a TR-4 Fusarium pathogen causing wilt disease on Cavendish banana has been detected in Bihar, but this timely detection will make us prepared to manage the disease not to spread to other states.

Adoption of package of technologies developed by the Centre will certainly make the farmers to realise their income doubled in three to four years especially by growing banana. The technologies are reaching to the banana growers through many ways including the mass media, KVKs, progressive farmers, farmers company or associations/federations and entrepreneurs. We always recognise the best among the better and award them for their contribution every year. This year we have recognised the following in the respective categories.

| Sl.No. | Award Category                      | Awardee  |
|--------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1      | Best banana conservator             | Chengalikodan Banana Growers Association, Thrissur, Kerala   |
| 2      | Best banana entrepreneurs           | 1. M/s SMV Exports, Theni<br>2. Mrs G.Viruthampal, Cuddalore |
| 3      | Best KVK award                      | ICAR-KVK, Sirugamani ( TNAU) , Trichy                        |
| 4      | Best Technology Dissemination Award | Mr P.Raghupathy, Vanoli Uzhavar Sanga Seithi Kathir, Trichy  |
| 5      | Best banana farmer award            | Mr Mullapudi Murali Krishna, Kalavapalli, Andhra Pradesh     |

Bananas are now threatened with the identification of TR-4 strain of wilt pathogen, Foc and this pathogen has the potential to wipe-out Cavendish banana in India. The scientists from International renowned Centres are participating in this Farmers Day to share their experience in African banana growers. Their purpose of visit is not only restricted to this day but to work out the ways and means to tackle the Wilt disease through breeding bananas resistant to Wilt disease. NRCB shall work for banana growers of India and make them happier by doubling their profit through technological interventions with the excellent Team of Scientists of NRCB.