

Govt. plans mechanism to control use of pesticides

Diploma course in agricultural extension services launched in State

STAFF REPORTER
THRISSUR

Agriculture Minister V.S. Sunil Kumar has said that the State government is planning to establish an enforcement mechanism to control the use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides in the State.

Speaking after inaugurating the State-level function to launch Diploma course in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers (DAESI) at Vellanikkara on Saturday, the Minister said new generation pesticides would not be allowed in the State.

Creating awareness

"Indiscreet use of pesticides and chemicals in agriculture cause irreparable damage to the ecosystem in addition to precipitating health hazards. A majority of the farmers use chemicals to aid plant growth and plant protection. But, approved norms for the use of chemicals are not followed since neither the farmers nor the dealers have scientific knowledge on their use. By providing adequate awareness to input dealers through DAESI, indiscreet use can be curtailed. By establishing a mechanism to monitor the use of banned and controlled chemicals, the soil health can be improved and ecological issues resolved. I solicit earnest



New start: Agriculture Minister V.S. Sunil Kumar at the State-level launch of Diploma in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers at Vellanikkara, in Thrissur on Saturday.

cooperation from the dealers to ensure that the programme yields desired results," said the Minister.

The diploma course has been made mandatory to renew and obtain licences for fertiliser and pesticide dea-

lership. Farmers will have to produce prescriptions to buy plant protection chemicals and only certified dealers can dispense it, as in the case of medicines.

It would help control the excessive use and misuse of

chemicals, said Mr. Sunil Kumar.

The course, designed by the National Institute for Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad, is implemented through the State Agricultural Management and Extension Training Institute (SAMETI).

Krishi Vigyan Kendras under the Kerala Agricultural University (KAU) were the training centres for the course, added the Minister.

KAU Vice Chancellor R. Chandrababu, in his keynote address, said the dealers should reciprocate the good faith with which DAESI was implemented.

"By controlling the use of pesticides and chemicals, we together ensure safety of mankind and safe-to-eat food for our own families," he said. K. Rajan, MLA, presided over.

District panchayat president Mary Thomas released the training module. Forty dealers from Thrissur are participating in the first batch of the course conducted by Thrissur KVK.

The Minister also opened a new hostel at Vellanikkara. The new hostel constructed with ICAR aid and State Plan fund is meant for PhD scholars. It consists of forty-two single rooms and two guest rooms.