

SRI KONDA LAXMAN TELANGANA HORTICULTURAL UNIVERSITY

Administrative office, Mulugu, 502279.

Proceeding of One-Day Workshop on “Shaping the Future of Vegetables: Grafting Trends in Modern Horticulture”

The Directorate of Extension, Sri Konda Laxman Telangana Horticultural University, organized a one-day workshop on “Shaping the Future of Vegetables: Grafting Trends in Modern Horticulture” on 18th December 2024 at the Administrative Office, Mulugu, Siddipet district. The event, attended by Subject Matter Specialists (SMS) from Krishi Vigyan Kendra’s (KVKs) of Telangana. It was presided over by Hon’ble Vice-Chancellor Dr. D. Raji Reddy. Dr. Shaik N. Meera, Director of ICAR-ATARI, Zone-X, Hyderabad, participated as the Chief Guest, Dr. I. Prabhakar Reddy, Prof. (Retd.), ANGRAU, Dr. A. R. Reddy (Principal Scientist, ICAR-ATARI) were the special invitees.

Dr. Danda Raji Reddy, Vice-Chancellor, underscored the economic advantages of horticultural crops compared to traditional agriculture. He stressed the importance of ensuring year-round vegetable supply and advocated for adopting innovative technologies such as vegetable grafting, post-harvest processing, value addition, and mechanization to boost farmers' income.

Dr. Shaik N. Meera highlighted horticulture's role in enhancing livelihoods and doubling farmers' incomes. He noted the significant technological advancements in horticulture over the past 70 years, stressing the need for the scientific community to stay updated and enhance their skills.

Addressing challenges like biotic and abiotic stresses, drought, and salinity, he questioned whether grafting technology could mitigate these issues and improve yields by 20-30%. He suggested to explore the potential application of grafting in natural and organic farming.

He pointed out Hyderabad’s vegetable deficit, with 1.5 lakh tonnes required annually but only 74,000 tonnes produced locally. He urged a focus on increasing production to reduce imports from other states.

He advised university and KVK Subject Matter Specialists (SMS) to develop models for protected cultivation integrated with grafting technology. Strengthening SMS skills through training and awareness programs was recommended. He also emphasized year-round vegetable cultivation's role in carbon sequestration.

Under “Agri Volta-PM Kusum,” he suggested establishing units at KVKs rather than solely conducting training. With 5,000 hectares under protected cultivation in Telangana, grafting technology could significantly benefit this sector.

He proposed establishing 10 grafting hubs at KVKs across Telangana, targeting the production of 2 million vegetable grafts. He called for On-Farm Testing (OFT) with different rootstocks and scions on farmers' fields and emphasized making quality grafted plants available at low prices.

Shri K. Krishna Kishore, Director of Operations at Heir Looms Seedlings and Plants Pvt. Ltd., incubated at ICRISAT was the keynote speaker for this workshop presented on grafting methods, production, and yields. He explained how grafted seedlings improve disease resistance, nutrient efficiency, and yields, contributing to multiple harvests per plant. They developed tropicalized rootstock breeding programs using the most advanced dryland systems and rapid Phenotyping systems. He conducted, practical demonstrations and showcased importance of interspecific and intraspecific vegetable grafting techniques.

The workshop concluded with a call to popularize grafting technology among farmers through extension institutes like KVKs to ensure widespread adoption and dissemination.