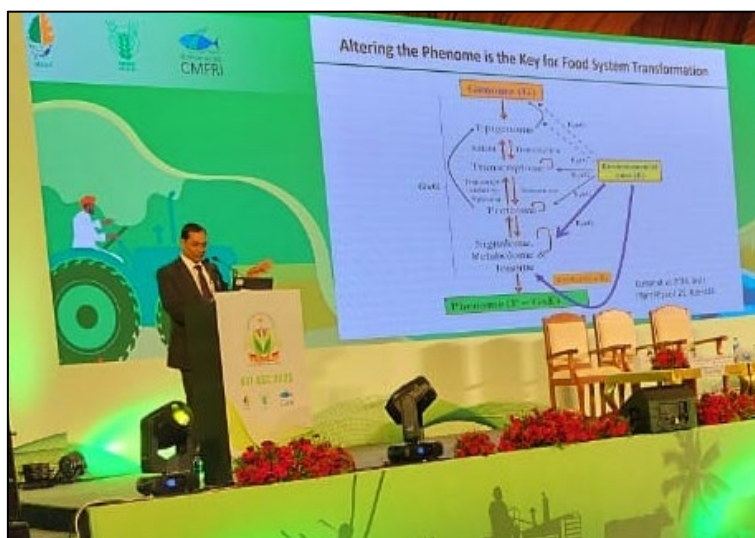# Participation of PPVFR Authority in the XVI Agricultural Science Congress and ASC EXPO, held at Hotel Le Meridian, Cochin, Kerala from 10-13, October, 2023

The XVI Agriculture Science Congress was organized by the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS), NASC Complex, New Delhi from 10-13 October, 2023 at Hotel Le Maridian, Cochin, Kerala. The programme was inaugurated by Hon'ble Union Cabinet Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Govt. of India on 10-10-2023. The Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Authority participated in the Congress

Dr. T. Mohapatra, Chairperson, PPVFR Authority chaired the Presidential Address delivered by Dr. H. Pathak, Secretary, DARE and DG, ICAR, and NAAS New Delhi in the afternoon of 10th October 2023. Dr. Mohapatra made an excellent summary of the presentation made by Dr. Pathak. Dr. Mohapatra also Co-chaired a session on "Advances in Genomics and CRISPR-Cas Systems for crop Improvement" on 11th October, 2023. While summarizing the presentations, Dr. Mahapatra listed a few action points for immediate commercial application of gene edited crops in the country. Besides, Dr. Mohapatra delivered a Plenary Lecture on "Biotechnology for sustainable use of biodiversity to transform food system" on 12th October 2023 at 9 AM. The lecture was very well received.

Participation in the ASC EXPO

During Agriculture Science Congress an exhibition was arranged for various organizations to showcase their activities by displaying live material and posters /charts/ videos. Accordingly, the PPVFR Authority participated in the Exhibition and put up a stall and displayed posters

and charts on activities/provisions of PPVFR Act, 2001. Live samples of the PGSC Awardee Farmers from Karnataka and Kerala were also displayed. Booklet and brochures on the PPVFR Act 2001, Farmers Rights and PGSC Awards were distributed to the participants

who visited the stall. The Hon'ble Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Govt. of India Shri Parshottam Rupala ji visited the exhibition and he was presented a grafted plant of Farmers' variety of jackfruit named "Siddu" by the PGS Awardee farmers Shri S S Parmesh from Karnataka.

Special technical session on 12.10.2023

A special technical session on Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights in India was organised on 12.10.2023. The PPVFR Authority arranged for the special technical session. The theme of the Special Session was "Role of PPVFRA on Transformation of Agri-Food System for Achieving Sustainable Developmental Goals". The session was Chaired by Dr. P. L. Gautam, Former Chairperson, PPVFRA and co-chaired by Dr. Anupam Mishra, Vice Chancellor, CAU, Imphal, Manipur.

During the session, the following dignitaries were present in addition to around 70-80 farmers and other participants.

- Dr. T. Mohapatra, Chairperson, PPVFRA, Govt. of India
- Dr. R.C. Agrawal, DDG(Edu), ICAR, New Delhi
- Dr A. K. Singh, VC, CAU, Jhanshi, U.P.
- Dr. D.K. Agarwal, Registrar General, PPVFRA, Govt. of India
- Dr. J.C. Rana, Country Representative, Bioversity International
- Dr. D.K. Yadav, ADG (Oil Seed), ICAR, New Delhi
- Dr C. Viswanathan, Joint Director (Research), IARI New Delhi
- Shri Chandrashekhar Singh, a Padmashree Awardee Farmer from Utter Pradesh

Dr. D.K. Agarwal, Registrar General, PPVFRA presented a keynote lecture and provided an Overview of the PPVFR Act, 2001 and its provisions. An invited lecture on the Role and importance of Community Seed Banks of Farmers varieties situated in different districts of various states to conserve the seeds of farmer varieties was delivered by Dr. J. C. Rana, Country Representative, India, Biodiversity-CIAT Alliance, Rome. The presentation was also made by Dr. Raji Namboodri, Assistant Professor, IPR Cell, KAU, Kerala about various activities of the

University/ State in the areas of protection and conservation of traditional verities and efforts made by farmers of Kerala. She specifically described the efforts of the farmers of the state of Kerala leading to winning of Plant Genome Saviour Awards /recognitions of PPVFRA.

A presentation session was conducted for the farmers. One PGSC Awardee farmer namely: Shri S. S. Parmesh, from Karnataka, conserver of a jackfruit variety called 'Siddu' spoke on conservation, multiplication and making available his registered Jack variety to other

farmers with the help of IIHR, Bangalore. Another farmer from Kerala, Shri John Joseph made a presentation about the Nutmeg varieties. He informed that he is conserving more than 50 types of nutmeg varieties in Kerala. Other framers namely Ms Usha Ben from Gujrat, and

a Padmashree Awardee farmer from Odisha, Smt Sabarmatee also spoke and shared their experience. There was another farmer who spoke on conservation and importance of Mahua Plant.

Based on discussion, a few action points were decided regarding faster registration of farmers' varieties. The following recommendations were made for further action.

1. The number of farmers' varieties registered with PPVFRA, New Delhi is very less from Kerala State. Thus more efforts should be made by Kerala Agricultural University and its KVKs to help the farmers who are conserving unique germplasm lines with significant economic value so that they come forward to register important farmers' varieties.
2. There is an urgent need for promotion of community seed banks more intensively to ensure supply of quality seeds to farmers for food and nutritional security of the country.
3. Biodiversity conservation by the farmers should be encouraged and recognized to minimize the possibilities of losing the important traits available in the existing gene pool and to enable the germplasm to evolve on the farm.
4. The availability of literature about PPVFR Act, 2001 and its benefits in different languages should be ensured for scientists and farmers for generating mass awareness.
5. Already registered varieties should be promoted and taken forward by developing suitable business models.

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