

'Accreditation of nurseries to ensure supply of quality saplings'

Directorate to publish details of such nurseries on its website

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

SHIVAMOGGA: To ensure availability of planting material of good quality for the farmers who undertake cultivation of spices, the Directorate of Arecanut and Spices Development has introduced the system of accreditation of the nurseries, said its director Homi Cherian.

He was speaking after inaugurating a symposium on cultivation of spices held under the aegis of University of Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences (UAHS), Shivamogga, at Jawaharlal Nehru National College of Engineering here on Tuesday.

He said that the area of cultivation of spice crops has increased by 2.5 per cent in India in the last decade. Apart from consumption as food, the usage of spices in pharmacy and cosmetic industries has also increased in recent times. It is necessary to ensure availability of saplings of improved varieties of spices to enhance production and to maintain the quality of the produce, he said. The Directorate has commenced accreditation of the private nurseries that are engaged in supplying saplings of spice crops for the farmers, he said. The Direc-



SYMPOSIUM: Homi Cherian (third from right), Director, Directorate of Areca and Spices Development, and other dignitaries releasing a booklet at a symposium on cultivation of spices in Shivamogga on Tuesday. — PHOTO: VAIDYA

torate would publish the information on the accredited nurseries on its website. Farmers can purchase the saplings from such nurseries. The Directorate would act as a bridge between the farmers engaged in cultivation of spices and the nurseries that would supply planting material for the them, he said.

Addressing the gathering, P. Chowdappa, Director of Central Plantation Crop Research Institute (CPCRI) said that the arecanut and coconut growers should go for

inter-cropping by taking up cultivation of pepper and cocoa to enhance their income.

He stressed on the need to promote research on value addition for arecanut. The Central Arecanut and Cocoa Marketing and Processing Cooperative Ltd. has planned to export tender arecanut to China where it is used to prepare mouth fresheners. In wake of extension in the area of cultivation of arecanut at a rapid pace in recent times, it is necessary to explore the alternative uses

of the produce, he said.

C. Vasudevappa, Vice-Chancellor of UAHS, Shivamogga, said that as cultivation of cashew nut requires less water, the university was planning to promote the farmers in arid regions of the district to take up its cultivation. J. Venkatesh, Director of Extension of University of Horticultural Sciences, Bagalkot, M.K. Naik, Director of Research of UAHS, Shivamogga, and T.H. Gowda, Director of Extension, were present.