

Training cum Demonstration on Biocontrol Strategies for Management of Invasive Whiteflies in Coconut

(14th March, 2024, Pollachi, Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu)

ICAR- NBAIR conducted farmers training cum demonstration on biocontrol strategies for management of invasive whiteflies in coconut on 14th March, 2024 at Avelappanpatti, Pollachi, Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu in collaboration with Coconut Development Board, Regional office, Chennai and Department of Horticulture, Coimbatore district,. Shri E, Aravazhi, Director, Coconut Development Board- Regional centre, Chennai inaugurated in presence of Shri. G. Ragothuman, Assistant Director, Demonstration-cum-Seed Production (DSP) Farm of CDB, Udumalpet, Tiruppur and Shri Radhakrishnan, Assistant Director of Horticulture, Pollachi. Further, Shri E, Aravazhi addressed the farmers on importance of the programme and technologies and products developed by ICAR-NBAIR to tackle these invasive whiteflies in coconut. Besides, Shri G. Ragothuman briefed about programme and utility of agri-drone in crop protection especially in coconut and Shri Radhakrishnan briefed about invasive whitefly in the district and effort made through department of horticulture for their sustainable management.



Shri E, Aravazhi, Director, CDB-RC, Chennai addressing the farmers

In the technical session, Dr. K. Selvaraj, Senior Scientist (Entomology) briefed about the diversity of invasive whiteflies, nature of damage, population dynamics, biocontrol management strategies to farmers. Biocontrol agents such parasitoid, *Encarsia guadeloupae* and oil based formulation of entomopathogenic fungus, *Isaria fumosorosea* distributed to farmers for the augmentation in coconut.

Later, conducted demonstration on different release techniques for *Encarsia guadeloupae* and preparation and foliar application strategies for *Isaria fumosorosea* were explained to farmers.



Shri E, Aravazhi, Director, CDB-RC, Chennai distributing of biocontrol agents

Training kits include biocontrol agent's viz., Parasitoids, *E. guadeloupae* and *fumosorosea* formulations (oil and talc) and extension folders on invasive whiteflies and their biocontrol strategies (Tamil) were distributed to all the farmers. This organized under project on **“Generation of toxicological data for registration of *Isaria fumosorosea* in CIBRC and demonstration of biocontrol agents for management of Invasive Whiteflies in Coconut”** sponsored by Coconut Development Board, Kochi. This programme was coordinated and organized by Dr. K. Selvaraj, ICAR-NBAIR and Shri G. Ragothuman, CDB-DSP farm for the benefit of progressive coconut farmers and other stakeholders.

About 100 farmers participated and benefitted the programme and widely covered in local daily (English and Tamil) newspapers and media in for the benefit of the farmers and other stakeholders.



Demonstration of agri-drone based delivery of biopesticide in coconut



Farmers and dignitaries attended the training cum demonstration programme at Pollachi