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New Initiative

Plan to create hubs for pulses seeds

Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has prepared a Rs 250 crore plan to create 100 hubs, each targeting to produce 100 tonnes of pulses seeds this year. The plan will be sent to the cabinet for approval soon. The plan proposes to create 100 seed hubs this year and another 50 in 2017 in some select krishi vigyan kendras (KVKs), state agriculture universities (SAUs) and institutes of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). One-time grant of Rs 50 lakh would be provided to seed hubs to set up processing, storage and production related infrastructure. Karnataka and Maharashtra, two major producers of kharif pulses, will have 19 and 18 hubs, respectively.

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Centre to study means of enhancing soil fertility

The University of Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences (UAHS) plans to establish a centre to conduct study and research on biological means of enhancing soil fertility and controlling pest and fungal infection. The State government has provided an amount of Rs. 90 lakh for the centre that is likely to be functional by November

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NRRI launches mobile app 'riceXpert'

National Rice Research Institute (NRRI) has developed a mobile app 'riceXpert' that will provide information to farmers in real time on insect pests, nutrients, weeds, nematodes and disease-related problems, rice varieties for different ecologies, farm implements for different field and post harvest operations. The app has web-based application systems which facilitates flow of information from the farmer to the farm scientist and get their instant solution. The farmers can send the

photo and voice through this mobile app.

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AP launches “runa upasamanam” program

State Government of Andhra Pradesh has launched the “runa upasamanam” program under which loan waiver of Rs. 10,000 per acre would be extended to horticulturists in the State. Loans of horticulturists to the tune of Rs. 380 crore would be waived in the State, including Rs. 67.35 crore, to 32,051 horticulturists in Kadapa district. The benefit in Chittoor district would be around Rs. 100 crore. The loan waiver would be applicable to a maximum of five acres to each family.

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Partnership

ICAR signs MoU with All Mizoram Farmers' Union (AMFU)

The Indian Council of Agriculture and Research (ICAR) has signed a MoU with All Mizoram Farmers' Union (AMFU) on providing agro-advisory service to the farmers in the state. Under the MoU, farmers would be provided information on weather forecasts, application of fertilisers and insecticides and also medicine for domestic animals through mobile phone SMS in the local language.

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UAS signs MoA with ICRISAT

University of Agricultural Sciences, Raichur, has signed an MoA with ICRISAT to support setting up of agribusiness incubator at the university's Raichur campus, Karnataka. ICRISAT will help to identify and promote agribusiness start-ups, as well as facilitate agro-technology transfer in the North Karnataka region, which is expected to enhance the impact of outreach activities for the university.

Entrepreneurs will get technical and business development support in seed production, farm machinery and food processing domains. This will be through technical support to develop business models, capacity building and training for incubator personnel, facilitate strategies and systems for technology commercialization and consulting services for promotion of agribusiness in the region.

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Agri Marketing

HP launches online portal for F&V

The State Government of Himachal Pradesh has launched an online portal of local fruit and vegetable market that will enable the farmers to sell their produce directly to wholesale buyers. The state's two prominent vegetable and fruit markets in Solan and Shimla have been linked online with the National Vegetable Market Portal, which would facilitate the timely and online sale and purchase of the produce of the farmers.

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Trade

India ratifies Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) of WTO

India has ratified the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) of the World Trade Agreement (WTO) and the instrument of Acceptance for Trade Facilitation Agreement was handed over to WTO Director-General by India on April 22, 2016. The Agreement will enter into force once two-thirds of WTO members have completed their domestic rectification process. India is the 76th WTO member to accept the TFA. The ratification of the WTO's TFA will help in improving border procedures, and also help further India to boost economic growth by reducing trade costs, improve trade flows and reap benefits from international trade.

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