

Training of extension personnel is an important statutory function of the Kerala Agricultural University (KAU). Although the University was conducting training programmes ever since its inception in 1972, the training activities were brought under one umbrella with the establishment of the Central Training Institute (CTI) in 1986. Started with financial assistance of the World Bank as a sub-project of the National Agricultural Extension Project, Central Training Institute has now become the nodal point of KAU's training activity. Availability of highly competent and trained manpower in any field of expertise related to Agriculture and allied fields enables the University to offer training programmes of quality and excellence to its clientele. Central Training Institute has two sub-units - the Training Service Scheme, Vellayani, Thiruvananthapuram and the Training Unit, Pilicode, Kasargode District.

The Central Training Institute has been vested with the following responsibilities: to identify training needs and organize training programmes undertaken by the KAU, to strengthen the training capabilities of research stations and educational institutions under the KAU and to conduct follow-up work.

**Demand-oriented training :** Keeping in view the National Policy for training, Central Training Institute is oriented itself to provide more demand-oriented training as against supply-oriented training. Thus, it had expanded the scope of its training programmes by catering to the training needs of the State Departments of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development, Fisheries and Rural Development, Development Departments of the Union Territory of Lakshadweep. Input Agencies such as Nationalised Banks, Fertilizer and other Agricultural Chemical Agencies, Commodity Boards. Later, as a part of discharging its social responsibilities, the University decided to extend its technological support to the less privileged sections of the Society and started vocational training programmes for the unemployed youth, rural housewives etc. on a no-profit-no-loss basis. Still recently, with the introduction of Democratic Decentralisation and people's planning in the State the need for training has increased manifold and the Central Training Institute has been catering to this requirement as well. Stipendiary training programmes varying durations on job-oriented topics for candidates with basic qualifications are also being offered by the University. Systems

**Approach to Training :** Central Training Institute has from its experience developed the capability of being dynamic in its programming, it follows a system approach to training that is based on training needs assessment. Evaluation of needs is undertaken even during the course of a training activity and possible modifications brought into the programme. Terminal evaluation of the participants is always done and this feed back helps to improve future training activity. **Target Group :** Central Training Institute caters primarily to senior and middle level functionaries involved in executing extension programmes. However, Central Training Institute also undertakes training programmes for progressive farmers, farm youth and farm women on innovative subjects. Central Training Institute has been conducting specialised training for pre-release defence personnel also. Central Training Institute also conducts National Level Seminar-cum-Workshops.

**Training Emphasis :** Wherever be the training typology, stress is given for planned and systematic improvement in knowledge, skills and attitudes. Knowledge would include subject matter knowledge of clients' problems and their solutions and knowledge of extension methods. Skills selected for improvement could vary between Communication Skills, Technological Skills, Demonstration Skills, Organisational Skills, Training Skills and Diagnostic skills. Attention is also given for attitudinal development. The participant's predisposition towards his job, his superiors and his clients are worked

upon for positive reinforcement.

**Faculty & Methodology :** Experts from within Kerala Agricultural University form the primary resource base. However, resource persons are also pooled from Central Government Institutions and other esteemed agencies. Optimum theoretical and field mix is followed in Training Programmes to relate them to the needs and problems of the participants. Maximum stress is laid on field visits, case studies, group discussions and audio-visual teaching so as to make the programmes participatory, interactive and experiential. **Modus operandi :** Every year, proposals for training based on the felt needs of various extension services are invited. These proposals are discussed and approved by the Joint Training Committee (JTC) which meets once in an year under the Chairmanship of Vice-Chancellor and a Training Calendar for the year is prepared. A Course Director is nominated for each training programme and he/she will be responsible for its successful conduct. Training fee is charged from the Department/Agency sponsoring the candidates.

### Special Programmes

- **Horticulture :** Special programmes in horticulture such as vegetable production technology, cultivation practices of fruits, production technology of medicinal plants and cultivation practices of spices are undertaken through the Krishi Vigyan Kendras at Ambalavayal, Sadanandapuram, Pattambi and Manjeswaram.
- **Animal Production Programmes** on broiler farming, backyard poultry, goat farming and clean milk production are implemented through the three KVKs at Ambalavayal, Pattambi and Sadanandapuram.
- **Home Science :** The important areas of technology transfer programmes in Home Science implemented through the Krishi Vigyan Kendras are skill development in handi-crafts making, low cost technique of energy conservation, Bouquet making and flower arrangement, preservation of locally available fruits and vegetables, low cost balanced diet and weaning of food for children and integrated nutrition education.
- **Special component plan programme :** Rural youth belonging to SC/ST are offered training under the special component plan programme in nursery technique and vegetable production at the KVK, Sadanandapuram and Agricultural Research Station, Mannuthy. Agro-Forestry Models for Extension and Training at Mankada, Malappuram District. Agro-Forestry Models for Extension and Training, Manjeswar, Kasaragod District Agroforestry models for extension and training is at KVK, Manjeswar is yet another project for the development of 'conservation farms' implemented by the University with the assistance of the Department of Wasteland Development, Government of India. This Project with its area of operation at Manjeswar Block in Kasaragod District taken up various extension and training programmes for the promotion of agro-forestry models in the farming fields and transfer of wasteland development technologies to the farmers. Production-oriented short terms courses in forestry, agro-forestry and allied fields and inservice training programmes in agro-forestry for the extension personnel officers of the development departments of Government and quasi-government bodies of Kerala are also organised under the Project. A three year project for developing agro-forestry models and wasteland development techniques for the high rainfall laterite soils of Mankada Block in Malappuram District is functioning at the Cashew Research Station, Anakkayam. The Project is fully financed by the Department of Wasteland Development, Government of India. The major programmes at present being undertaken by the Project are the development of agro-forestry models with cashew as main crop, raising of demonstration plots in farmers fields, intercropping pineapple in cashew plantations, development of wastelands associated with public lands and raising nurseries for the production of high yield cashew clones, stumps of teak and three seedlings. Wasteland Development Committees, formed by the beneficiary farmers of the programme are supervising the implementation of the project. Training programmes for farmers and extension officers in soil and water conservation, cultivation practices in sloppy areas, energy

plantations and agro-forestry for hill areas are also conducted.

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