Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree breeding, Coimbatore has been organizing Tree Growers’ Mela in several strategic places in Tamil Nadu to spread awareness on tree cultivation using improved planting materials, including clones. Last year, the mela was successfully held at Trichy and Dindivanam. In continuation to the efforts, IFGTB organized Tree Growers Mela on 16 February, 2018 at KVK, Papparapatty, Dharmapuri under the theme “Tree farming for increasing Farm income”, in collaboration with Tamil Nadu Forest Department and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University.

Tree Growers’ Mela served as an integration platform for Scientists, research institutions, industrial partners and government agencies to serve forestry research and market inputs for the tree growers’. Industrial partner’s viz., Tamil Nadu Newsprint & Papers Limited (TNPL), Sharon Plywood Limited; Research Institutions like Institute of Wood Science & Technology, Bangalore and Forest College & Research Institute, Mettupalayam contributed their technical inputs on wood market information and technology transfer on improved planting material availability of the priority species. IFGTB published a media advertisement in local media for giving wide publicity before the event. Overwhelmingly, about 700 farmers from various districts of Tamil Nadu participated in the mela.

The inaugural session was chaired by Shri K. Vivekanandan I.A.S. District Collector, Dharmapuri. Shri K Thirumal, IFS, DFO, Dharmapuri, Dr. Shanmugam, Programme Co-ordinator, KVK, Dharmapuri, Shri G. Rajesh, IFS, Head, Forest Economics and Extension Division, IFGTB, Coimbatore; Shri P. Kathirvel, IFS, Asst. Silviculturist, IFGTB, and Smt. K. Yasodha, Extension Officer, IFGTB, Coimbatore graced the occasion. Shri K. Vivekanandan I.A.S. District Collector, Dharmapuri in his keynote address, advised farmers to take up tree farming in large scale and explore the scope of framing a Farmer Producers Organization for the contract farming with support of wood based industries. He insisted that introduction of new technologies would lead to increase in the yield and farm income for the farmers. He also added that the 8000 ha land of PWD and other Government lands will be utilized for tree farming using 100 days of work MGREGA in Dharmapuri. He also released the book on “Mara Sagupadi” (Tamil) - Tree Cultivation practices published by IFGTB, Coimbatore. The book summarizes the tree cultivation practices of 12 major species for Tamil Nadu.

Shri G. Rajesh, IFS, Head, Forest Economics and Extension Division, IFGTB, Coimbatore during his presidential address stated that the lack of awareness among
farmers on the availability of improved planting material, wood procurement and market information led to the selection of Dharmapuri district for this Tree growers Mela. He also added that the lead presentations are arranged based on the preliminary survey on the tree species best suited for Dharmapuri district. He also gave a broad outline of programme, its objective and expected outcome for the tree growers.

The technical sessions included; the thematic presentations on “Cultivation practices of different tree species” by scientists of IFGTB and IWST on various topics. “Teak Farming for enhancing livelihood” by Dr. C. Bhuvaneshwaran, Scientist F; “Cultivation and Management of Eucalyptus” by Dr. A. Vijayaragavan, Scientist E; “Melia cultivation for maximizing income” by Dr. S. Saravanan, Scientist E; “Cultivation and Management of Sandal” by Dr. M. V. Durai, Scientist B, IWST, Bangalore; “Cultivation and Management of Ailanthus” by Dr. D.Raja Suguna Sekar, Scientist E; “Cultivation and Management of Tamarind” by Shri A. Mayavel, Scientist B and “Disease problems and their Management of priority tree species of Dharmapuri” by Dr. A. Karthikeyan, Scientist E, IFGTB, Coimbatore. The resource persons shared their knowledge and experience on their respective species in detail and their presentation triggered the awareness regarding the tree cultivation and very importantly on necessity for using improved planting materials in farm planting programmes.

Tree growers’ were encouraged to interact with the team of scientists and industrial partners in two independent thematic discussions. The first thematic discussion was on “Cultivation practices of tree crops” and the second thematic discussion was on “Wood procurement, trade and Marketing” with the panel members of Scientists, Industry partners, Tamil Nadu Forest Department and KVK. Some of the important queries/ suggestions raised by the farmers are summarized as below;

- Farm planting *Melia dubia* and Eucalyptus and availability of clones
- Techniques to be adopted to reduce branching in teak
- Remedy for pest management in *Thepesia populnea*
- Insurance & subsidies Scheme for tree farming
- Sandal tree planting, harvesting and marketing- trade & permit related issues
- Buy back mechanism offered by the industries for Eucalyptus and *Melia dubia*.

The panel members addressed the queries of the farmers; and particularly the industrial partner’s viz., TNPL and Sharon plywoods detailed their annual requirement, the market value of species and the quality of wood required for their end use. Nearly 34 farmers, who had grown Melia and Eucalyptus, registered their plantation details with TNPL and Sharon Plywoods for a possible wood procurement at maturity. The industrial partners, research institutions FC&RI, Mettupalayam, KVK and IFGTB exhibited various technologies in cultivation, pest & disease management, wood procurement and clonal...
technology in the exhibition. The participants and farmers were given free copies of the book “Mara Sagupadi” and brochures on Melia, Gmelina, teak and VAM published by IFGTB, Coimbatore. The Tree Growers’ Mela was widely covered by local print and electronic media. The media reports of the mela, in brief are annexed in this report.
Farmers visiting the stall
Farmers at the Mela
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முன்னர் மான்று விளை காந்தித் தலைப்பு விளை

கண்டுருவாக்கங்கள் தொடர்வி மேம்பட்டுத் திகழ்வு ஆர்வாக்கி வாக்கு

காரணிகள் மூலம் வலிதல் மேம்பட்டுத் திகழ்வு ஆர்வாக்கி வாக்கு

பட்டாளி பார்வையின் பொறுப்புப் பலகை மேம்பட்டுத் திகழ்வு ஆர்வாக்கி வாக்கு.

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IFGTB tree mela in Dharmapuri

The Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB) is organizing a tree mela for farmers at Krishi Vigyan Kendra in Paapparai village near here on Friday to spread awareness on tree cultivation using improved planting materials including clones. The programme is jointly organised by the Forest Department.

According to the Forest Department, a team of scientists along with forest-based industries would be presenting various concepts of plantation technology, availability of imported clones, pest and disease management and marketability of major identified species. The identified tree species for the training include teak, melia, dubia, sandal, alnus, eucalyptus, and tamarind. Along with this, thematic presentation on cultivation practices of crops, timber marketing and timber trade will be held.

According to the department, over 700 farmers will be accommodated for training.

IFGTB is one of the nine regional research institutions under Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) under the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

IFGTB had organized similar melas in Tiruchi and Dinakoram.

800 farmers take part in workshop on silviculture

Over 800 farmers participated in the 'Tree Growing Mela' workshop organised by the Forest Department in collaboration with Indian Council of Forester Research and Education, at the Krishi Vigyan Kendra Research Centre in Dharmapuri on Friday, to teach farmers the art of cultivation of trees and to use them as a source of income.

In the workshop, scientists specializing in Silviculture had presentations on trees, which are suitable for Dharmapuri’s soil. "The purpose of this event is to educate farmers on growing trees, as that would be a staple source of income for the farmers," said Lead Researcher of the Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding G Rajesh.

Unlike the southern states of India, the soil in the northern states have low fertility, Rajesh said, adding that Dharmapuri has 16% of forest area, which is more than the average 1:1 ratio.

Collector K Vivekanandhan, Forest Officer K Thirumal and over 20 leading scientists took part in the workshop.