ICFRE’s vision 2030 envisages the adoption of aggressive extension strategies for outreach and demonstration of its research findings. The institute had been organizing Tree Growers Melas (TGM) in several districts of the mandated states since 2009 as the most important extension activity and a flagship programme. Befitting to the ICFRE’s extension strategy, IFGTB organized a two-day TGM at the research institute’s premise on 10.03.2020 & 11.03.2020. Based on the feedbacks received in the TGM it was felt to transform our extension strategies from those that are institution based to technology driven programmes like e-platforms, documentaries, short films etc., which has greater scope for reaching out to a wider mass through social media.

In the above backdrop and due to the prevailing pandemic situation of COVID 19, IFGTB collaborated with Pasumai Vikatan (a leading agricultural journal) in Chennai for hosting online training lecture series on the theme “Tree cultivation for increasing farm income”. This initiative was organized as part of ICFRE-NFRP- "Developing and Popularizing Digital interactive platform for Tree Growers and Other Stakeholders of Tamil Nadu". This project is handled by Shri. Rajesh Gopalan, IFS Chief Conservator of Forests & Head Extension. The main objective of the online series was to popularize the technologies of IFGTB viz., Commercially Important Clonal varieties and tree crops, Package of practices, Agro forestry models and integrated pests and disease management with the Tree Growers and Other Stakeholders of Tamil Nadu.

The Part I of the online series was started as a Friday Feature on World Environment Day 2020; and Part I had four lectures for the month of June. The schedule of the programme was advertised in the journal and flyer was designed in English & Tamil for wide circulation in the social media groups. The advertisement was also shared in the KVK groups, tree growers associations in the districts of Tamil Nadu for eliciting larger participation. The online lectures were hosted by Shri. Rajesh Gopalan, IFS Chief Conservator of Forests & Head Extension from IFGTB side while Shri. Pon Senthilkumar, Chief Editor, Pasumai Vikatan was the moderator for all the lectures. Shri. S. Senthil Kumar, IFS, Director IFGTB inaugurated the programme and took part in the discussions and deliberations with participants. On an average, nearly 1327 participants registered for the programme, while 1031 attended the training live in ZOOM App. The theme of lectures and participation is summarized in Table 1.
Table 1: Summary of participation in the Part I of the webinar sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/ Speaker</th>
<th>Registered Participants</th>
<th>Viewers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Whatsapp</td>
<td>Via Google Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05.06.20</td>
<td><strong>High yielding Casuarina Clones - Dr. A. Nicodemus</strong></td>
<td>368</td>
<td>882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.06.20</td>
<td><strong>Agroforestry Models &amp; Casuarina Windbreak Clones Dr. C. Bhuvaneswaran</strong></td>
<td>126</td>
<td>1044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.06.20</td>
<td><strong>Cultivation practices in Gmelina arborea (Kumil) Shri. A. Mayavel</strong></td>
<td>96</td>
<td>1281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.06.20</td>
<td><strong>Cultivation practices in Cadamba – Dr. A. Vijayaraghavan</strong></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1444</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Participation in Part I of Webinar series** 1,031+ 50,700+

**Webinar 1: High Yielding Casuarina Clones**

Dr. A. Nicodemus, Scientist discussed on high yielding clones of Casuarina developed by IFGTB including the qualities of clones, productivity and package of practices adopted. He portrayed the important trials conducted by IFGTB in farmer’s field and other OFTs to showcase the quality of the clones in various parts of Tamil Nadu. He also detailed on the availability of improved seedlings and clones & economic analysis of cultivation of casuarinas including the market value. He also mentioned about the CYCUS App released by IFGTB in the Tree Growers Mela held in Jayamkondam, Ariyalur district in 2019; wherein farmers can get information about yield of casuarinas crop by registering the details in the application. As regards to the queries of the participants nearly 12 queries were addressed by speaker during the Q&A session. Shri. S. Senthil Kumar, IFS Director IFGTB in his concluding remarks, highlighted that growing a tree is similar to having a fixed deposit in bank account and he further stressed that farmers should grow more high yielding trees to augment their farm income. The full lecture can be accessed through the Face book link https://www.facebook.com/PasumaiVikatan/videos/194482061741564/.

**Webinar 2: Agro forestry Models & Casuarina Windbreak Clones**

Dr. C. Buvaneswaran, Scientist presented on the different types of agro forestry models suited for Tamil Nadu. He narrated package of practices for each of the models citing case studies of On Farm Trials (OFTs) and demonstration trails laid by IFGTB in several places in Tamil Nadu. He covered Teak based models, Windbreak models, Ailanthus based models, Melia based models in his lecture. He explained in detail on the windbreak clones (5 nos) of Casuarina released by IFGTB their qualities and cultivation practices, intercropping methods and agricultural crop compatibilities. As regards to the queries of the participants nearly 10 queries were addressed by the speaker during the
Q&A session. Shri. Rajesh Gopalan, IFS Head Extension in his concluding remarks highlighted the role and importance of farm forestry and agro forestry in increasing the tree cover outside the forests. He also emphasized that more and more tree growers to come forward to take up farm forestry as it acts as an insurance to farm income and as it can boost timber and pulp wood production. The details of webinar can be accessed through the Facebook link https://www.facebook.com/PasumaiVikatan/videos/1714744458677105/.

**Webinar 3: Cultivation practices in Gmelina arborea (Kumil)**

Shri. A. Mayavel, Scientist gave a detailed account on the "White Teak cultivation", by highlighting on high yielding cultivars, availability of seedling and its market opportunity of the timber. Further he explained about nature of white teak, growing conditions, suitability to soil types. He also gave detailed information on planting techniques and package of practices for its cultivation besides sharing details of agro forestry models based on Gmelina. A video clip on Gmelina cultivation from the OFT of Shri. Bagyaraj, Vadakad village, and Shri Ravichandran of Anavayal village from Pudukottai district of Tamil Nadu was shown to the participants to encourage them to take up cultivation. A very interactive Q&A session was held wherein nearly 10 queries were addressed by the speaker. The full lecture can be accessed through the Face book link https://www.facebook.com/PasumaiVikatan/videos/401753460738956/.

**Webinar 4: Cultivation practices in Neolamarkia kadamba (Kadamba)**

Dr. A. Vijayaraghavan, Scientist gave a detailed account on the Kadamba cultivation. He narrated package of practices in kadamba cultivation citing case studies of farmers from several places in Tamil Nadu. He also highlighted on availability of improved seedlings and its market opportunity of the timber. He also gave detailed information on planting techniques and package of practices for its cultivation. Short videos on kadamba cultivation by the farmer’s viz., Shri. Karthik, Kenipet village and Shri. Sivakumarasamy, Kodoor from Dindivanam district was shown to the participants. Shri. S. Senthil Kumar, IFS Director IFGTB in his concluding remarks, stressed that IFGTB will take up technology based strategies in 2020 to take research findings and products to the tree growers and other stakeholders.

All the four lectures were streamed online through Face book live and recorded version was also shared in the social media groups. It is extremely satisfying to see the outstanding response received for the webinars so far more than 50,000 views in Facebook is recorded. The online lectures were also documented in form of review article in Pasumai Vikatan journal for larger dissemination. Some of the glimpses of the programme and publication of the programme is shared as annexure to the report. IFGTB and Pasumai Vikatan will be jointly planning for hosting the Part II of the programme in forthcoming months.
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