

Need to step up cashew production: Minister

New hybrid released at annual Cashew Day

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Minister for Fisheries and Cashew Industry J. Mercykutty Amma has called for steps to increase production and productivity of cashew as there is a shortage of raw cashew nuts for processing in the State and different parts of the country.

A press release issued by the Directorate of Cashew Research (DCR) at Puttur in Dakshin Kannada in Karnata-

ka on Tuesday said the Minister inaugurated the annual Cashew Day at the directorate.

In her inaugural address, she said the DCR under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) was striving hard to develop technologies and reach out to farmers for taking up better practices in cashew cultivation.

New planting system

She stressed the need to adopt ultra-high density planting system in cashew for higher yields in less space. The Minister urged

the farmers to utilise the services of the DCR to improve cashew cultivation practices.

The Minister released the first cashew hybrid of ICAR-DCR, H-130 by distributing it to Horticultural Department officials from Karnataka and Kerala. This hybrid has precocious flowering behaviour and is suitable for high density planting. The hybrid has bold nuts weighing around 12-13 gm and yield levels are also high.

A website that serves as a tool for monitoring cashew phenology (showing developmental stages such as sprouting, leaf development,

flowering and fruiting) in relation to environmental parameters will help in modifying the cultivation practices of a particular variety to get maximum yield.

The release said Shirish K., Special Officer (Cashew) and Managing Director of the Kerala State Agency for Expansion of Cashew Cultivation, stressed the importance of cashew planting material to expand the cashew cultivation in Kerala.

Anitha Karun, Director (Acting), Central Plantation Crop Research Institute, Kasaragod, M.G. Nayak, Director (Acting), DCR, were among

those who were present. Dr. Nayak announced the formation of Cashew Growers Association of India, the release informed.

Exhibition held

An exhibition on cashew production technologies, different cashew varieties and cashew apple products was organised as part of the event. Farmers were taken for field visits to show the various cashew research plots. Over 200 cashew farmers participated besides representatives of nurseries, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, among others.