

Articles under The Hindu 's Farmers Notebook put together in book form

Speakers at the release of the book, Impact of The Hindu's Farmers Note Book on Technology Literacy of Farmers , here on Saturday dwelt on ways of making farming remunerative.

Welfare Organisation for Rural Development (WORD-Tirupati) and Sustainable Agro Alliance Limited (SAAL-Madurai) brought out the book, a compilation of 180 articles published over the past six years in the Farmers Notebook column of The Hindu .

Farm scientist Velamoor Rajagopal, the brain behind the work, said the book carried interesting articles with case studies, success stories and innovative farm practices. It would be translated into Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Marathi and Hindi.

Expressing concern at the falling contribution of agriculture to the Gross Domestic Product, Chittoor Collector K. Ramgopal called cooperative farming the elixir to rid agriculture of its woes.

An agriculture graduate himself, Mr. Ramgopal advised farmers to divide tasks among themselves to cut operational cost.

“Strong leadership at the village level and farmers' willingness to look beyond their farm bund can ensure its success.”

The Hindu 's Managing Editor V. Jayanth, who released the book, said dissemination of information was a major function of a newspaper. Agriculture was an important sector where information needed to be shared. The successive editors of the newspaper had great concern for agriculture and felt that the newspaper would be failing in its primary duty if due priority was not accorded to agriculture.

K. Ramaswamy, Vice-Chancellor of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (Coimbatore), lauded the efforts of The Hindu 's agriculture correspondent M.J. Prabu and wanted the book to be made part of the curriculum. “Science journalists have the ability to look beyond what we [academics] see,” he said, seeking a higher allocation to strengthen the academic infrastructure to match the rise in the number of seats.

The ISCA president and former Vice-Chancellor of Sri Venkateshwara University, R. Ramamurthi, called farmers “rural innovators.”

SV Agricultural College Associate Dean N.P. Eswara Reddy, Regional Agricultural Research Station associate director of research T. Giridhara Krishna, P.N. Vedanarayanan of the special taskforce on the delta farmers' welfare (Tamil Nadu) and WORD secretary K. Gangadharam participated.