

ANDAMAN SHEEKHA

The True Mirror of A & N Islands

Island Stakeholders trained on Cultivation and Postharvest Management of Spices at ICAR-CIARI

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Sri Vijaya Puram Aug 20: A three days' training programme entitled "Scientific Cultivation and Postharvest Management of Major Spice Crops of the Bay Islands" was organized at ICAR- CIARI under CSS-MIDH Project on Spices during August 17-19, 2026.

Spices are the major commercial crops of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. However, several growers are unaware about the scientific cultivation and postharvest management of these crops resulting in lower profits. Further, production, processing and value addition in spices could be profitable business ventures for the island youth. In order to create awareness about the vast potential of the spices sector in the islands, the programme was organized.

The programme was inaugurated by Dr. Jai Sunder, Director (A), ICAR-CIARI. In his inaugural address, he underscored how spices had shaped Indian history and the economic value it possessed. He encouraged all the participants to take benefits of the technical sessions planned in the programme schedule.

Dr. Ajit Arun Waman, PI, CSS-MIDH Project on Spices and Course Director of the programme, gave a presentation on scientific cultivation techniques of traditional as well as novel spices including black pepper, cinnamon, tejpat, nutmeg, clove, ginger, turmeric, woody pepper, culantro, mango ginger etc. Dr. Pooja Bohra, Course Director, sensitized the participants about the propagation techniques for quality planting material in spice crops and business prospects of the nursery sector. Hands-on training sessions were conducted on vegetative propagation techniques including division, cuttings, air layering, serpentine layering, softwood grafting, approach grafting and Dweep Gootee 365 (a novel propagation technique developed by ICAR-CIARI). As protected structures are a basic requirement for production of quality planting material, participants were practically apprised about various kinds of protected structures including naturally ventilated polyhouses, climate-controlled polyhouses, shade net houses and polytunnels.

Participants were taken to the Horticulture Research Farm, Sippighat to showcase various cropping systems involving spices such as cinnamon, black pepper, woody pepper, clove, nutmeg, turmeric, mango ginger, ginger etc. For imparting knowledge on intercultural techniques, practical sessions on nutrient management, use of weed mat and plant protection chemicals were also organized.

A demonstration session on cinnamon harvesting using Dweep CinnRub (cinnamon bark rubbing tool developed by ICAR-CIARI) was organized. Techniques for mechanical drying, packaging and storage along with the machines required were also demonstrated to the participants in the Horticultural Quality Analysis Laboratory. Participants also visited the essential oil distillation unit of the Institute and learnt the process firsthand.

The programme was attended by 21 participants from various parts of the islands including members of the self-help groups, educated youth, entrepreneurs and kitchen gardeners. Participants expressed their happiness and satisfaction on the meticulous planning and execution of the programme by the organizers. The programme ended on August 19, 2026 with distribution of certificates along with planting material and products of spices to the participants.