

Eastern University, Sri Lanka

Faculty of Agriculture

Faculty Newsletter - 2021



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Message from the Dean/ Faculty of Agriculture

It's my pleasure to bring this greeting message to the Faculty Newsletter – 2021. This newsletter showcases the faculty activities on teaching, research and community outreach and remarkable achievements of our staff during the year 2021. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has substantially disrupted the day-to-day activities of the universities across the country, we tried our best to produce these achievements by introducing innovations to our teaching and outreach programs using the online tools and virtual platforms. Our efforts are focused on being responsive to the needs of our students and the community by delivering consistent, high quality, timely guidance, services, and supports through proven knowledge and engaging programs. I envision extending our continuous support for a community of learners connected to the opportunities for growth and development in our region, country and beyond. I congratulate the Editor, Heads of the Departments and all our staff for their commitment to publish this issue of the faculty newsletter. Thank you.

Prof. M. Pagthinathan,
Dean/Faculty of Agriculture



Message from the Editor

It is indeed a great honour to serve as the Editor of the 15th issue of the Faculty Newsletter (2021). In this issue, we recount on teaching, learning, research and outreach activities of the Faculty of Agriculture, Eastern University, Sri Lanka and highlight the milestones of achievements of our faculty members. I am grateful to all the staff for working towards the success of the faculty activities during this COVID-19 pandemic and a huge thank you to all of you for your valuable inputs for this newsletter. I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and, we welcome your valuable feedback, comments and suggestions. Thank you.

Dr. R. Eeswaran
Editor/ Faculty Newsletter-2021



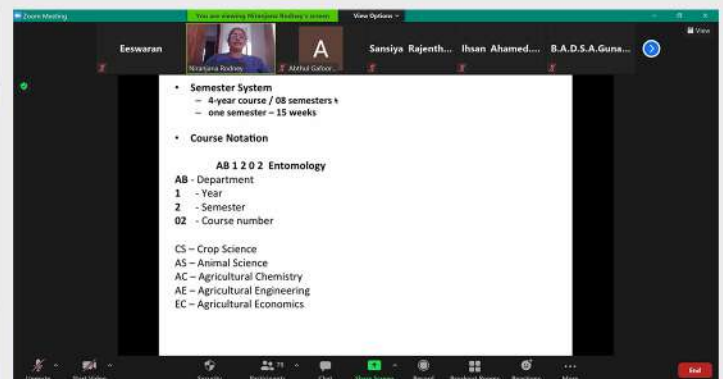
Fourth National Symposium on Agriculture – 2021

The 4th National Symposium on Agriculture – 2021 (NSA 2021), organized by the Faculty of Agriculture, Eastern University, Sri Lanka was held on 10th March 2021 as a virtual conference. The theme of the symposium was "Technological Adaptation in Agriculture to Combat Unpredicted Calamities". The symposium was coordinated by Mr. R. Thivyatharsan (Senior Lecturer in Agricultural Engineering) while Mrs. E. Delina J. Prince (Senior Lecturer in Agricultural Engineering) served as the symposium secretary. The symposium was virtually graced by the Vice Chancellor Prof. F. C. Ragel and the keynote speech was delivered by Prof. Gamini Senanayake, Professor Emeritus and Chairman, Sri Lanka Council for Agricultural Policy.



Orientation Program for New Students – 2019/2020 Batch

The orientation program for new students (2019/2020) batch of the Faculty of Agriculture was held virtually (through zoom technology) from 19 – 22 July 2022. The program was successfully coordinated by Dr. R. Eeswaran from the Department of Crop Science and series of virtual sessions were delivered by various resource persons to prepare the students to the university teaching and learning environment. Most of the students have highly regarded the organization and the content of the orientation program in their feedback.



AHEAD ELTA- ELSE Department Development Project, Department of Animal Science, Faculty of Agriculture

The following activities were carried during the period of 2021:

- The online workshop on “Soft Skills in English for Teaching & Learning” on 13th January 2021 was conducted for the academic and technical officers of the Faculty of Agriculture. The workshop was attended by 25 participants.
- The online workshops on “English for Communication skills” and “English for Academic Writing” on 18th and 23rd January 2021 were conducted for the final year students (50 students) of the Faculty of Agriculture. The Resource person for both workshops was Mr. Naaren Moharanjithan / Academic Consultant/ HLS, Headway Learning Solutions, Colombo.
- Several equipment was purchased under the AHEAD Project in 2021.



Outreach Activities/ Programs Conducted by the Faculty Staff

- Mrs. S. Karunakaran, Chief Technical Officer, Department of Agricultural biology has been participated a workshop on 'Safety Precautions and Maintenance of Laboratories' as resource person conducted for laboratory staff of the Eastern University, Sri Lanka on 19.02.2021 organized by the Staff Development Centre, Eastern University, Sri Lanka.



- Dr (Mrs.) R. F. Niranjana, Senior Lecturer Gr. I, Department of Agricultural Biology has been participated a two days workshop on 'Integrated Pest Management' as resource person conducted for Agricultural Instructors on 23rd – 24th, November 2021 organized by the Department of Agriculture, Batticaloa.



- Dr. R. Eeswaran attached to the Department of Crop Science participated as a resource person to disseminate the National Research Council (NRC) project findings with the farming community in Kaluthavalai, Batticaloa on 17th December 2021. The project was led by Prof. Devika De Costa from the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya.



- Prof. Punitha Premanandarajah from the Department of Agricultural Chemistry and Mrs. Nishanthi Vathshalyan from the Department of Agricultural Biology delivered special lectures at the Natural Farming Summer School - 2021 program, which was held at Miani Technical Institute, Thannamunai from 20-21, December 2021. The program was organized and sponsored by World Vision Lanka as part of the Natural Farming Project.



Award of Scholarships, Fellowships, Prizes and Research Grant received during the year 2021

- Dr. (Mrs.) R. F. Niranjana, Senior Lecturer Gr. I, Department of Agricultural Biology received UBL grant to commercialize a research finding.



- Mr. K. Prasannath, Senior Lecturer Gr. II, Department of Agricultural Biology received Australasian Plant Pathology Society (APPS) bursary grant to attend the APPS conference 2021 held in Australia.



Appointments/ Promotions/ Retirement of Staff during 2021

• Dr. R. Eeswaran was appointed as Lecturer (Probationary) to the Department of Crop Science with effect from 15th March 2021 and he assumed his duties from 29th March 2021.



• Mr. G. Hariharan, Lecturer (Prob), Department of Agricultural Biology has been appointed as a Member of the Young Scientist Forum (YSF) Steering Committee, National Science and Technology Commission (NASTEC), Ministry of Technology, Sri Lanka, from 15th March 2021.



• Mrs. Brintha Karunarthna attached to the Department of Crop Science has been promoted to Senior Lecturer Grade I with effect from 27th March 2021.



• Dr. R. Eeswaran attached to the Department of Crop Science has been appointed as the Coordinator for Orientation Program for new batch of students – academic year 2019/2020 on 08th April 2021.



• Mr. G. Hariharan, Lecturer (Prob), Department of Agricultural Biology has been appointed as a Secretary for Fifth National Symposium on Agriculture 2022, Faculty of Agriculture, Eastern University, Sri Lanka on 08th April 2021.



• Ms. K.D. Lakshika Madhuwanthi appointed as a Management Assistant with effect from 03rd of May 2021 to the Department of Agricultural Biology, Faculty of Agriculture.



Appointments/ Promotions/ Retirement of Staff during 2021

- Dr. P. Sivarajah, Senior Lecturer Grade I and former Dean , attached to the Department of Agricultural Economics, Faculty of Agriculture retired from his position with effect from 24th July 2021. He has rendered his service to the Faculty of Agriculture as well as the University for more than 35 years.



- Prof. S. Sutharsan attached to the Department of Crop Science has been appointed as the part time Consultant to University of Colombo Institute for Agro-Technology & Rural Sciences from August 2021 - March 2022.



- Dr. R. Eeswaran attached to the Department of Crop Science has been appointed as the Editor for the Faculty Newsletter – 2021 on 23rd September 2021.



- Prof. S. Sutharsan attached to the Department of Crop Science has been appointed as the Chairman of the Research Council, Eastern University, Sri Lanka with effect from November 2021.



Centre for Sustainable Agriculture and Resource Management (CENSARM) Activities during 2021

• Technical Seminar on "Ecofriendly Management of Insect Pests and Disease of Economically Important Crops" was conducted for the A/L students (2021/ 2022 Batches) at Kaluthavalai School on 5th of April 2021. Resource persons were Dr. (Mrs.) R. F. Niranjana, Mrs. V. Nishanthi and Mr. G. Hariharan, from Eastern University, Sri Lanka.



• Impact Assessment of Greening Batticaloa project is carried from March 2021, and it was funded by the Dilmah Conservation, Colombo. Team members were Dr. M. Pagthinathan (Co-ordinator), Dr. (Mrs.). G. Thivahary, Dr. T. Geretharan, Prof. S. Sutharsan, Prof. Thayamini H. Seran and Mr. R. Thivyatharsan.



• Poetry Competition among the Grade 09 and 10 School students in Kalkudah Zone was conducted in October 2021 to create awareness on World Food Day. The title of the Poetry was "Impact of COVID - 19 Pandemic on Food Production". This activity was coordinated by Mrs.N. Vathshalyan under the guidance of Prof. Thayamini H. Seran, Director/ CENSARM.



• Field exposure visits to Dilmah Conservation farm and AmiRON organic farm in Kalkudah zone was organized on 25th of November 2021 for the Third Year Students (2016/2017 batch) under ELTA-ELSE Faculty grant, AHEAD project, Eastern University, Sri Lanka. Director/ CENSARM thanked Dr. R. Eeswaran for accompanying in this field visit.



• World Food Day-2021 was celebrated on 30th of December 2021 at the Faculty of Agriculture, Eastern University, Sri Lanka. Certificates for first three places in the Poetry competition was awarded to the school students at the World Food Day ceremony.



Details of Students

Academic Year	Male	Female
2016/2017	15	53
2017/2018	09	38
2018/2019	10	44
2019/2020	16	81

Publication Details

Type of Publications	Number of publications by the departments					
	Agricultural Biology	Agricultural Chemistry	Agricultural Economics	Agricultural Engineering	Animal Science	Crop Science
Peer-reviewed Journal Articles	09	03	03	06	01	19
Books/Monographs	--	--	--	01	--	--
Book Chapters	01	--	--	--	--	01
Abstracts published in Conferences/Symposia/Research Sessions	11	13	07	03	06	05
Full papers published in Conferences/Symposia/Research Sessions	--	--	03	01	--	01

Workshops/Seminars/ Conferences/ Training programmes attended by staff during the year 2021

- Dr. T. Geretharan, Senior Lecturer attached to the Department of Crop Science has successfully completed an online course on “Drones for Agriculture: Prepare and Design Your Drone (UAV) Mission” offered by Wageningen University and Research in June 2021.



- Dr. R. Eeswaran attached to the Department of Crop Science attended an online workshop on “Authentic online assessment” organized by the Staff Development Center (SDC), Eastern University, Sri Lanka on 21st June 2021.



- Dr. (Mrs). Thivahary Geretharan completed online training programs on “Research Basics with University Press Scholarship Online - Citations” and “How to Publish with Oxford Journals” conducted by the Oxford University Press in collaboration with Library, EUSL on 27th August and 6th September 2021, respectively.



- Dr. R. Eeswaran attached to the Department of Crop Science attended a virtual Forum on Complex Food and Agricultural Systems: Engineering for Sustainability and Resilience organized by the National Academy of Engineering, USA on 09th September 2021.



- Dr. R. Eeswaran attached to the Department of Crop Science virtually attended the Food Climate Partnership, an initiative led by members of AgMIP, Columbia University, New York University, and FAO during Climate Week NYC 2021: Raising Ambitions for Food Systems and Climate Change by Uniting Science and Policy on 21st September 2021.

Workshops/Seminars/ Conferences/ Training programmes attended by staff during the year 2021

- Mrs. N. Vathshalyan , Lecturer (Prob), Department of Agricultural Biology has attended a training programme on DynEd software usage was conducted by the Faculty of Agriculture under the AHEAD project-Activity-5 to DELT staff at Eastern University Sri Lanka on 22nd of November, 2021. The resource person for the training program was Ms. Patricia Susan Raj, Project Coordinator-Academics, Headway Learning Solutions.



- Mr. G. Hariharan, Lecturer (Prob), Department of Agricultural Biology has participated a webinar on "How to Secure National and International Grants" Organized by the Young Scientists Forum (YSF) of National Science and Technology Commission (NASTEC), Sri Lanka held on 24th of November 2021.



Outcomes of Research studies in 2021

- Dr. (Mrs.) R. F. Niranjana, Senior Lecturer Gr. I, Department of Agricultural Biology found that application of 1% (w/v) *Piper longum* and *Acorus calamus* extracts reduce the *Callosobruchus maculatus* infection in green gram.



- Dr. R. Eeswaran and his co-authors at Michigan State University has shown that no-till agriculture could improve the overall resilience in a corn-soybean-wheat rotation at a watershed scale. Access the publication here: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.agee.2021.107612>



- Mrs. Nishanthi Vathshalyan, Lecturer (Prob), Department of Agricultural Biology conducted a survey on banana anthracnose disease intensity in major fruit stalls in Ninthavur divisional secretariat of Ampara district and revealed that the anthracnose disease was prevalent in the study area in all assessed varieties. However, intensity varied depending on the handling practices and the varietal differences. Further, variety 'Puli Kathali' was more susceptible to anthracnose disease when they physically damaged. Also, the disease intensity of varieties 'Puli kathali', 'Seeni Kathali' and 'Kolikkoodu' were lesser than the disease intensity of variety 'Etharai' regardless to the handling practices adopted by the fruit sellers.

