

The 28th Convention was held at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (K), Srinagar on 29-30 June' 2004.

Theme:- "Orient Agricultural Education towards Future needs and opportunities"

Sub-Themes:-

1. Employment orientation to Agriculture Education.
2. Pros and Cons of Private Agricultural Education.
3. SAU Model Act implementation.
4. Niche Agriculture and Required Academic Orientation.

Major Recommendations

- Agricultural Education should orient the mindset and prepare the students in knowledge the skills capable of covering rural based strategic opportunities into self employment.
- Restructure agriculture education to meet the demand driven manpower requirement of private sector enterprises.
- Graduates of Agriculture and allied fields be also groomed as service providers, authorized suppliers of agricultural inputs.
- The establishment of private agricultural institutions should be subject to approval of ICAR and the Accreditation Board.
- Distance education may be encouraged only in the areas not requiring practical trainings such as agri-business management, economics etc.
- Appointment of the Vice-Chancellor, members to statutory bodies like BOM and/ or EC should vest with the Chancellor.
- Research and Extension Councils should include progressive farmers (Krishi Bushan/ Krishi Pandits etc) and Academic Councils should include an academician from traditional university and agro-industry based SAU graduate as members.
- Each agro-ecological situation being suited for a few crops and commodities. SAUs with the assistance of ICAR and IAUA should identify such niche crops and commodities and focus in their academic programmes, besides issues of food and feed security.
- Approach to niche agriculture be made in holistic manner to cover entire gamut of activities including production, processing, marketing and export to create "Centres of excellence" for the purpose of each SAU.
- Sufficient budgetary support for agricultural education and research in SAUs both by Central and State funding agencies is imperative. Allocation should reflect at least 2% of GDP in agriculture.
- ICAR assistance to SAUs should be increased to a minimum of one third of total annual budget. Liberal financial support by ICAR for networking of institutions and maintenance of IT infrastructure under Development Grant was emphasized.