



Training-cum-demonstration on Biological Control of Invasive Whiteflies Infesting Coconut

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Date: 06th February, 2023 **Venue:** Nangavaram, Karur, Tamil Nadu
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ICAR-NBAIR is conducting regular training, awareness, field day and demonstration programme on biological control of invasive whiteflies viz., rugose spiraling whitefly, *Aleurodicus rugioperculatus*, Bondar's nesting whitefly, *Paraleyrodes bondari* and nesting whitefly, *Parleyrodes minei* and palm infesting whitefly, *Aleurotrachelus atratus* infesting coconut and many other economically important crop plants. ICAR-NBAIR curtails these invasive whiteflies through biocontrol agents viz., parasitoids, *Encarsia guadeloupae* for rugose spiraling whitefly, *Encarsia cubensis* for palm infesting whitefly and entomopathogenic fungus, *Isaria fumosorosea* (ICAR-NBAIR Pfu-5) for all these invasive whiteflies.

ICAR-NBAIR is striving hard to sensitize and popularize the augmentation (redistribution, inoculative & innudative release) and conservation strategies (pesticide holiday & habitat manipulation) for these potential biocontrol agents in collaboration with line departments and Krishi Vigyan Kendras and farmers producing organizations. ICAR-NBAIR identified and validated a potential entomopathogenic fungus, *Isaria fumosorosea* (ICAR-NBAIR Pfu-5) against these invasive whiteflies and popularizing through regular demonstrations and hands on training on mass production and formulations of this fungus with higher bio-efficacy, field persistence and longer shelf life.

In this series, ICAR- NBAIR conducted farmers training cum demonstration on biocontrol strategies for management of invasive whiteflies in coconut on 6th February, 2023 at Nangavaram, Karur district, Tamil Nadu in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Karur, Department of Agriculture, Karur district. Dr. K. Selvaraj, Senior Scientist (Entomology), ICAR-NBAIR addressed the farmers on importance of biocontrol for tackling these invasive whiteflies in coconut, diagnostic characteristics, host ranges, co-existence patter, natural enemies and their augmentation and conservation strategies. During meeting,

we distributed parasitoids and *I. fumosorosea* formulations to farmers for the augmentation.



After the brief discussion, it was demonstrated the parasitoid release techniques and foliar application of *I. fumosorosea* in the nearby field. Dr, J. Dhiraviam, Senior Scientist and Head, KVK, Karur elaborated about the join programme to address the invasive whiteflies in coconut and many other economically important crop Plants. About 100 farmers, KVK officials, department officials, volunteers, Students from Agricultural College and Research

Institute, Kudumiyamalai, Pudukkottai and MIT College of Agriculture and Technology, Musri were participated in the programme. Training and demonstration news was covered by local daily press and media and given wider publicity for the programme.



