

Seed Production and Culture Techniques of Snake Heads

A four-day training programme on Seed production and culture techniques of Snake head” was organized under Village adoption Project of Directorate of Extension and Faculty of Fisheries Science, Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies, Panagad Kochi, Kerala (KUFOS) by the Principal Investigator of the project Dr. Gijo Ittoop, Assistant professor, from 18th to 21st October 2022. The programme was inaugurated by the Vice Chancellor, KUFOS, Dr. K. Riji John. In the inauguration function, the nutshell of the programme was explained by the Director of Extension, Dr. Daisy C Kappan. A training manual on new trends in aquaculture named “Malsyakrishi Noothana Sankethika Vidhyakal” published under the directorate of extension was released by the Vice Chancellor and the copies were distributed to the farmers. The main objective of the training program was to give awareness and confidence to the farmers to venture into the culture of snakeheads which has enormous potential in Kerala, because of the high demand and price of the fish in local market. 27 farmers and interested students of KUFOS were given hands on training. The seed production classes were led by Dr. Anwar Anil, Asst. Professor, Faculty of Fisheries Science. The culture techniques were explained by Arun Das, consultant and entrepreneur, Business Incubation Centre, KUFOS. On the first day of training, sessions on basic principles of aquaculture and prospects and possibilities of snakehead culture were given. Selection of snakehead brooders were demonstrated to the farmers. On the second day of training, hypophysation was demonstrated and farmers were allowed to perform injection on fish. On the same day, demonstration classes on seed production of *Etroplus suratensis*, the state fish of Kerala was taken by Dr. Binu Vargheese, in etroplus hatchery of KUFOS. Various culture techniques of snakeheads such as culture in silpaulin lined ponds, earthen ponds and in unused biofloc tanks with RAS (Recirculatory Aquaculture System). Technology was explained with financial analysis by Sri. Arun Das.

On the third day, demonstration sessions on live feed culture, rearing of spawn, artificial feed preparation, weaning of fry for pelleted feed and value addition of products from snakeheads were taken. On the fourth day, awareness classes on topics such as health management, anti-microbial resistance and alternatives and fish as a nutrient rich food was taken by experts in the respective fields. Officials from State Fisheries Department gave awareness on various projects and schemes offered by the government. The farmers were taken for a site visit to understand the farm infrastructure, hatcheries and aquarium complex of KUFOS.

At the end of the training program, the farmers expressed their confidence to start the culture and seed production of snakehead. They also requested follow up training programs. The participants were given certificates by the Vice Chancellor.