

2nd Brainstorming Session

Theme: Distance Education In Agriculture

The 2nd Brain Storming Session of I.A.U.A was held on 17-18 August 2005 at Indian Veterinary Research Institute, IVRI, Hebbal (Bangalore) campus.

Sub Themes:

- Role of Distance Education in Agriculture Development.
- Extension Education, Distance Education and Continuing Education - Conceptual Framework.
- Current Status of Distance Education in Agriculture.
- Developing knowledge through Distance Education - ways and means.
- Changing attitudes and motivating through Distance Education.
- Veterinary Education through Distance Education for various clients.
- Cyber Extension and Information Communication Technology (Internet) in Agriculture.
- Imparting technical skills and conducting practical through Distance Education.

Major Recommendation

- There is general consensus that SAUs, DUs and CAU should not award formal degrees through ODEL in agriculture and allied disciplines at present and instead focus on catering to societal needs on demand driven vocational, entrepreneurial education and continued educational programmes for farmers, extension workers, rural youth and capacity building of agricultural graduates and faculty using ODEL.
- As a first step, in capacity building on ODEL activities and programmes at SAUs, each university may identify a Nodal Officer to eventually establish a Co-ordinating Cell on Distance Education. ICAR should be approached for funding under National Agricultural Innovation Project (NAIP) for establishment of Distance Education Cells at all SAUs and CAU.
- Considering the Paucity of Specialised cadre of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary extension workers to promote livestock health and production based extension services in the State line departments, there is an urgent need to provide qualified veterinary extension specialists or alternatively give intensive training on Animal Husbandry and Veterinary extension programmes to the existing agriculture extension workers.
- ICAR should take the responsibility of training the faculty in SAUs and DUs on distance education and learning techniques and developing the course content with the involvement of agencies like IGNOU, ICRISAT, NAARM, Dept. of Information Technology etc.
- A provision may be made for engaging experts for awareness creation and training of the faculty in SAUs, DUs, CAU in distance education activities from the ICAR Education Development Grant under the Head HRD.
- A regional consortium approach for creating infrastructure for development and delivery of distance education to the clientele should be supported by ICAR to strengthen the existing distance education facilities at SAUs, DUs and CAU.