

Proceedings of IAUA 8th Regional Committee Meeting On “Sharing Experiences and Strategies about Changing Paradigm of Agriculture University Governance Systems” May 9-10, 2019

The 8th IAUA Workshop was held during May 9-10, 2019 at G B Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar, Uttarakhand. At the end of two days deliberations the participants of the workshop came up with the following:

Recommendations:

- In order to improve the quality and relevance of agricultural education, there is a need for fundamental change of approach in governance and control, financial sustainability, accountability, autonomy, transparency and meritocracy.
- There is an ardent need to check the establishment of new agricultural university (ies) by bifurcating the existing one(s) in the state and also the mushrooming of private colleges as that will cause major damage to education and employment sectors. Instead, the idea of ‘broad farm universities’ need to be strengthened.
- The SAUs and colleges affiliated to general universities, engaged in teaching agriculture and allied subjects, need institutional changes, which include changes in statutes and governance towards academic independence and excellence and to enlarge the scope of providing education and learning.
- The SAUs, despite being funded by state Govt. and ICAR, face shortage of funds. There is, thus, a need to explore new ways of income generation and funding and adopting them for strengthening the funds in the universities. Management of universities should thrive for provisions of fund raising through innovative ideas of technology and knowledge that can be sold to rich farmers as well as industrialists and at the same time attract good students and hardworking staff. Entire syntax of university administrative set up needs change of perceptives and purpose.
- The underperformance of the graduating students when they face the real-world farming situation as well as in selling themselves for jobs, is a major concern and must be addressed urgently. The delivery approaches and methods of classroom teaching and hands on training/ practice in equipping the graduates with necessary skills must match the requirements of farming systems/ situations.
- Conceptual and perceptual changes are needed in skill development of all components of the university, be it students, teachers, administrator or supporting staff. Quality research with academic background support and worthy extension provisions including functional help of KVKs and KGKs, and entire paradigm of scientific development of agricultural science should be raised.
- Future farm universities must have access and ability to utilize new trans disciplinary knowledge such as biotechnology, nanotechnology, information and communication technologies (ICTs), space technologies and material sciences and become central to developing new technologies and innovations.

- State oriented restricted admission regulations are not in line with the future aspirations of making the university global. Provisions have to be made for open nationwide admissions and for international students.
- Integration of SAUs and ICAR institutes for teaching and research could be a futuristic step and may address the rural, peri-urban and urban needs in a better way. Moreover, SAUs should be permitted to admit foreign students directly.
- IAUA should hold series of dialogues on envisioning future pathways, including inviting experts to give valuable inputs. Also, 50 years long documented history of past experiences should be studied to learn lessons from it, especially to understand specificities of the agricultural education ecosystem.