Brief Report On

"World Soil Day"

The Department of Agriculture, IIAST celebrated "World Soil Day" on 5th December 2022. The theme for World Soil Day was **"Soil: Where food begins"**. On this occasion, an educational, interactive and motivational '*Guest Lecture*' was conducted through a virtual platform (Google meet). The Guest speaker was Dr. Rakesh S, Research Associate, ICAR – National Academy of Agricultural Research Management, Hyderabad, Telangana. He is an eminent Soil Scientist and has vast experience and knowledge in the area of Soil Carbon Sequestration, Climate Change Adaptation, Soil Conservation, Conservation Agriculture, Soil Fertility, etc. The event began with a brief introduction of speaker by Dr. Deepranjan Sarkar. The guest speaker was heartily welcomed by Dr Saba Siddiqui, Head of the Department.

Dr. Rakesh addressed on "Soil Restoration to deal with Food Security and Climate Change". Dr. Rakesh S discussed climate change and its result as loss of soil productivity and fertility, loss of croplands under flooded areas, causing barren lands, loss of crop and farmer's suicide. These losses can be minimized by focusing mainly to protect our soil by capturing the atmospheric carbon, recycling the farm resources, maintaining fertility and quality, and minimizing the soil disturbances. He also discussed about the effective adaptation techniques for soil conservation and Soil Health Schemes initiated by the Government of India. He concludes with a message that awareness, action, and framework related to soil protection is the key factor in the production of food.

After the guest lecture, the faculty coordinators and supporting staff went to Farm Unit 1 for a demonstration of soil sampling method. Dr. Deepranjan Sarkar and Dr. P. Smriti Rao discussed the conventional and modern tools of soil sampling. They demonstrated the process of soil survey, collection, processing and preparation of soil samples. Agricultural productivity depends on the farmland quality, and a soil test can timely report a problem in crop growth conditions. Field suitability analysis helps choose the appropriate crops or decide on land use for farming.

Around 80 students and staff attended the program. The program was successfully coordinated and conducted by Dr. Khalid Habib, Dr. P. Smriti Rao, Dr. Deepranjan Sarkar & Supporting Staff Mr. Mohsin. The program ended with a vote of thanks by Dr. Deepranjan Sarkar, Assistant Professor, Department of Agriculture, to the authorities, speaker, students, and to organizing team. The basic objective of the demonstration programme was to enrich students about the primary objective of soil sampling i.e., to provide a representative sample of the soil to support crop growth. It was a good learning experience; the lecture helped the students in understanding Climate Change and Soil Restoration.

Glimpse of the Program