

## ICAR-IARI Inaugurates Maitri 2.0: India-Brazil Cross Border Agri-tech Incubators' Program



The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) together with Pusa Krishi, Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) inaugurated **MAITRI 2.0: India-Brazil Cross Border Agri-tech Incubators' Program** on September 22, 2025, at NASC Complex in New Delhi. The five-day event, which runs until September 26, is a significant milestone in fostering greater India-Brazil cooperation in agricultural innovation and entrepreneurship. Building on the success of the first edition of Maitri held in 2019-2020, Maitri 2.0 aims to take the bilateral collaboration to the next level by focusing on agri incubators, the heart of any vibrant start-up ecosystem.

Dr. Mangi Lal Jat, Director General of ICAR and Secretary of the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), chaired the event, with His Excellency Kenneth Felix Haczynski da Nobrega, Ambassador of Brazil to India, as the Chief Guest.

The inaugural session kicked off with opening remarks by Dr. Neeru Bhooshan, Assistant Director General of IP&TM, ICAR. She welcomed the delegates and participants, setting the stage for the event by emphasizing the need for deeper cooperation between the Indian and Brazilian agricultural sectors. She acknowledged the challenges faced by both nations in achieving food security, sustainability and climate resilience, which Maitri 2.0 aims to address through innovative agricultural technologies.



Dr. Ch. Srinivasa Rao, Director and Vice Chancellor of ICAR-IARI, delivered a keynote address underscoring the critical role of research-driven innovation in agriculture. He highlighted the significance of both India and Brazil being ranked among the top 50 nations in the Global Innovation Index, noting that agricultural innovation was a shared priority for both countries. Dr. Rao pointed out that the Indian agricultural ecosystem, driven by policies promoting research and technology adoption, had nurtured a thriving agri-tech sector. He emphasized that the future of agriculture lies in scaling solutions to challenges such as food security and climate change and Maitri 2.0 serves as a platform to propel this vision forward through cross-border collaboration.

Expressing his gratitude, His Excellency Ambassador Kenneth Felix Nobrega applauded ICAR & IARI for organizing the event. He highlighted the growing significance of Indo-Brazilian cooperation in agricultural science, technology and trade. The Ambassador drew attention to key issues including nutrition and climate change, stressing that sustainable agricultural practices and innovative solutions are critical to global food security. He expressed optimism that Maitri 2.0 would act as a catalyst for mutually beneficial partnerships, extending beyond research and innovation to include joint ventures and enhanced access to international markets.

Reflecting on the spirit of the initiative, Dr. Mangi Lal Jat elaborated on the meaning of MAITRI - 'friendship' and highlighted the 77-year-old diplomatic relationship between India and Brazil, recently reinforced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit. He emphasized that in the face of global agricultural challenges such as climate change, food insecurity and sustainability, collaborative platforms like MAITRI are essential for co-developing innovative, scalable solutions. Dr. Jat underlined that both nations, as major agricultural economies with rich biodiversity and shared priorities, are

uniquely positioned to drive global change through joint incubation, knowledge exchange and technology transfer.



The inaugural session concluded with a heartfelt vote of thanks by Dr. Viswanathan Chinnusamy, Joint Director, ICAR-IARI, who expressed gratitude to each and every dignitary and guest. His closing remarks formally marked the commencement of the 10-day international program.