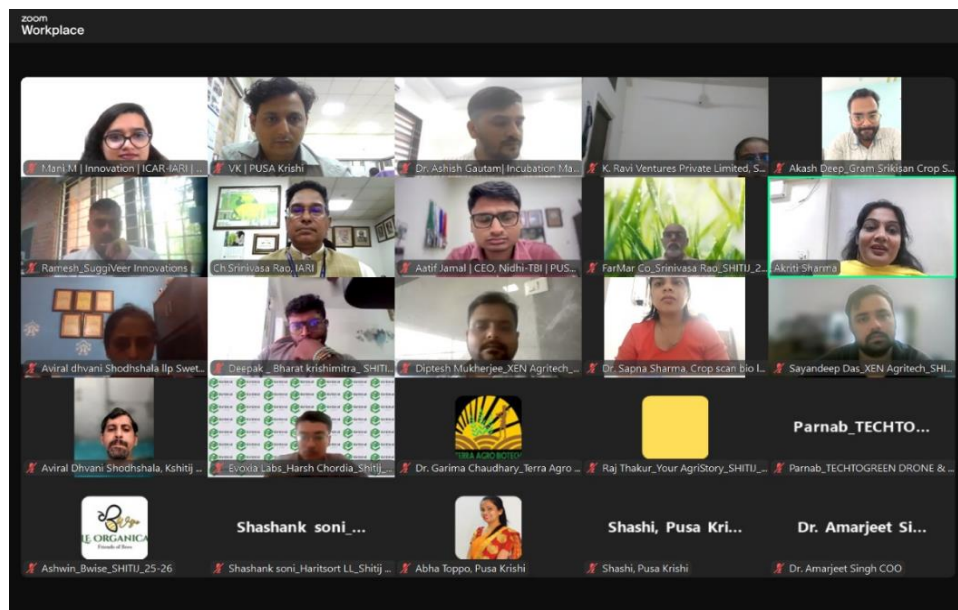


Dr. Ch. Srinivasa Rao Inaugurates SHITIJ 2025-26 Phase-1 to Empower Agri-Startups



Phase-1 of **SHITIJ 2025-26**, the flagship year-long incubation program by Pusa Krishi, was formally inaugurated by **Dr. Ch. Srinivasa Rao**, Director, ICAR-IARI, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest on **23rd September 2025**. Designed to empower agri-startups through capacity building, infrastructure support, expert mentorship and collaborative opportunities, SHITIJ continues to serve as a cornerstone initiative in advancing agricultural innovation and entrepreneurship.

The event began with a welcome address by Dr. Manisha Mani, Innovation Lead at Pusa Krishi, setting the tone for the year-long journey of innovation and entrepreneurship. Following this, Dr. Akriti Sharma, CEO of Pusa Krishi, delivered an introductory presentation where she highlighted the evolution of the Pusa Krishi Incubation Center. She elaborated on the core services and various support programs available under its umbrella, emphasizing the vital role of structured incubation in transforming agri-innovations into scalable and impactful businesses.



After the formal introductions, the participating startups took the stage to present their ventures. Each startup introduced itself and outlined its focus areas, which spanned from precision farming and agri-biotech to sustainable inputs and post-harvest solutions. This segment provided a valuable opportunity for the cohort to understand each other's domains and set the stage for collaboration and peer learning during the incubation phase.

Dr. Ch. Srinivasa Rao addressed the gathering with words of encouragement, appreciating the innovative ideas presented by the startups. He highlighted the importance of agri-entrepreneurship in solving real-world agricultural challenges and assured the participants that Pusa Krishi, with its expert mentorship and institutional backing, will continue to support their journey towards success. He urged the startups to remain committed, innovative and open to learning throughout the incubation program.