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India, Sri Lanka join hands in agriculture research

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Two premier research organisations of the subcontinent have joined hands together to accelerate closer collaborative effort for development of agricultural research and education.

The work plan for 2006-07 between the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the Sri Lanka Council for Agricultural Research Policy (SLCARP) was signed in Colombo last week. ICAR Director-General Mangala Rai and Secretary, Sri Lanka Ministry of Agricultural Development Tissa Warnasooriya signed the work plan.

The major components of the plan include short-term and long-term training of Sri Lankan scientists, exchange visits of scientists of each

• **ICAR and SLCARP to collaborate in hybrid seed production technology**

• **13 Indian scientists to attend programmes**

country in various disciplines, deputation of ICAR consultants for providing consultancies to Sri Lanka, collaborative research project and exchange of germplasm between the two countries.

The two organisations would collaborate on research projects in areas such as hybrid seed production technology in onion, sunflower and chilli; virus cleaning through tissue culture in citrus; development and testing of potato varieties for humid tropics; biological control of coconut mite; devel-

opment of storage methods to enhance storability of onions; identification of appropriate food/agro-processing technologies for adoption at rural level as viable micro enterprises; development of screening technologies for virus and fungal diseases of chilli, onion, grain legumes, using biotechnological tools, etc.

During 2006-07, a total of 62 participants from Sri Lanka will attend short-term programmes and 37 participants would attend long-term programmes such as M.Sc. and Ph.D. Thirteen Indian scientists would attend programmes and make study visits in Sri Lanka during the same period. In 2004, Ph.D. programmes in India was attended by 10 Sri Lankan students and the next year saw 15 students attending them.