

## Agri-Startups Graduation Ceremony Organized by a-IDEA, ICAR-NAARM

*Date: 23 January 2024*

The Second Graduation Ceremony of Agri-Startups, hosted by a-IDEA, unfolded on January 23, 2024, at ICAR-NAARM in Hyderabad. This event was a jubilant celebration of the accomplishments of 43 Agri-startups incubated at a-IDEA. These startups are hailing from 13 states and spanning 12 domains such as AgTech and Precision Farming. Under the guidance of experts these startups participated in various programs, including FPO Immersion and Cohort Networking. Notably, six progressed to the acceleration phase, while 14 agricultural students underwent enriching internships. The ceremony aimed not only to applaud their achievements but also to inspire and fortify the burgeoning startup ecosystem in agriculture.



Shri. Govinda Rajulu Chintala, Former Chairman of NABARD, and Chairman, RAC of ICAR-NAARM delivered address as Chief Guest, stressing the importance of startups cultivating independent strength, cautioning against heavy reliance on funds. Congratulating graduating startups, he encouraged them to contribute to the nation's growth.

Dr. Ch. Srinivasa Rao, President of a-IDEA & Director, ICAR-NAARM expressed gratitude to NABARD for consistent support, emphasizing collaborative efforts in fostering the success and growth of the agricultural startup landscape.

Shri. Raymond B D'Souza, Chief General Manager of OFDD, NABARD, graced the event as the Guest of Honour sharing insights on the significance of ensuring startup products are market-ready.

Dr. Ravi Shankar, Co-Founder of Gram Paathshala, praised A-IDEA's role in the startup ecosystem, lauding its PPP model. Congratulating startups, he urged youth to shift from job-seeking to job-giving. He highlighted the significance of keeping small farmers in focus, acknowledging India's diverse agriculture, from sugarcane to saffron and coconut to cotton.



Dr. G. Venkateshwarlu, Vice President of a-IDEA and Joint Director, ICAR-NAARM, extended a warm welcome to the esteemed dignitaries present at the ceremony. The programme was attended by

about 200 officials covering bankers, investors, incubation heads, startup enthusiasts, faculties, students and other officials.

The programme was coordinated by Dr. Senthil Vinayagam, CEO of a-IDEA.