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S. No.	CONTENTS	Page No.
	Editorial	
1	Physical and Nutritional Evaluation of Freeze Dried Jamun Pulp Powder Stored at Different Package and Storage Conditions. S. Reginold Jebitta, M. Ramanathan and P. Rajkumar	11709-11716
2	Comparative Efficiency of Irrigation Methods with Different Irrigation Schedules and Fertigation for Groundnut. Nazir Ahmed Bazai, Mei Zhu, Mohammad Tahir and Jia-xiang Zhao	11717-11725
3	Effectiveness of Varmam and Thokkanam Therapy in Azhal Keel Vayu (Osteo Arthritis). Dr. C.Senthamil Rajam and Dr. R. Manickavasagam	11726-11730
4	Survival Analysis among Oral Cancer Patients at a Tertiary Hospital in East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia. Siti Nazihahasma Hassan, Wan Muhamad Amir W Ahmad, Mohammad Khan, Suharni Mohamad, Wan Ahmad Faiz Wan Jamil and Wan Suriana Wan Ab Rahman	11731-11739
5	Influence of Storage Period and Temperature on Respiration Rate of Table Grapes ('Bangalore Blue syn or Isabella' 'Bhokri'). Sagar Ramesh Bangale, M.Ramanathan* T.V.Ranganathan and V.Thirupathi	11740-11745
6	Induction of Hepatocellular Carcinoma using N-Nitrosodiethylamine in Wistar Rats. G M Akshatha, Sunant K. Raval, Ghodasara. D. J, Sadariya. K. A. and Nirav Amin	11746-11752
7	Assessment of Effect of Curcumin Supplementation on Sperm Functional Membrane Integrity and Acrosome Integrity of Malabari Buck Spermatozoa using Hos-G Procedure. Akhila V V, K Promod, A Arangasamy, A C P Azeez, Amritha Aravind and Babitha V	11753-11759
8	Antibiotic Sensitivity Studies of Intrauterine Pathogens in Postpartum Cows with Subclinical Endometritis Dhanusree Paithalayan, Leeba Chacko, Chintu R, Aishwarya J and Shiju S	11760-11765
9	Fresh Semen Characteristics of Vechur Bull Spermatozoa. Yamini P. Suresh ,K. Promod, Manoj M., Bindya Liz Abraham, S. Selvaraju, Abdul Azeez C.P., Amritha Aravind and Hiron M. Harshan	11766-11769
10	Effect of Complete Feed with Tween 80 on Weight Gain and Fibre Digestibility on Dairy Calves. Charujith Narayanan, Dr. Dildeep V., Dr. Biju Chacko, Dr. Sajith Purushothaman, Dr. Promod. K., and Sunanda	11770-11773
11	Effect of Temperature and Salinity on Survival and Nauplii Production Rate of <i>Parastenhelia</i> sp. (Copepoda: Harpacticoida) – An Optimization Study. Jayalakshmi Thillainayagam, Nandakumar Ravichandran, Balaji Prasath Barathan and Santhanam Perumal	11774-11780

12	Effect of Titanium Dioxide TiO ₂ doped Graphene as an Electron Transport Layer on P3HT:IC70BA organic solar cell. Mervat K. Tameem and Bushrah A. Hassan	11781-11789
13	GABA and ATPase in Development and Ageing. Mohammad Kabir Ahmed, Chandan Kumar Roy, Shaker Uddin Ahmed and Tahamida Yesmin	11790-11797
14	Comparative Efficacy of Vermiwash and Synthetic Nutrients on Plant Growth and Phytonutrients of <i>Solanum lycopersicum</i> and <i>Capsicum annum</i> . Mahadevi R, Chitradevi M.R and Karthy E.S	11798-11805
15	Batch and Flow injection Spectrophotometric Methods For Determination of Folic acid in Pharmaceutical Preparations using Cerium(IV) ammonium sulfate(CAS) as an oxidant Kurdistan F. Azeez, Shirwan O. Baban and Khozan A. Haji	11806-11815
16	Design, Fabrication and sensitivity Analysis of Different Types of Co-Axial Thermocouples using Oil Bath Based Calibration Technique Sanjeev Kumar manjhi and Rakesh Kumar	11816-11823
17	Impact and Management of Extreme Weather Events in Groundnut Production in India Vyas Pandey, B. I. Karande and B. M. Mote	11824-11833
18	Quantitative Determination of Biochemical Constituents and Evaluation of Antioxidant Potential of Different Cultivars of Mulberry Species Subha varghese and Jibu Thomas	11834-11844
19	Investigation of Chemical and Microstructure properties of Natural Fiber Composite S.C.Prasanna	11845-11853
20	Implementing Aquaponics in Nilgiris K.K.Sheema, M.Dorai and S.Sundravel	11854-11862
21	Economic Impact of Ghee Residue Inclusion in Concentrate Diets of Large White Yorkshire Grower Pigs J. Selvamani, S. Santhosh Kumar, R. Jayanthi and M. Boopathy Raja	11863-11865
22	Constraint Analysis of Swine Farming in North-Eastern Agro-Climatic Zone of Tamil Nadu M. Boopathy Raja, K. N. Selvakumar, R. Jayanthi and J. Selvamani	11866-11869
23	Internal Obturator Muscle Transposition and Autogenous Fascia Lata Graft for Perineal Herniorrhaphy in Dogs S.Ramanathan, Capt.G.Dhananjaya Rao, L.Nagarajan, Ravisundar george, R.Siva Shankar and K M Prabhakaran	11870-11881
24	Evaluation of Response of Mustard (<i>Brassica juncea</i> Coss) Varieties to Varying Levels of Nitrogen Ashish Kumar Dukhu and S.S.Singh	11882-11887
25	Impact of Organic Farming Programme Implemented by World Vision India on Behavior Aspect of Farmers of Chhattisgarh Asish Kumar Dukhu	11888-11894
26	Effect of Xylazine – Ketamine Anaesthesia on Sleep Time and Toe Reflex in Sprague Dawley Rats Sreelakshmi M, Divakaran Nair N, Shyam S, Nazreen Fathima M S and Sabeer Hussain K V	11895-11897

27	Feasibility Evaluation of Solar Desalination System Coupled with Vacuum Tubes S. R. Kalbande, Sneha Deshmukh and V. P. Khambalkar	11898-11902
28	Experimentation on Drying Kinetics of Aonla Candy in Mini Solar Tunnel Dryer S. R. Kalbande, Swati H. Patil, Sneha D. Deshmukh and V. P. Khambalkar	11903-11909
29	Experimental Performance of Solar Powered Refrigeration system S.R.Kalbande , Sneha Deshmukh and V. P. Khambalkar	11910-11916
30	Evaluation of Mechanical and Microstructure Properties of Al6061 –TiB ₂ - SiC of Metal Matrix Composite by using Stir Casting Method S.C.Prasanna, R.SivaKumar, R.Manivel and M.Karthe	11917-11922
	Call for papers	11923

Editorial.....

Science & Technology for Rural Prosperity

Science is the greatest collective endeavor. It contributes to ensuring a longer and healthier life, monitors our health, provides medicine to cure our diseases, alleviates aches and pains, helps us to provide water for our basic needs – including our food, provides energy and makes life more fun, including sports, music, entertainment and the latest communication technology. Last but not



least, it nourishes our spirit. Science generates solutions for everyday life and helps us to answer the great mysteries of the universe. In other words, science is one of the most important channels of knowledge. It has a specific role, as well as a variety of functions for the benefit of our society: creating new knowledge, improving education, and increasing the quality of our lives.

Science must respond to societal needs and global challenges. Public understanding and engagement with science, and citizen participation including through the popularization of science are essential to equip citizens to make informed personal and professional choices. Governments need to make decisions based on quality scientific information on issues such as health and agriculture, and parliaments need to legislate on societal issues which necessitate the latest scientific knowledge. National governments need to understand the science behind major global challenges such as climate change, ocean health, biodiversity loss and freshwater security.

To face sustainable development challenges, governments and citizens alike must understand the language of science and must become scientifically literate. On the other hand, scientists must understand the problems policy-makers face and endeavor to make the results of their research relevant and comprehensible to society. Linking science to society, public understanding of science and the participation of citizens in science are essential to creating societies where people have the necessary knowledge to make professional, personal and political choices, and to participate in the stimulating world of discovery. Indigenous knowledge systems developed with long and close interaction with nature, complement knowledge systems based on modern science.

Scientific knowledge of the Earth's history and mineral resources, knowledge of ecosystems and biodiversity, and the interaction of humans with ecosystems are important to help us understand how to manage our planet for a peaceful and sustainable future. Challenges today cut across the traditional boundaries of disciplines and stretch across the lifecycle of innovation -- from research to knowledge development and its application. Science, technology and innovation must drive our pursuit of more equitable and sustainable development.

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