



Dr. S. THILAGAR  
VICE-CHANCELLOR

Madhavaram Milk Colon  
Chennai - 600 051



MESSAGE

India has around 160 million hectares of cultivable land and enjoys growing conditions suitable for most crops, vegetables and fruit. It also has adequate water resources, even if they are not effectively harnessed. Yet food security eludes its grasp; about 380 million Indians suffer from hunger and malnourishment today and, with rising food prices, up to 150 million more are expected to face the same fate by 2020. Hence, the government has made food security a national priority. **India has made encouraging progress** by halving its official poverty rate, from 45 percent of the population in 1994 to 22 percent in 2012. Our country more or less self-sufficient in cereals but deficit in pulses and oilseeds. Due to changes in consumption patterns, demand for fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat, poultry, and fisheries has been increasing. Due to these reasons post-harvest technologies have gained importance and referred as secondary agriculture. Importance of Post-harvest technology lies in the fact that it has the capability to meet food requirement of growing population by eliminating losses making more nutritive food items from raw commodities by proper processing and fortification. It also adds additional value to the farm produce as well as income and employment for farmers especially for women and youth. In these context the conduct of International Congress on Post-Harvest Technologies of Agricultural Produce for Sustainable Food and Security is the need of the hour. I am but sure the meaningful deliberations and discussions during the conference will help the Indian Agriculture and farmers in the days to come. I wish the Congress a great success.

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(S. THILAGAR)  
VICE-CHANCELLOR

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