

Quality-Related News – 2024
Faculty of Agriculture
Rajarata University of Sri Lanka

**Summary of Workshops, Seminars, Webinars, Training and Awareness Sessions,
important events, etc. – 2024**

Training Session on 'Utilizing the Digital Library Services of the Rajarata University Library System' for the Academic Member of the Faculty of Agriculture

A training session on "Utilizing the Digital Library Services of the Rajarata University Library System" was held for the academic staff of the Faculty of Agriculture on 12th January 2024, in the Boardroom. The session was facilitated by Mrs. W.P.T. Dilrukshi, Senior Assistant Librarian, and Mr. U. Ahamed, Assistant Librarian from the Main Library, who served as the resource persons. The event aimed to enhance the participants' understanding and effective use of the university's digital library resources.



Virtual Inauguration Ceremony of MAgri and Postgraduate Diploma in Rural Development, FoA, RUSL 2024

Virtual inauguration ceremony of Postgraduate programmes; MAgri and Postgraduate Diploma in Rural Development was conducted on 20th January 2024. This ceremony was graced by distinguished guests from the university including the Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. The 5th intake and 3rd batch of students were enrolled for MAgri and Postgraduate Diploma programmes, respectively.



Workshop on Follow-up Actions of SER in BSc Hons Agriculture Degree Programme

This session was organized by the Faculty Quality Assurance Cell on 23rd January 2024 at the Faculty. In-charge of the follow-up action progress reporting team of the programme review 2019 (16 members) were attended.



Workshop on University Examination Procedures for Management Assistant

The above workshop was conducted by the Staff Development Center on 29th & 31st January 2024. The following Management assistants of the faculty attended the session.

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| 1. Ms. P.R.G.G. Rankothge | 4. Ms. P.K.D. Mangala |
| 2. Ms. B.A.S.N.P. Jayathika | 5. Ms. I.G.T.S. Ilukgoda |
| 3. Ms. U.D.N.S. Ranasinghe | |

15th Annual Research Symposium – 2024

The Faculty of Agriculture (FoA), Rajarata University of Sri Lanka (RUSL) held its 15th Annual Research Symposium on 08th February 2024. The theme for this year symposium was 'Towards Food Sovereignty Through Sustainable Agriculture'. The program began with a formal inauguration session in the morning held at the auditorium of the FoA, RUSL. This occasion was graced by the presence of Prof. (Ms.) G.A.S. Ginigaddara, Vice Chancellor of RUSL as the chief guest; Prof. G.V.T.V. Weerasooriya, Dean of the FoA, RUSL; Deans of other faculties; Prof. M.G.T.S. Amarasekara, Symposium Coordinator; Dr. Nimal Chandrasiri, who served as the Keynote Speaker; academic staff of the faculty and professionals from different research institutes in Sri Lanka.

Following the inauguration session, the technical sessions were held at 11 venues at the FoA, RUSL where the undergraduate students presented the outcomes of their research conducted over the last six months in widely-different fields of agriculture belonging to the following eight majoring modules: Agricultural Biology, Agricultural Economics and Extension, Agricultural Engineering, Agricultural Systems and Management, Animal Production and Technology, Crop Science, Environmental Soil Management, Food and Postharvest Technology. Altogether 131 students presented their research findings. In addition, there was

a postgraduate session where four MPhil and four MAgri students of the postgraduate program conducted by the FoA, RUSL presented their research findings.

The closing ceremony was held in the evening of the same day at the auditorium of the FoA, RUSL. The most outstanding presenter selected from each majoring module (8 students from 8 modules) was awarded a medal and a certificate at this occasion. In addition, the winners and participants of 3MT competition were awarded medals and certificates. The program came to an end with the address by Prof. G.V.T.V. Weerasooriya, Dean, by recapitulating the proceedings of the day and congratulating the passing out batch of students for their successful completion of the degree program at the FoA, RUSL.





Workshop on "Introduction of ChatGPT" for Academic & Research Purposes

The above workshop was conducted by the Staff Development Center on 13th February 2024.

The following academics of the faculty attended the session.

1. Dr. D.A.U.D. Devasinghe
2. Dr. K.R.E. Padmathilake
3. Dr. A.J. Fernando

Workshop on "Time Management" for Executive Staff and Management Assistants

The above workshop was conducted by the Staff Development Center on 14th March 2024. The following members of the faculty attended the session

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|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Ms. T. Luxshana | 3. Ms. P.K.D. Mangala |
| 2. Ms. A.S. Illanagasinghe | 4. Ms. H.R.N.D. Heendeniya |

Workshop on "Current Trends in Human Resource Management" for Executive Staff and Management Assistants

The above workshop was conducted by the Staff Development Center on 28th March 2024. The following members of the faculty attended the session

1. Ms. T. Luxshana
2. U.D.N.S. Ranasinghe
3. Ms. H.R.N.D. Heendeniya

“Krushi Dekma”, Farmer Day 2024

“Krushi Dekma”, Farmer Day 2024, was a remarkable event dedicated to the objective of expanding and disseminating agricultural knowledge among farmers, undergraduates, and public community organized by the Faculty of Agriculture, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. Prof. GAS Ginigaddara, the Vice Chancellor, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka and the honourable invitees graced the event. “Krushi Dekma”, Farmer Day 2024 was held on 3rd of April 2024, at the faculty premises brought together a diverse audience passionate about agriculture and rural development. Participants had the opportunity to explore 20 stalls showcasing innovative agricultural products, equipment, and initiatives promoting rural development. The day was filled with insightful discussions, interactive sessions, demonstrations, and meaningful company collaborations aimed at advancing the agricultural sector. Inspirational speeches by distinguished speakers highlighted the significance of empowering farmers and fostering agricultural sustainability.





Workshop on Digital tools for teaching

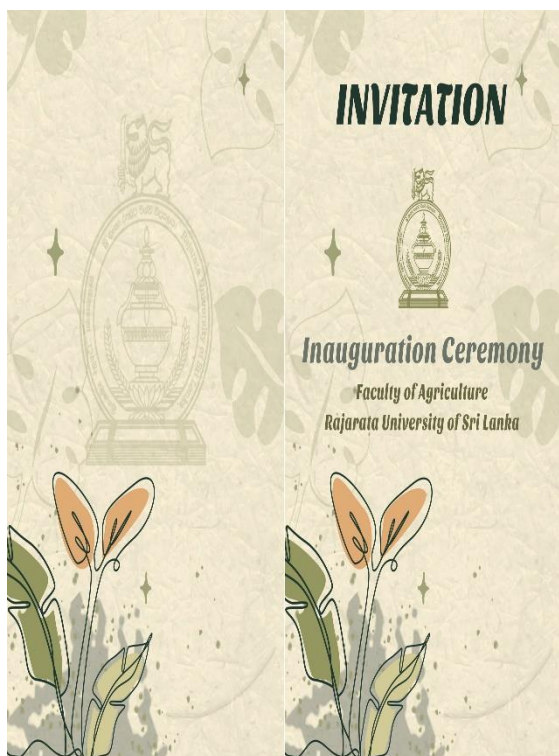
Dr. (Ms.) Jayaruwani Fernando and Ms. K.G.S. Nirmanee conducted a workshop on Digital tools for teaching under the Erasmus+ CCWater Project on 04th April 2024, for the Faculty of Agriculture academic staff members.



Inauguration Ceremony of 2022/2023 batch

The inauguration ceremony of the new entrants for undergraduate degree program of Faculty of Agriculture (2022/2023 batch) was successfully held on 24th April 2024 at the Auditorium, Faculty of Agriculture. This event was graced by the chief guest, Prof. G.A.S. Ginigaddara, Vice Chancellor, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. As this ceremony stands as the official welcome for the new entrants of the faculty, all the students and their parents got the opportunity to become aware of the university life and degree programme through valuable insights shared by Prof. G.A.S. Ginigaddara, Vice Chancellor of the university, Prof. G.V.T.V. Weerasooriya, Dean of the faculty and Prof. Thusitha Amarasekara, Senior student counsellor of the faculty.

Presenting of the Deans' list and faculty awardees to the current undergraduates of the faculty which is introduced for the first time lured this occasion and provided a great inspiration for the new entrants on the very first day of their university life. The Deans' list awardees were evaluated for the best academic performance while Faculty Awardee was evaluated for the academic performance along with the extracurricular achievements of the students.





Library Orientation Program – Introduction to the Agriculture Library

The library orientation program, "Introduction to the Agriculture Library" was conducted on 29th April 2024, for the undergraduates of the 2022/2023 batch of the Faculty of Agriculture. Mrs. W.P.T. Dilrukshi, Senior Assistant Librarian, served as the resource person, providing valuable insights into the library's resources and services to support the academic journey of the students.



Library Online Session: Science of Wellbeing



The Agriculture Library at Rajarata University of Sri Lanka hosted an online session titled “The Science of Well-Being” on 19th June 2024, for first-year students (2022/2023) of the Faculty of Agriculture. The session aimed to guide students in cultivating happiness and fostering personal well-being. Mrs. Hansamali Wickramasooriya, Assistant Librarian of the Main Library, served as the resource person, offering valuable insights to support the students' mental and emotional well-being.

Accessing Online Resources at the Agriculture Library for First-Year Students

The Agriculture Library at Rajarata University of Sri Lanka organized an online session on "Accessing Online Resources at the Library of Rajarata University" on 25th June 2024, for all first-year students (2022/2023) of the Faculty of Agriculture. The session aimed to familiarize students with the library's extensive online resources, including research databases, digital tools, and other essential academic resources. Mrs. W. P. T. Dilrukshi, Senior Assistant Librarian of the Faculty of Agriculture, served as the resource person, providing valuable guidance to support the students' academic journey.

Library Online Session: ICT Applications and Best Practices

The Agriculture Library conducted an online session on "ICT Applications and Best Practices" on 27th June 2024, for the 2022/2023 batch of the Faculty of Agriculture. The session aimed to enhance students' understanding of ICT tools and their effective application in academic and research activities. Mr. U. Ahamed, Assistant Librarian of the Main Library, served as the resource person, sharing valuable insights and practical knowledge to support the students' academic endeavours.



The poster features the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka logo at the top left. The title "ICT Applications and Best Practices" is prominently displayed in orange. Below the title, a circular portrait of Mr. U. Ahamed is shown. To the right of the portrait, a bulleted list highlights the session topics: "Secure Email", "Best Practices in Public Computer Labs", and "Free Online Resources". The session date and time, "On June 27th, 2024 live from 14:00 onwards", are written in orange. At the bottom left, Mr. U. Ahamed's credentials are listed. At the bottom right, a Zoom logo is accompanied by the Meeting ID (987 9452 9414) and Passcode (14564501).

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இலங்கை ரஜரட்ட பல்கலைக்கழகம்
Rajarata University of Sri Lanka

ICT Applications and Best Practices

- Secure Email
- Best Practices in Public Computer Labs
- Free Online Resources

On June 27th, 2024 live from 14:00 onwards

U. Ahamed MPhil. BSc (Hons)
Assistant Librarian
Main Library
Rajarata University of Sri Lanka

Meeting ID : 987 9452 9414
Passcode : 14564501

Visit of Prof. Bijesh Maharjan, University of Nebraska–Lincoln to Foster Collaboration

On 24th July 2024, Prof. Bijesh Maharjan, a distinguished expert in Soil and Water Sciences from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, visited the Faculty of Agriculture at Rajarata University of Sri Lanka to foster collaborative efforts between the two institutions. This partnership was facilitated by Prof. Manjula Magamage of Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. During his visit, Prof. Maharjan engaged in meaningful discussions with Prof. G.V.T.V. Weerasooriya, Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Dr. Chinthaka Karalliyadda, Director of International Relations, and the Heads of Departments.

The discussions focused on developing joint research initiatives, facilitating faculty and student exchange programs, and establishing specialized training opportunities. As part of his visit, Prof. Maharjan delivered an enlightening lecture on "Soil Health in Dry Lands in the USA," inspiring the academic community and students to explore advanced research and study opportunities in the United States. This visit is expected to strengthen the academic and research capabilities of both the Faculty of Agriculture at Rajarata University of Sri Lanka and

the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, paving the way for a long-lasting and mutually beneficial partnership



Visits of Scholars from NMV University, India

On 29th August 2024, Dr. K.R. Sundaravaradarajan, Vice Chancellor of NMV University, along with students from the Institute of Agriculture Research & Technology (IART) majoring in Agricultural Economics and Extension, visited the Faculty of Agriculture at Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. During the visit, Dr. Sundaravaradarajan engaged in a productive discussion with the Vice Chancellor of RUSL, the Dean, and the staff of the Faculty of Agriculture. The meeting focused on exploring opportunities for future collaboration, including student exchange programs and joint research initiatives.





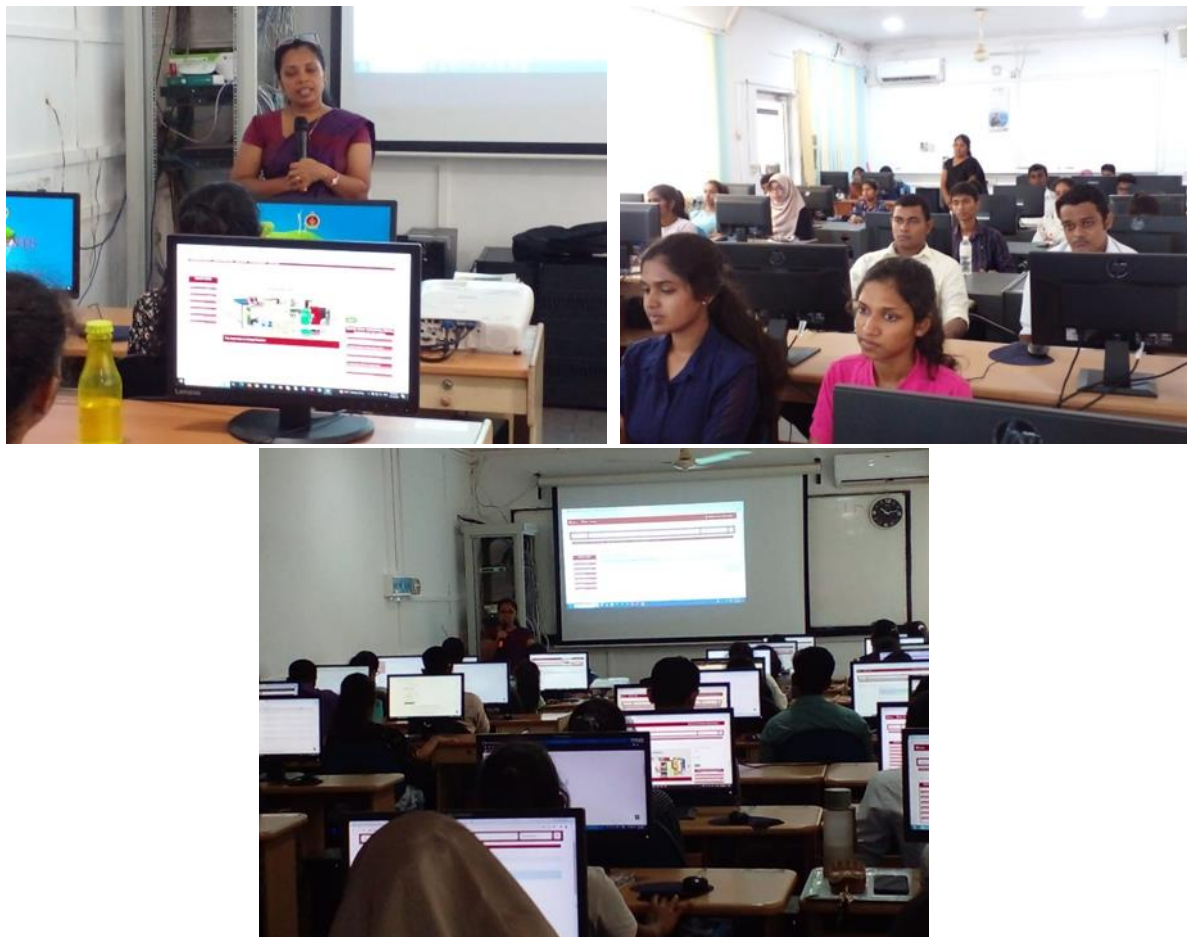
Stakeholder Engagement Meeting by RUSL

A successful stakeholder engagement meeting was held at Horizon Campus, Malabe, on 5th September 2024, organized by the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka as part of the FOUNTAIN Consortium. The event brought together entrepreneurs, industry experts, university academics, and undergraduate students, creating a collaborative platform for dialogue and innovation. The session introduced the FOUNTAIN Project and focused on the deliverables of Work Package 4, which emphasizes innovative and entrepreneurial curricula development. Key discussions centered on refining the content for the Advanced Certificate Course in Entrepreneurship, Invention, and Innovation, as well as the Internship Curricula model and module. The meeting marked significant progress in bridging academia and industry, highlighting the importance of collaboration in fostering innovation and sustainable partnerships.



Library Awareness Session on Effective Use of Library Facilities

The Agriculture Library of the Faculty of Agriculture organized an awareness session on "Effective Use of Library Facilities" on 12th September 2024, for the undergraduates of the 2022/2023 batch. The program featured a comprehensive demonstration on utilizing the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), searching electronic databases, exploring useful academic web links, and navigating the digital library. Mrs. W.P.T. Dilrukshi, Senior Assistant Librarian of the Faculty of Agriculture, served as the resource person, equipping students with essential skills to maximize the library's resources for their academic pursuits.



International Workshop - 11th International Conference on Agriculture 2024 -AGRICO 2024

Prof S.C. Somasiri participated in the 11th International Conference on Agriculture 2024 - AGRICO 2024, held on 23rd & 24th September 2024, at Ambassador Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand. There were over 150 participants from around the globe, including scholars, researchers, and industry leaders, the event offered a platform for sharing research findings, networking, and collaboration on sustainable agricultural practices. This conference was organized by the International Institute of Knowledge Management (TIKM), No: 531/18, Kotte Road, Pitakotte, 10100, Sri Lanka. She presented an abstract titled "Traditional Crop - Livestock Integrated Agricultural Systems for Sustainable Agricultural Production". Authors were SC Somasiri, APS Fernando and S Premarathna. In addition, she has also participated in the

stakeholder meeting aimed at addressing the challenges and opportunities in modern agriculture organized by the Conference.



Workshop on Gender Equity and Equality: Live with Diversity

This session was organized by the Faculty Quality Assurance Cell on 26th September 2024 at the faculty. Dr. S.M.C.B. Karalliyadda and Mr. N.M.K.C. Premaratne were the resource persons. This workshop gave important insights on living with diversity, and addressing the rights of individuals against gender-based violence. Twenty nine academic staff members attended the workshop.

Workshop on

Workshop on gender equity and equality: Living with diversity

By Faculty Quality Assurance Cell , Faculty of Agriculture

Date: 26th September 2024

Time: 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm

Venue: Faculty Board Room, Faculty of Agriculture

Resource persons: Dr. S.M.C.B. Karalliyadda and Mr. N.M.K.C. Premaratne



FOUNTAIN Consortium Members' Visit to Tallinn, Estonia

Consortium members of FOUNTAIN project visited Tallinn, Estonia, from 1st to 3rd October 2024 for the E4.1 Workshop on Internship Programs and Curricula and the 4th Steering Committee Meeting, hosted by Tallinn University of Technology. The three-day program included two days of workshops and discussions, followed by a day of field visits. Representing RUSL, Prof. M.H.J.P. Gunarathna (Project coordinator-RUSL), Prof. M.K.N. Kumari and Dr. P.D. Kahandage attended this event.

Day 1, featured a training session on internship curricula development led by Prof. Tiia Rüütman, Head of the Estonian Centre for Engineering Education. The FOUNTAIN WP 3 workshop, titled "Bridging Research Innovation and Industry through Digital Skills Development for Green Innovation and Entrepreneurship," highlighted capacity building, green innovation, and fostering university-industry networks.

Day 2 began with a campus tour of TalTech, concluding at the Mektory Innovation and Business Centre. Presentations included TalTech's industry cooperation, Estonia's innovation ecosystem, and digital twins. Afternoon discussions on innovative curricula (Work Package 4) and establishing centers of excellence (Work Package 5) were led by Sri Lankan delegates. The day concluded with the 4th Steering Committee Meeting chaired by Prof. Guttilla Jayasinghe and a social evening at Noa Restaurant.

Day 3 involved field visits, beginning with a guided tour of Tallinn's Old Town. The team then visited the Tallinn City Government to learn about its innovation initiatives, followed by the e-Estonia Briefing Centre, where Petra Holm introduced Estonia's digital transformation efforts. The visit concluded with an exploration of the Telliskivi Creative City.



Workshop on Inventory Management

The above workshop was conducted by the Staff Development Center on 3rd October 2024. The following members of the faculty attended the session.

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| 1. M.R.W.P. Rathnayaka | 4. I.G.T.S. Ilukgoda |
| 2. P.K.D. Mangala | 5. S.M.A.G.B. Senawirathna |
| 3. S.M.S.S.D.B. Samarakoon | 6. A.S. Ilangasooriya |

Outreach Programme for the School Children of Widya Pradeepa Vidyalaya, Dunupethagama, Anuradhapura

An outreach program aimed at promoting and enhancing reading habits among schoolchildren was held at Widya Pradeepa Vidyalaya in the Anuradhapura District on 14th October 2024. Mrs. W. P. T. Dilrukshi, Senior Assistant Librarian of the Faculty of Agriculture, and Mrs. H. Wickramasooriya, Assistant Librarian of the Main Library, served as resource persons, offering valuable guidance to the students. This initiative was organized by the Nochiyagama Pradeshiya Sabha, providing a platform to inspire a love for reading and learning among young learners.



Workshop on Aquaculture Industry

The Export Development Board, in collaboration with the Association of Live Tropical Fish Exporters of Sri Lanka and the Sri Lanka Ornamental Fish Farmers' Association, conducted a workshop at the Faculty of Agriculture on 16th October 2024. This event was organized in partnership with the Department of Animal and Food Sciences and attracted 175 participants, including ornamental fish farmers from the Anuradhapura District, students from the University College Anuradhapura and the School of Agriculture in Anuradhapura, non-academic staff from the Faculty of Agriculture, and students from the faculties of Agriculture and Applied Sciences.

The workshop was organized by Dr. R.H.G.R. Wathsala, Senior Lecturer in Aquaculture & Fisheries, along with the staff and students of the Department of Animal and Food Sciences, particularly those enrolled in the Animal Production Technology module. The primary goal of the event was to share knowledge with ornamental fish farmers and university students,

addressing the challenges faced by the ornamental fish industry and exploring practical solutions to enhance its contribution to the national export economy. This collaborative effort highlighted the Faculty's commitment to supporting industry growth and fostering community engagement.



RUSL Academics visit UWM, Poland

At the invitation of the University of Warmia and Mazury, Poland (UWM), Prof. M.H.J.P. Gunarathna and Prof. M.K.N. Kumari participated in a field sampling training and laboratory visit from October 15th to 24th, 2024. This program provided invaluable hands-on experience in water quality and flow assessment techniques.

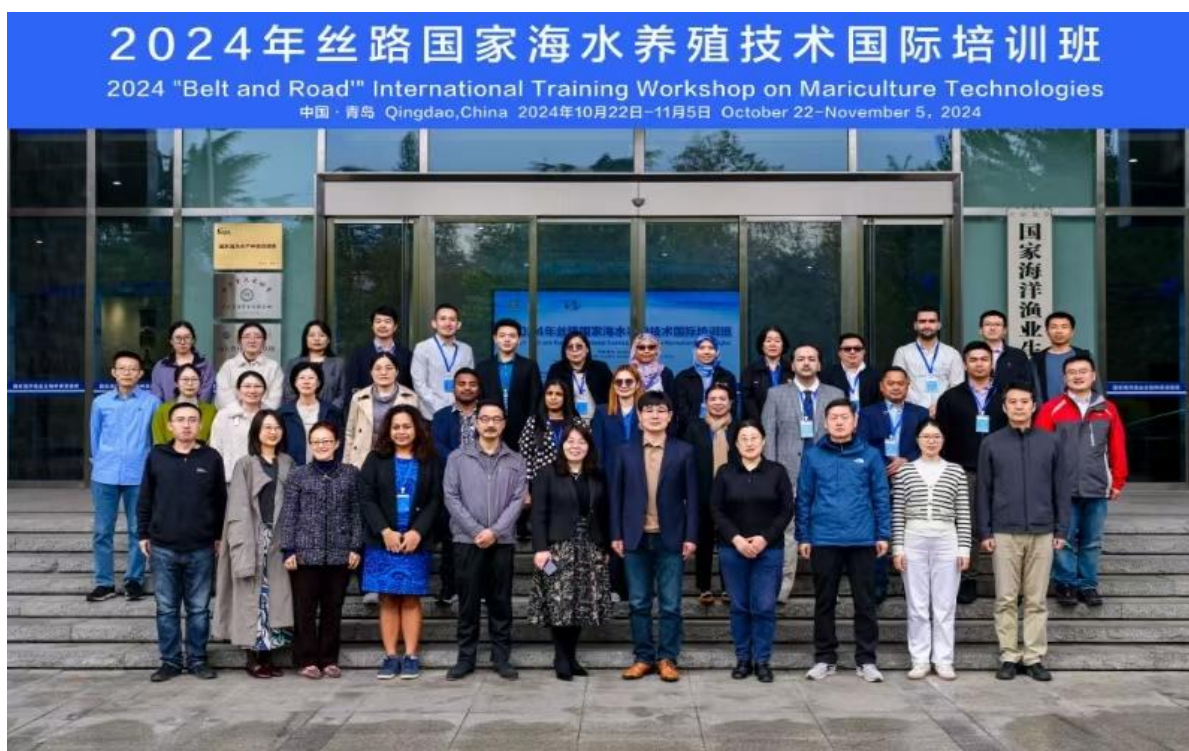
The training included visits to UWM's isotope and water laboratories, where participants were introduced to advanced analytical methods and cutting-edge research tools. Fieldwork sessions enabled to apply their learning directly, gaining practical insights into water sampling and flow measurement in diverse environmental settings using modern technologies.

This experience not only enhanced technical skills but also fostered international collaboration and recognition to the university.



International Training: “Belt and Road” International Training Workshop on Mariculture Technologies, 2024 in China

The international training workshop on mariculture technologies was held from 22nd October to 5th November 2024, in Qingdao, China, with the participation of 20 professionals from various countries engaged in the aquaculture sector. Dr. R.H.G.R. Wathsal had the opportunity to participate in this training. This workshop provided a valuable opportunity to gain practical knowledge in advanced mariculture technologies, including large-scale breeding, innovative mariculture models and techniques, disease control and prevention, nutrition and feed technologies for mariculture animals, and processing technologies for mariculture products. Given Sri Lanka's growing focus on sustainable mariculture practices and the blue economy, as well as the existing gaps in expertise in this field, the knowledge acquired from this program holds great value. It can be applied to teaching, research, outreach, and broader contributions at the national level, fostering advancements in the mariculture industry.



Workshop on Introduction to Counseling

The above workshop was conducted by the Staff Development Center on 19th November 2024. The following members of the faculty attended the session.

1. Prof. M.G.T.S. Amarasekara
2. Dr. K.R.E. Padmathilake

16th Annual Research Symposium 2024 – Faculty of Agriculture, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka

The 16th Annual Research Symposium of the Faculty of Agriculture (FoA), Rajarata University of Sri Lanka (RUSL), was held on 20th November 2024 at Puliyankulama, Anuradhapura, under the theme '*Innovation and Sustainability in Modern Agriculture.*' This esteemed event highlights the research achievements of students, reflecting the faculty's dedication to advancing agricultural science and practice.

The inaugural session was honoured by the presence of Prof. G.V.T.V. Weerasooriya, Acting Vice Chancellor and Dean of FoA, RUSL; deans of other faculties of RUSL; Dr. U.G.A.I. Sirisena, Symposium Coordinator; and Prof. Paul Kenyon, Head of School, School of Agriculture & Environment, Massey University, who delivered the keynote address. The event also welcomed academics, professionals from research institutes, academic-supportive and non-academic staff, as well as undergraduate and postgraduate students. Following the inaugural session, technical sessions commenced with 145 undergraduate students presenting their research across diverse agricultural fields. The symposium also included a postgraduate session, where 13 students from the faculty's postgraduate program shared their research findings, contributing to the event's comprehensive exploration of modern agricultural

innovations. Recognizing excellence, awards were presented to the best presenters from each majoring module and postgraduate session, and the winners of the 3MT competition.





Virtual Inauguration Ceremony of MSc in Agroecology, FoA, RUSL 2024

Virtual inauguration ceremony of Postgraduate programme; MSc in Agroecology was conducted on 30th November 2024. This ceremony was graced by distinguished guests from the university including the Vice-Chancellor of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka and Dr. S.M.C.B. Karalliyadda, Academic Coordinator of the program. The 1st intake was enrolled for MSc in Agroecology.





Workshop on Dementia

The above workshop was conducted by the Staff Development Center on 10th December 2024. The following members of the faculty attended the session.

1. Prof. S.C. Somasiri
2. Ms. A.S. Ilangasingha

Reading Camp for Library Readers of the Public Library, Anuradhapura

A reading camp was conducted on 13th December 2024, at the Public Library in Anuradhapura, aimed at fostering reading habits among children and promoting the effective use of the public library. Mrs. W. P. T. Dilrukshi, Senior Assistant Librarian of the Faculty of Agriculture, and Mrs. H. Wickramasooriya, Assistant Librarian of the Main Library, served as resource persons,

providing insightful guidance and encouragement to participants. This initiative sought to inspire a lifelong love for reading and enhance the educational value of the public library.



Workshop on Career Progression and Promotion Scheme of Technical Officers

The above workshop was conducted by the Staff Development Center on 18th December 2024. The following members of the faculty attended the session.

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| 1. M.K.R.K. Samarasena | 3. S.M.A.U.B. Senavirathna |
| 2. M.R.N.B. Rathnayake | 4. A.N. Tennakoon |

Workshop on Preparation of Budget for Self-Finance Courses

The above workshop was conducted by the Staff Development Center on 19th December 2024. The following members of the faculty attended the session.

1. Dr. R.H.G.R. Wathsala