



Agri Innovation Centre, UASB

University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore



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UAS-B/NL/2025/GKVK/USN-019-08

Newsletter of AIC, UASB

Quarterly Newsletter

Volume - 8 (January to March 2026)



TOP NEWS OF THE QUARTER

READ MORE

Navarambha-3rd to 13th
March 2026
Pre Incubation
Training Programme-
Build Your Agri Startup
from Scratch

The programme strengthened participants' entrepreneurial readiness by enabling idea refinement, business model validation and identification of market opportunities. It enhanced investment preparedness through exposure to business planning and funding avenues, while fostering collaboration with experts and peers. The programme also promoted tech-driven innovation through real-world insights and advanced agricultural technologies.

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Message



Dr. S.V. Suresha
Hon'ble Vice Chancellor,
UASB

The Agri Innovation Centre (AIC) at the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, established in 2017, supported by DBT and DPIIT, GoI, plays a crucial role in nurturing agricultural startups. It provides a comprehensive range of support and resources to help entrepreneurs transform their ideas into market-ready products. As the Vice Chancellor of the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore and Chairman of the Management Committee of the AIC, it is my privilege to witness the significant initiatives and progress achieved by this innovative hub. The quarterly newsletter published by the AIC, UAS, Bangalore showcases the dynamic activities of the centre with a wide variety of topics, including the startups, innovations and assistance along with the funding opportunities. It also covers the capacity-building training sessions and networking events organized by the centre.

Hope this newsletter provides you with plenty of valuable information and encourages you to explore stories of startup resilience, transformative projects and collaborative endeavors that embody the spirit of innovation and progress in agriculture.

Best wishes to all the readers and happy reading!

Welcome to the **Eighth edition** of our newsletter from the AIC, UASB. We are delighted to share the latest updates from the Agri Innovation Centre (AIC), UASB, as we continue our mission to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector. Our Incubation Centre is dedicated to nurturing groundbreaking ideas and empowering entrepreneurs, farmers, students, and researchers.

At AIC, we provide the necessary infrastructure, mentorship, and funding support to help transform visionary concepts into impactful agri-based ventures. Our core vision is to create meaningful societal change by supporting grassroot level innovations, advancing deep-tech solutions, and promoting women-led enterprises. To date, AIC, UASB has supported 80 startups, trained over 23,000 participants, and contributed to the creation of 1000+ employment opportunities through our incubated startups. As we continue to drive innovation in agriculture, we warmly invite all stakeholders to engage with us, collaborate, and contribute to building a sustainable, technology-driven future.

Message



Dr. Veena S. Anil
Professor and Head, Dept. of
Plant Biotechnology &
Coordinator
AIC, UASB



About Agri Innovation Centre

The University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore (UASB), has established the Agri Innovation Centre (AIC) at the GVKK campus in Bengaluru during 2017. This center is designed to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector and is a hub of creative ideas and initiatives. It caters to a wide range of individuals, including agriculture graduates, farmers, and anyone with innovative ideas related to agriculture and allied sectors.

The Agri Innovation Centre, as an umbrella Centre has an Incubator that was supported by the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) under the BioNEST scheme since 2021, referred to as "BioNEST Agri Innovation Centre". In a significant development, a section 8 company (a nonprofit entity) was established under the Companies Act of 2013 in 2021, as a component of the AIC and operating under the guidance of the esteemed Vice Chancellor of UASB.

The Agri Innovation Center UASB, has received funding from the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), through the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme, enabling it to provide financial support to startups nationwide. This support spans various stages of their journey, including proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market entry, and commercialization.

The primary focus of the Agri Innovation Centre at UASB is to empower entrepreneurs, rural youth, farmers, academics, and agricultural scientists with innovative ideas in the Agri and allied sectors. By embracing emerging technologies and initiating translational programs, the centre aims to develop tangible products that enhance the economic returns of the agriculture sector.

SERVICES OFFERED BY THE AGRI INNOVATION CENTRE



Training



Incubation facility



Seed funding



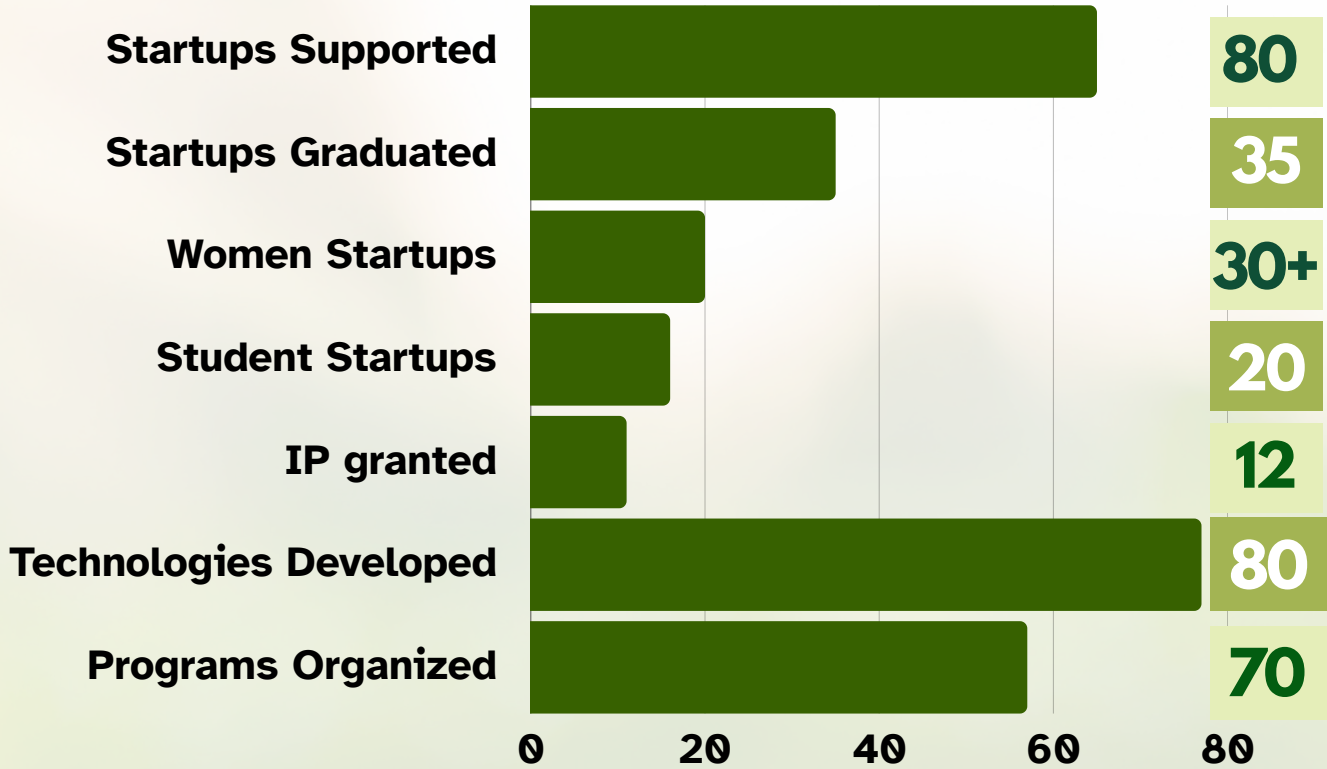
Mentorship



Networking

IMPACT OF AIC, UASB

● Impact of AIC



1,000+

Employment generated



23,000+ Participants Trained

Farmland Reached
5 lakh + Hectares



Farmers Reached
9.23 lakh +



150+
FPO's trained

3520 Lakhs
Fund raised



Training Programme/Meeting organised by AIC, UASB:

Executive Committee meeting- Incubation programme

The Executive Committee Meeting was held on **13th February and 18th March 2026** to evaluate and select new startups for incubation programme.



Executive committee members during EC meeting held on 13th February 2026

The meeting began with a welcome address by Dr. Veena S. Anil, Co-ordinator, AIC UASB, who also provided an overview of the proceedings of the previous committee meeting. The meeting was chaired by Dr. K. Madhusudan, Registrar & Dean (PGS) on 13th February 2026 and Dr.P. Venkataravana, Dean (PGS) on 18th March 2026 followed by Dr. Chikkalingaiah, ADR, UASB and Dr. P. H. Ramanjini Gowda, Retired Professor & Former Member, Board of Regents, UASB and other faculty members who were also assigned to serve as mentors to the incubatee applicants, if the applicants were selected.



Startup pitching during EC meeting held on 13th February 2026



Executive Committee members during 18th March 2026



Startup pitching during EC meeting held on 13th February 2026

The committee formally confirmed the minutes of the earlier meeting before proceeding to review the new applications. **Eighteen startups** presented their innovative ideas across various domains in Agriculture including **Biofertilizer, Carbon Credit, Value addition, Crop Management applications, Sericulture based innovations, Deep technology & Waste to wealth.**

Navarambha- Pre Incubation Training Programme

“Build Your Agri Startup from Scratch”

AIC, UASB successfully completed a comprehensive 10-day online pre-incubation training programme, culminating in an engaging on-campus session at the Incubation Centre from 3rd to 13th March 2026. This initiative was thoughtfully designed to nurture aspiring entrepreneurs and early-stage agri-startups by equipping them with the knowledge, tools, and ecosystem connections required to transform innovative agricultural ideas into scalable, market-ready ventures.

The programme adopted a structured, hands-on approach, blending expert-led sessions with practical learning modules. Participants were guided through the startup journey from ideation to execution ensuring they developed a strong foundation in both business and agricultural innovation.

Key learning areas included:

- **Exploring opportunities in agriculture**, with a focus on emerging trends, problem identification, and innovative solution development, along with refining startup ideas and validating business models
- **Market opportunity assessment**, enabling participants to identify target customers, analyze demand, and position their solutions effectively

- **Business plan development and investment readiness**, with step-by-step guidance on building robust, investor-ready proposals
- **Understanding funding avenues**, intellectual property rights, and navigating legal and regulatory frameworks critical to startup success
- **Real-world exposure** through interactive sessions with successful agri-startup founders and investors, offering practical insights and lessons learned
- **Deep engagement with the Agri Innovation Centre and UASB ecosystem**, opening pathways for incubation, mentorship, and future collaboration

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from 45 individuals, representing a diverse mix of startups, aspiring entrepreneurs, students, and IT professionals.



A distinguished lineup of **15 expert speakers from the startup, industry, and innovation ecosystem enriched the sessions with their experience and domain expertise.** The concluding in-person session on **13th March 2026** at AIC, UASB added significant value by fostering direct interaction and experiential learning. Participants actively networked, exchanged ideas, and built meaningful connections with peers and experts. Special sessions on startup funding schemes provided clarity on financial support mechanisms, while experience-sharing sessions by incubated startups offered inspiration and practical insights into real entrepreneurial journeys.

The programme concluded with an interactive feedback session, allowing participants to reflect on their learning experience, followed by the distribution of certificates. Overall, the initiative marked a significant milestone in fostering innovation, building entrepreneurial capacity, and strengthening the agri-startup ecosystem, reinforcing UASB's commitment to driving sustainable agricultural development.

In addition, participants were introduced to recent advancements in food processing technologies, broadening their understanding of value addition in agriculture. The on-campus visit featured exposure to state-of-the-art facilities, including the hydroponics unit and advanced Smart Agriculture Labs, where participants explored innovations in agri-automation and drone technologies.

Impact:

The programme enhanced participants' entrepreneurial readiness by helping them refine ideas, validate business models, and identify market opportunities, while also improving investment preparedness through exposure to business planning and funding avenues. It fostered collaboration and partnerships among participants and experts, and encouraged tech-driven innovation through real-world insights and exposure to advanced agricultural technologies. Continued access to incubation and mentorship further supports participants in developing and scaling their ventures, contributing to sustainable growth in the agri sector.



Training programmes and events participation by AIC UASB

Participation at Krishi Santhe of UASB

The University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore (UASB) organizes the *Krishi Santhe* on the fourth Saturday of every month. This monthly event serves as a vibrant platform to highlight the university's cutting-edge research, agricultural technologies, and the significant contributions of its Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVK) and Agricultural Research Stations (ARS). The purpose of the *Krishi Santhe* is to connect scientific advancements with the public and farming community.

The *Krishi Santhe* has seen enthusiastic participation, drawing over more than 10,000 visitors during each santhe. Notably, startups, such as **Criyagen Agritech, Susthira Organic LLP, Maine Wellness and FPOs like Kalpamitra and Banashankari from Tumakuru** actively took part in the events held in January, February and March 2026, showcasing innovations ranging from organic inputs to advanced seed related technologies.



International Trade Fair 2026

Organized by Karnataka State Department of Agriculture at Tripuravasini, Palace grounds, Bengaluru

Agri Innovation Centre (AIC), UASB actively participated in the International Trade Fair – “Agriculture Beyond Cultivation: Empowering Farmers”, organized by the Karnataka State Department of Agriculture from **6th to 8th March 2026** at Palace Grounds, Bengaluru. The fair provided a vibrant platform to connect stakeholders across the agriculture ecosystem, from farmers and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) to agri-startups, innovators, and entrepreneurs.

The event emphasized transitioning Indian agriculture beyond traditional cultivation practices toward value-added, technology-driven and scalable business models.

Visitors to the AIC, UASB stall had the opportunity to:

- Learn about incubation and mentorship support offered to early-stage agri-startups.
- Explore flagship programmes, including the Pre-Incubation Programme
- Interact with incubated agri and biotech startups
- Gain insights into testing, validation, and market-readiness support provided by UASB



Vijnatham Utsav - 2026

Organized by Adichunchanagiri University in association with Sri Adichunchanagiri Mahasamsthana Math at Sri Kshetra Adichunchanagiri, Belluru Cross, Mandya(Dist.)

AIC, UASB participated in **Vijnatham Utsav - 2026** on 19th to 20th February 2026 at Sri Kshetra Adichunchanagiri.



Representing the dynamic agri-startup ecosystem of **AIC, UASB showcased innovations under the theme "AI and IoT in Agriculture for Food Security."** The exhibition featured cutting-edge solutions developed by its incubated startups, demonstrating the increasing role of advanced technologies in modern agriculture. Notably, **Agri Botics Systems Pvt. Ltd., an indigenous precision drone spraying startup, was among the key exhibitors.**



Lead Speaker at SERI-SETU National Industry Meet

Organized by Central Silk Board, GoI at Hotel The Lalit Ashok, Bengaluru

Dr. Veena S Anil, Professor & Head, Department of Plant Biotechnology and Coordinator, AIC, UASB, participated as a key speaker at the **SERI-SETU – Sericulture Stakeholders' Engagement for Technology Upgradation**, organized by the Central Silk Board. The programme was held on **20th February 2026**. The event brought together various stakeholders from across the sericulture sector.



During the event, Dr. Veena S. Anil delivered a guest lecture on **“Impact of Incubation Centres on Agricultural Startups and Entrepreneurship.”** In her address, she highlighted the critical role of incubation centres in nurturing agri-startups by providing end-to-end support including mentoring, infrastructure, access to funding, and market linkages. She emphasized how such ecosystems enable the transformation of innovative ideas into commercially viable enterprises, particularly in sectors like Agriculture and Sericulture.

She further elaborated on the role of AIC, UASB in promoting entrepreneurship through structured incubation programmes, capacity building initiatives, funding support and industry collaborations. **The session provided valuable insights into strengthening stakeholder engagement, accelerating technology adoption, and fostering innovation-driven growth in the Sericulture value chain.** The lecture was well received by participants, offering practical perspectives on leveraging incubation support to build sustainable and scalable agri-enterprises.

Atal Community Incubation Centre inauguration at PIMs

Organized by Padmashree Institute of Management Studies, Bengaluru

Padmashree Institute of Management Studies (PIMS) inaugurated the **Atal Community Innovation Centre (ACIC), supported by AIM, NITI Aayog On 22nd January 2026**, to promote grassroots innovation and entrepreneurship. **This marks the launch of Karnataka’s first ACIC at PIMS—an initiative dedicated to empowering community-led solutions and nurturing emerging innovators.** The programme was inaugurated by Sri Sri Nirmalananda Maha Swamyji and Dr. C. Ashwath Narayana, MLA. Ms. Nandini C. L., CEO of AIC UASB participated in the inauguration event.

The event brought together key stakeholders and strengthened collaborative efforts between institutions for fostering innovation and inclusive growth.



Panel discussion From Farm to Enterprise: Enriching Farms

Organized by Kristu Jayanti College, Bengaluru

As part of the International Trade Fair 2026, a pre-event **panel discussion on “From Farm to Enterprise: Enriching Farms”, organized by Kristu Jayanti (Deemed to be University)** in association with the Karnataka State Department of Agriculture (KSDA) on **28th January 2026**. Ms. Nandini C. L., CEO, AIC, UASB, participated in the discussion. The panel discussion brought together KSDA officials, agri-startups, incubator representatives from UAS, Bangalore and UAS, Dharwad, and student entrepreneurs on one platform.

To discuss how Indian agriculture can transition beyond primary production towards value addition, enterprise creation, and brand ownership.



SUSTAIN-2026: Panel discussion

Organized by TIGS, in collaboration with NCBS, Bengaluru

TIGS, in collaboration with NCBS, organised **SUSTAIN-2026** (Sustainable Transformation in Agriculture and Nutrition) - a new annual summit from **5th to 6th February 2026 at UAS-GKVK**, wherein ICAR-NBAIR, and ICAR-IIRR participated as knowledge partners for this inaugural edition.

Dr. Veena S Anil, Professor & Head, Department of Plant Biotechnology and Coordinator, AIC, UASB, participated in the panel discussion and highlighted the role and applications of microbial technologies in agriculture. She explained that plant-microbiome associations naturally enhance growth, stress tolerance, and productivity, with endophytes acting as **“hidden partners”** by improving nutrient uptake, regulating uptake, regulating hormones, and



enabling resilience to salinity, heat, and drought through osmolyte production, ion balance, and antioxidant activity. She emphasized that future advancements lie in precision microbiome engineering, integration with plant breeding, and improved delivery systems, supported by omics research and synthetic consortia to address field inconsistencies.

Visit to AIC, UASB:

Visited by FTI trainees

The Farmers Training Institute (FTI), UASB organized a three-day advanced training programme on **“Millets Processing and Value Addition”** for 27 participants, including farmers, FPO representatives, and entrepreneurs. As part of the programme, the participants visited the AIC, UASB on **7th January 2026**. During the visit, Ms. Priyanka S, Operational Manager, AIC-UASB, briefed the participants on the **activities of the incubation centre and highlighted the support extended to millet-based entrepreneurs, including packaging facilities, mentorship, and incubation support**. She also shared success stories of millet-based startups nurtured by the centre.

The visit concluded with an interactive session, followed by a guided facility tour of AIC-UASB, providing participants with firsthand exposure to the startup ecosystem and innovation infrastructure.



Orientation programme to Agriculture Department officials

SAMETI (State Agricultural Management and Extension Training Institute), in collaboration with UASB, conducts specialized training, capacity-building, and induction programmes for stakeholders of the Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA), particularly Assistant Technology Managers (ATMs) and Block Technology Managers (BTMs).

As part of a three-day training programme, **Dr. Veena S. Anil** delivered a lecture on **“Entrepreneurship in Agriculture,”** providing participants with insights into emerging opportunities in the agri-startup ecosystem. This was followed by a visit to the Agri Innovation Centre (AIC), UASB on **23rd January 2026**. During the visit, 22 participants explored the centre’s infrastructure, interacted with startups, and gained exposure to various funding schemes, incubation support services, and key activities undertaken by the centre.



Visit by Students from Manipal University

AIC, UASB hosted a vibrant group of 15 students from **Manipal College** on **22nd January 2026**. The visit began with an introduction by Ms. Priyanka, Operational Manager, AIC, who familiarized the students with the vision and activities of the Centre, emphasizing its role in driving agricultural innovations and showcasing the incubation facilities available for startups. This was followed by an engaging session by highlighting the mandates, activities, flagship programmes, incubation models and **student-focused funding schemes offered by the government**. She also shared inspiring success stories of incubated startups whose innovations have translated into impactful agri-solutions.



The interactive session encouraged students to explore their entrepreneurial potential, with many showing keen interest in understanding how technology can be aligned with agriculture, biotechnology, and innovation-driven entrepreneurship.

DBT Scheme Survey by Forvis Mazars LLP appointed by Niti Ayog

The team from **Forvis Mazars, appointed by NITI Aayog, Government of India** visited AIC, UASB to survey the impact of **BioNEST Scheme of BIRAC by DBT, GoI to Incubation Centre and startups**. The goal of the team was to assess the **impact of BIRAC-supported initiatives in the startup ecosystem**.

They reviewed the BioNEST scheme of BIRAC, Department of Biotechnology (DBT), focusing on its role in strengthening the incubation ecosystem, supporting biotech startups, and driving innovation in agri-biotech. Interactions with startups, faculty, and the incubation team provided insights into infrastructure, funding, mentorship, and technology commercialization.

The visit highlighted AIC-UASB's contributions towards fostering entrepreneurship and building a vibrant biotech startup ecosystem.

Visit by PGDM Students from Coffee Board, Bengaluru

A group of 10 students enrolled in the Diploma in **Coffee Estate Management (DCEM)** program from the Coffee Board, Govt. of India visited the AIC, UASB on 24th March 2026 as part of their academic exposure and industry learning initiative.

The visit aimed to provide students with insights into the agri-startup ecosystem, innovation-driven agriculture, and entrepreneurship opportunities within the sector. During the session, **Mr. Sandeep D, Incubation Assistant, introduced students to the role and activities of AIC, UASB in nurturing agri-based startups through incubation support, mentoring, funding facilitation, and access to advanced infrastructure and research facilities.**



The interaction included an overview of ongoing startup innovations in agriculture, particularly those relevant to **plantation crops, sustainability, and value addition—areas closely aligned with coffee estate management.** Students were also briefed on how technological interventions such as precision agriculture, IoT-based monitoring, and post-harvest innovations are transforming traditional farming practices.

The visit featured a guided tour of the incubation facilities, laboratories, and startup workspaces, allowing participants to understand the practical aspects of product development, testing, and commercialization. The students engaged in interactive discussions with the AIC team, gaining clarity on startup ideation, business models, and support mechanisms available for aspiring agri-entrepreneurs.

STARTUP SPOTLIGHT- Susthira Organic LLP

Susthira Bio Organics, an incubated startup at AIC, UAS(B), GKVK, Bengaluru. With a vision to promote eco-friendly and residue-free farming, the startup has focused research on isolating and harnessing beneficial ***Lactobacillus species***. Through rigorous experimentation, multiple strains were identified with unique properties such as **bactericidal, fungicidal, nematocidal effects**, along with capabilities as bio-fertilizers and plant growth promoters.

Building on this research background from Indian Institute of Horticulture Research(ICAR-IIHR), the startup developed its flagship product, the "**Consortia of *Lactobacillus spp.***," a powerful microbial formulation combining multiple beneficial strains. **Field trials showcased its high efficacy in managing critical crop diseases, including wilt in tomato and chilli, and yellow leaf disease in arecanut.** Beyond disease control, the product significantly improved plant health, vigor, and overall yield, making it a valuable input for farmers.



Founder: Dr. M. S. Rao



The innovation gained recognition from the Department of Agriculture, Government of Karnataka, which supported its credibility and adoption. Leveraging this validation, Susthira Bio Organics successfully moved towards commercialization, manufacturing and marketing the product to farmers across the state. Today, the solution is widely applied across diverse crops such as vegetables, fruits, plantation crops, cotton, paddy, and sugarcane.

The Startup has successfully received RKVY Raftar grant from UAS, Dharwad for their innovative combi products



Incubatees of Agri Innovation Center ,UASB



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