MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

DEPARTMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY, RAJARSHI SHAHU MAHAVIDYALAYA, LATUR (Autonomous)

HUDCO Corner, MIDC, Latur - 413512,

Maharashtra, INDIA

AND

KRISHI VIGYAN KENDRA

KRISHI VIGYAN KENDRA, LATUR

Date: 15/07/2024

PREAMBLE

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is established with profound recognition of the exceptional institutions and entities involved, each exemplifying a commitment to excellence, innovation, and the advancement of education and biotechnology.

Rajarshi Shahu Mahavidyalaya (Autonomous), situated in the vibrant city of Latur and founded in 1970, has consistently demonstrated its capacity to transform challenges into opportunities. A cornerstone of its mission is to provide exceptional education to disadvantaged students, embracing an educational philosophy known as the 'Shahu Pattern. This pedagogical framework prioritizes innovation, ethical values, and unwavering dedication. As a result, the institution has cultivated a culture of academic distinction, yielding remarkable accomplishments such as producing top-ranking students and obtaining accreditation from the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). Since 2013, the institution has enjoyed academic autonomy, which has facilitated the pursuit of distinctive educational methodologies. Through an array of academic programs, the institution has garnered recognition, established partnerships with prestigious organizations, and fostered a dynamic alumni community across diverse professional domains.

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Latur, functioning under the esteemed Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), is a pivotal institution dedicated to agricultural training, technology transfer, and rural upliftment. As a frontline extension center, KVK Latur plays a transformative role in bridging the gap between scientific advancements and field-level implementation. Through its comprehensive programs—including on-field demonstrations, applied and adaptive research, farmer-centric training modules, capacity-building workshops, and continuous scientific outreach—KVK significantly contributes to improving agricultural productivity, sustainability, and socio-economic development in the region. The center’s expertise spans crop improvement, soil health management, plant protection, agri-biotechnology, climate-resilient agriculture, and integrated farming systems.

Recognizing the complementary strengths, resources, and visions of both institutions, this MoU seeks to establish a robust and collaborative framework that integrates academic excellence of the Department of Biotechnology with the practical field expertise of KVK Latur. The collaboration is designed to enrich the academic environment by exposing students to real-world agricultural and biotechnological practices, enhance their technical competencies through hands-on training, and promote research development through interdisciplinary and field-based projects. This partnership aims to nurture innovation, strengthen problem-solving abilities, and broaden the scientific outlook of students, enabling them to meet the emerging demands of the agriculture and biotechnology sectors.

Therefore, in the spirit of mutual growth and academic advancement, both institutions willingly and formally express their intent to collaborate through this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This association reflects a shared commitment to promote quality education, applied research, technology dissemination, and the overall development of competent, skilled, and socially responsible biotechnology professionals.

Objectives:

1. To establish a strong academic–industry interface for student benefit.
2. To enhance student skills through practical training, field exposure, and research participation.
3. To facilitate collaborative research activities in biotechnology, agriculture, and allied fields.
4. To enable mutual learning and technical exchange between faculty, scientists, and students.
5. To support curriculum enrichment based on field requirements and modern trends.
6. To promote dissemination of scientific advancements through workshops, training, and extension activities.
7. To develop long-term partnerships aimed at societal impact, innovation, and capacity-building.

Proposed Collaborative Activities

1. Arrangement of internships and hands-on training for Biotechnology students at KVK Latur, enabling them to gain field-level and laboratory-based practical exposure.
2. Identification of opportunities for student project work, including field research, soil and water analysis, crop disease diagnostics, molecular studies, and other lab-based investigations aligned with KVK mandates.
3. Promotion of department-level collaborations for conducting joint academic, training, and research initiatives between the Department of Biotechnology and KVK Latur.
4. Development of specialized certificate courses and training programs related to Agricultural Biotechnology, Crop Improvement, Soil Biotechnology, Biofertilizers, Biopesticides, and Sustainable Agriculture.
5. Execution of collaborative R&D activities, wherein student groups will undertake research projects under the guidance and supervision of KVK scientists and faculty members.
6. Motivation and involvement of students in real-world agricultural research projects to enhance their scientific outlook, practical competence, and problem-solving abilities.
7. Provision of technical consultancy services by either party through mutual agreement, especially in the areas of biotechnology applications in agriculture and rural development.

8. Support for student placements and career development in agricultural, biotechnology, and allied industrial sectors through networking and mutual facilitation.
9. Internship participation eligibility shall be open to students scoring above 50% in the qualifying assessment conducted by the Department of Biotechnology.

Benefits to Department of Biotechnology

1. KVK Latur provides real-world agricultural environments that help bridge the gap between classroom learning and practical applications.
2. Biotechnology students receive hands-on experience in seed analysis, soil testing, plant pathology, and microbial studies.
3. KVK offers a platform for students to carry out research projects, case studies, and internships related to agricultural biotechnology.
4. Department faculty and students can collaborate with KVK scientists for technical support, workshops, and research assistance.
5. The department gains insights into how laboratory innovations are transferred to farmers, helping enrich academic curriculum and teaching practices.
6. Collaboration with KVK helps the department undertake applied research projects that can lead to scientific papers, patents, or field reports.
7. KVK trainings help students gain skills in sampling, data collection, disease diagnosis, bio-input preparation, and field analysis.
8. Inputs from KVK experts help the department update and align their courses with current agricultural and biotechnological needs.
9. Joint activities such as seed quality camps and awareness programs improve the department's engagement with farmers and rural communities.
10. Through KVK interactions, students learn about career paths in agri-biotech industries, research institutions, extension services, and start-ups—improving the department's placement outcomes.

Benefits to Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Latur

Through this collaboration, KVK Latur will significantly benefit from the scientific support and skill contribution of Biotechnology students as follows:

1. Their laboratory skills support KVK in performing precise tests such as germination, moisture content, and microbial contamination analysis.
2. With additional manpower, students help speed up the testing workflow, ensuring farmers receive quicker results and timely recommendations.
3. Students can use molecular or microbiological techniques to detect pathogens or assess seed health, improving the overall quality of analysis.
4. Students assist in proper documentation of sampling data, test results, and observations, helping KVK maintain accurate and reliable records.
5. Their knowledge of microorganisms helps in identifying fungal, bacterial, or viral infections in seeds, contributing to better disease management advice for farmers.
6. Based on their analysis, students can help suggest appropriate biofertilizers, biopesticides, or seed treatments to improve germination and crop performance.
7. Students help communicate scientific findings to farmers in simpler terms, improving awareness and adoption of good seed practices.
8. They support KVK experts in organizing demonstrations related to seed quality, germination tests, and biotech-based solutions for crop improvement.

COMMENCEMENT AND TENURE

This MoU shall come into force on 15 July 2024 and shall remain valid for five (5) years. It may be automatically renewed for successive five-year terms unless either party issues a written notice of revision or termination at least twelve months prior to expiration.

DURATION AND RECINDENCE OF MoU

a. The present agreement takes effect on 15 July 2024. Amendments shall be made only through mutual consent. In case of disagreement, the institution intending to withdraw shall preferably provide a six-month prior notice. A review of the MoU shall be conducted after one year.

b. To promote scholarly exchange, both institutions may consider faculty or student exchange programs in the future, based on feasibility and mutual interest.

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Date: 18.08.2025