

## A kit to water plants in your absence

KOCHI: City residents - who worry about watering their garden when they are away from home, can now use Irrigateasy, a drip irrigation kit for this purpose. This kit has been customised for non-agri purpose, especially for terrace gardens or kitchen gardens. The kit, introduced by Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) in Ernakulam, will hit the market this month.

The main purpose of this kit is to help consumers control the flow of water and ensure optimum use. Normally, people use a hose and some plants get too much water. Sometimes, the mud and nutrients flow out along with the water. All this can be prevented by adjusting the pressure of water flow using the kit, said KVK officials.

The micro-irrigation kit can water nearly 80 grow bags. "The unit can be connected to existing water pipe or to separate water storage tank set for the garden. The basic concept behind introducing this kit is to make kitchen gardening easy, particularly for non-traditional farmers," said KVK project coordinator Shinoj Subramanian.

He said that an electronic control system is being developed to automate the unit. "The kit works under low pressure or gravity flow. The flow to each drip line can be controlled. The whole unit is portable and can be shifted easily. The modular design helps to expand it to bigger area," he said.

The attractive part is you can set your own drip irrigation unit. The components have an instruction manual that is user-friendly. KVK has also released a video about the unit on the YouTube.

The cost of the unit that contains 50m drip tape, six end caps, five connectors with lock & valve, 2m connecting hose with control valve along with a CD on installation procedure is Rs 500. KVK is all set to introduce it at Rs 450.

The whole unit is being assembled and packaged by the inmates of sub-jail. "The sub-jail has become a satellite station for some of our activities. The inmates will get a share of each unit sold as their income," Shinoj said. The kit would soon be available for purchase from KVK sales counter located at ICAR-CMFRI.