

## KVK develops soil-less medium for city gardens

KOCHI: In an effort beneficial to the organic farmers in the City, the [Ernakulam Krishi Vigyan Kendra](#) (KVK), functioning under the [Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute](#) has developed a soil-less medium that can be used in place of soil. The soil-less medium or the mix will be a great advantage to those experiencing scarcity of quality soil, particularly in city areas. The [KVK](#) has developed the mix by using composted pressmud, a by-product from sugar mills along with coirpith, powdered cowdung, Neem cake and biocontrol agents.

As part of introducing the mix to the public, a sales mela will be held on Thursday at the CMFRI and the product will be made available to the public for sale. In addition, a business desk, that will extend assistance to those interested to produce the medium in a commercial scale, will function at the mela. Necessary information on procedures of producing the mix will be provided from the desk.

According to Dr Shinoj Subramannian, Head of the KVK the newly developed soil-less medium is a better alternative to the soil that is mostly not available to the city residents. "Availability of quality soil is a challenge for organic farmers in the city. Normally, at least 150 kg of soil is required to grow in 30 growbags", he said.

"Presently, the soil-less medium is being produced by [Vypeen Harisree Self Help Group](#) for sale under the technical guidance of the KVK. We are also happy to transfer the technology to anybody interested in the product. For them, a business desk will function at the sales mela", Dr Shinoj said.

The plants can be directly planted to the 10 kg bag which contain the media and thus growbags are not required separately, he said. The mela will remain open from 9.30 am to 5 pm.