

# Soilless mix for city-users from Krishi Vigyan Kendra

## OUR BUREAU

Kochi, August 21

Gardening enthusiasts and backyard farmers facing soil quality issues need no longer worry. A 'soilless mix', developed by the Ernakulam Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) of the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), can be used as an alternative, and is now ready for sale.

This mix is made of composted pressmud, a by-product from sugar mills, along, with coir pith, powdered cow dung, neem cake and biocontrol agents.

The soil-less mix will be a boon for backyard farming where availability of quality soil is a constraint, as in cities, says Shinoj Subramannian, Head of the KVK.

As plants can be directly planted in a 10-kg bag of the mix, no separate grow bags are required. A bag is

priced at ₹125. Scarcity of quality soil is one of the major challenges being faced by the organic farmers in cities.

Normally, at least 150 kg of soil is required to grow plants in 30 grow bags, Shinoj said.

"We are also happy to transfer the technology to anybody interested in the product," he added.