

# Madurai's jasmine to lure foreign markets

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IRRESISTIBLE: Madurai Malli on display at a workshop conducted last year. Malli growers are set to be linked with perfume manufacturers who will market the fragrance overseas. Photo: K Ganesan

Farmers of Uthappanaickanur near Usilampatti block in the district who cultivate the famous 'Madurai Malli' (jasmine) are in for a major boost. Efforts are underway to link them with major buyers who manufacture perfume for export markets.

A meeting for the farmers was organised in the village on Wednesday by Government officials and bankers to guide them towards this initiative, intended to help them to tide over the off-season, when the prices for their produce are low.

G. Baskararaj, Secretary, Madurai Market Committee, told The Hindu that another

meeting of the farmers groups and the buyers would be held shortly to discuss modalities such as deciding upon a remunerative price, how to carry out transactions, the quantities the buyers may need daily and to address the farmers' grievances.

“If all the details are finalised in this meet, a Memorandum of Understanding could be signed between farmers and buyers. This will result in farmers getting an assured market at a remunerative price,” he said.

The Wednesday meeting was organised by the Department of Agricultural Marketing and Agri Business, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Regional Training Centre, Karaikudi, and the Indian Bank.

R. Shankar Narayan, Assistant General Manager, NABARD, said that that along with the Indian Bank, they have formed 31 farmers club in Uthappanaickanur alone to help them solve their problems. Furthermore, the farmers are eligible for assistance under the National Horticulture Mission.

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