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### **Union Agriculture Minister presents “Best FPO” Award to Velliangiri Uzhavan**

**25 February 2020, Coimbatore:** Velliangiri Uzhavan, a Farmer Producer Company promoted by Isha Outreach, won the “Best FPO” Award at the Outlook Agriculture Conclave in New Delhi yesterday. Union Agriculture Minister Shri. Narendra Singh Tomar presented the award to representatives of the FPO. Two awards were given in the Best FPO category. Ramraheem Pragati Producers Company Limited from Madhya Pradesh was the other winner.

Velliangiri Uzhavan was formed in 2013 with the support of Isha Outreach, the Social and Environmental arm of Isha Foundation. It is the top ranked FPO in Tamil Nadu. With over 1000 farmers, 38% of whom are women, the FPO comprises largely small and marginal farmers who account for 70% of its membership. The farmers mainly produce coconut, betel nut, turmeric, vegetables and banana. The FPO declared an annual turnover of nearly 12 crore last year and has grown an astounding 2067 times since its inception. It has helped member farmers adopt new technologies, achieve better quality and quantity of produce and better market rates. It has significantly improved the socioeconomic condition of its member farmers.

The Outlook Agriculture Conclave is an annual event which includes a segment to recognize best practices and practitioners in agriculture. Award categories this year included Best Agricultural Scientist, Best Progressive Farmer, Best Agri Technology Start-up among others.

An eminent jury selected the winners from a list of nominations. The jury included Sanjay Agrawal, Union Secretary, Agriculture and Farm Welfare Ministry; Dr. T Haq, ex-

Chairman, Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices; Sandeep Kumar Nayak, MD, National Co-op Development Corporation; R S Sodhi, MD, Gujarat Co-op Milk Marketing Federation Ltd (Amul); Dr. A K Singh, Deputy Director General, Indian Council of Agricultural Research; and Harvir Singh - Editor, Outlook Hindi.

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