

ICAR-Sponsored 21-Day Winter School on “Innovations in Digital Extension and Smart Farming” Inaugurated at ICAR-IVRI on 15 January, 2026

The 21-day ICAR-Sponsored Winter School on “Innovations in Digital Extension and Smart Farming” was formally inaugurated at the Indian Council of Agricultural Research – Indian Veterinary Research Institute (ICAR-IVRI), Izatnagar, with great enthusiasm and academic fervour. The Winter School has been meticulously designed to provide participants with exposure to cutting-edge digital extension tools, smart farming technologies, ICT applications, data-driven decision-making, and innovative extension approaches. The programme aims to equip scientists, academicians, and professionals with futuristic perspectives to effectively address contemporary challenges in agriculture and allied sectors.

The inaugural session was graced by Dr Ajit Singh Yadav, Assistant Director General (Education Quality Assurance & Reforms), ICAR, New Delhi, as the Chief Guest, while Dr Triveni Dutt, Director and Vice-Chancellor, ICAR-IVRI, presided over the function. The programme commenced with a warm welcome to all dignitaries, faculty members, resource persons, and participants representing institutions from across the country.

Dr Rupasi Tiwari, Joint Director (Extension Education) and Course Director of the Winter School, delivered the welcome address. She highlighted IVRI’s notable achievements in the field of digital extension in the animal husbandry sector and emphasized the growing importance of digital tools and smart technologies in transforming agricultural and livestock extension systems. She also briefed the audience on the course content and participant profile of the Winter School. Participants subsequently introduced themselves and shared their expectations, expressing keen interest in gaining hands-on experience and insights into modern digital extension methodologies.

In his Presidential Remarks, Dr Triveni Dutt, Director, ICAR-IVRI, welcomed participants from various institutions and expressed his gratitude to the Directors of ICAR institutes and Vice-Chancellors of agricultural universities for nominating their faculty members for the ICT-based Winter School. He emphasized the need for innovation, quality education, and digital transformation in agricultural extension to ensure sustainable development. He sincerely thanked the Agricultural Education Division of ICAR for assigning the Winter School to ICAR-IVRI. He further apprised participants of the institute’s illustrious 136-year legacy and its significant contributions to national service. Additionally, he highlighted the mobile applications and chatbots developed by ICAR-IVRI for the welfare of the farming community and entrepreneurs in the livestock sector.

Delivering the Inaugural Address, the esteemed Chief Guest Dr Ajit Singh Yadav, ADG (EQAR), Agricultural Education Division, ICAR, highlighted various ICAR policies related to undergraduate and postgraduate education aimed at strengthening human resource development in agriculture and allied sectors. He emphasized the importance of preventive strategies and proactive communication with stakeholders, particularly the timely dissemination of information to farmers prior to the onset of diseases in the animal husbandry sector. He noted that early awareness and intervention could significantly minimize disease-related losses and enhance farmers’ profitability. Dr Yadav also elaborated on ongoing reforms in agricultural education, quality assurance mechanisms, and the integration of digital innovations in extension education. He underscored the critical role of smart farming, ICT, and

data analytics in strengthening farmer-centric advisory services and improving the overall effectiveness of extension systems. He further shared insights drawn from his extensive experience in education reforms, policy formulation, and research management at the national level. The programme concluded with a Vote of Thanks proposed by Dr Bablu Kumar, Course Coordinator of the Winter School. The inaugural session ended with a group photograph, marking a successful beginning of the Winter School.

