

ORIC Newsletter

University of Agriculture, Faisalabad

October 01 to 15, 2025



ORIC HOLDS A SESSION WITH AMERICAN EXPERT



In a bid to explore future collaboration with University of Florida, ORIC held a session with the visiting Prof. Dr. Edward A. Evans, Director, Tropical Research and Education Center, University of Florida, USA. Director, Institute of Horticultural Sciences Prof. Dr. Ahmad Sattar Khan, Floriculture expert Prof. Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad, Dr. Zaman Khan, Dr. Azhar Abbas, Dr. Amjad Iqbal, Dr. Khuram Zia, and Dr. Humaira Razzaq were among the participants. Dr. Edward A. Evans addressing the session, emphasized the need to keep the farming a profitable and attracting enterprise by incentivizing the farmers through promoting agricultural cooperatives. He said that both institutions are uniquely positioned to shape the future of agriculture across continents. The UAF experts underscored the need to gearing up the mutual collaboration through offering faculty and students exchange, scholarships and joint research projects thereby to benefit with each other's expertise in general and serve the agricultural sector at large. They were of the view that despite having exclusive department of cooperatives at provincial level, substantial development in promoting the cooperatives is still awaited. The participants vowed to strengthen the collaboration between both the institutions.

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BIC HOSTS TWO-DAY BOOT-CAMP ON LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE IN ACADEMIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Business Incubation Centre (BIC), University of Agriculture, Faisalabad (UAF), hosted a two-day Boot-Camp titled “Leadership Excellence in Academic Entrepreneurship: Transforming Ideas into Impact.” Addressing the participants, Mr. Tahir Mahmood, CEO of the Pakistan Institute of Entrepreneurship, highlighted how leadership begins with self-awareness and the courage to take initiative. Every business idea can be transformed into start-up with teamwork, discipline and leadership qualities. He further elaborated on the economic significance of the agricultural sector in Pakistan, noting its substantial contribution to the country’s GDP and its position as a major source of employment to a large portion of the population. He strongly encouraged students to pursue start-ups that aim to provide solutions to the persistent challenges within the agricultural sector.

Prof. Dr. Rao Zahid Abbas, Principal Officer ATRI, said that the future belongs to those who think differently and act decisively. He noted that UAF is boosting experiential and skill-based learning by inviting renowned mentors to share their life experiences with both the student body and faculty members.

Prof. Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad, Director BIC, said that our youth possess significant potential and are ready to explore new horizons, requiring only appropriate guidance. He added that this boot-camp will empower young individuals to develop business strategies necessary for becoming visionary future leaders. Mr. Waheed Khaliq Ramay from FCCI, referred to the students as ‘ambassadors of change’. He encouraged them to achieve academic excellence by proactively aligning themselves with global trends and developments.



BIC INVITES APPLICATION FOR SSBC COHORT4 UPTO OCTOBER 30, 2025

The Business Incubation Center (BIC), University of Agriculture Faisalabad, is inviting applications for SSBC Cohort 4 to empower aspiring entrepreneurs in transforming their innovative ideas into successful ventures. This initiative aims to nurture entrepreneurial talent through comprehensive support, including mentorship, seed funding, business model development, and legal assistance. By providing a conducive environment equipped with free office space and networking opportunities, BIC UAF continues its commitment to fostering innovation and promoting economic growth. Interested student startups are encouraged to apply before 30 October, 2025 to unlock their entrepreneurial potential. For queries, feel free to contact BIC.

Passionate about Scaling up your startup?

Features

- FREE OFFICE SPACE
- SEED FUNDING
- MENTORSHIP
- NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES
- BUSINESS MODEL DEVELOPMENT
- LEGAL ASSISTANCE



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BIC BUSINESS INCUBATION CENTER - UAF
Inspiring Creativity

BIC UAF is inviting Applications for SSBC Cohort 4

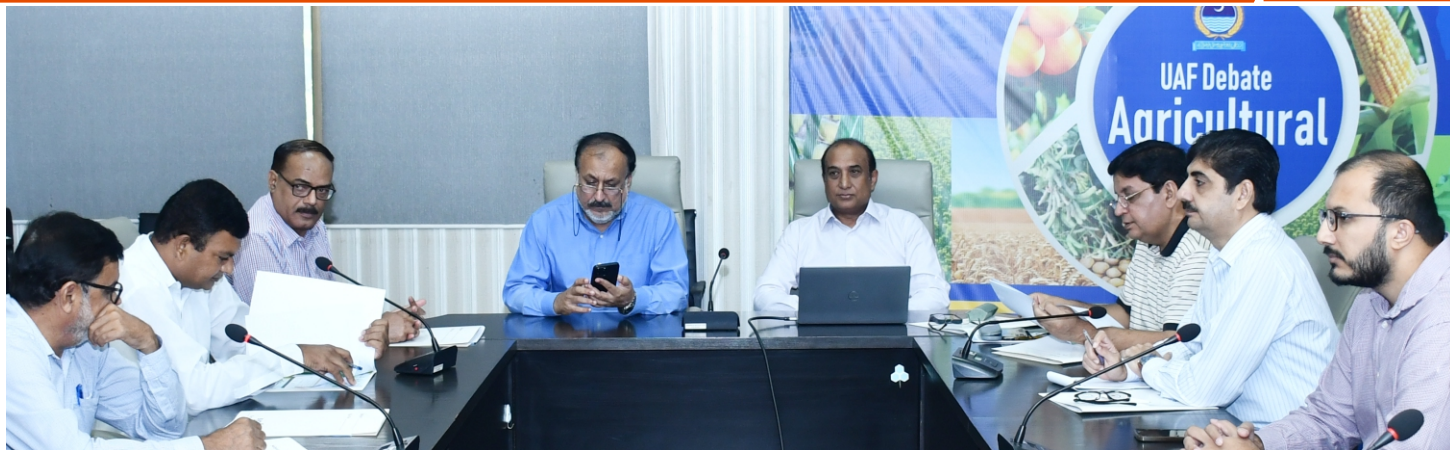
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Apply Now

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ORIC HOSTS HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE TO REVOLUTIONIZE PEST MANAGEMENT



Collaboration between academia, industry, and research organizations is vital to combat pest and insect attacks, enhance farm productivity, and ensure farming remains a profitable enterprise. This consensus emerged during a high-level collaborative session held at the Office of Research, Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC) Conference Room, University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF), where experts from Syngenta Pakistan, UAF, and the Ayub Agricultural Research Institute (AARI) participated.

Participants stressed the need to strengthen partnerships with UAF to establish standardized research laboratories and engage students in research on emerging plant protection challenges. They emphasized determining the minimum threshold levels of pesticide residues and promoting responsible pesticide use.

Faisal Bashir, Regulatory Affairs Manager, Syngenta Pakistan Pvt. Ltd., highlighted that Syngenta has established over 20 Learning Centers and five Farmer Training Centers across the country, providing comprehensive support including fertilizers, pesticides, machinery, and advisory services. He underscored Syngenta's commitment to crop protection stewardship from R&D to disposal of obsolete stocks, adding that farmer education and safe pesticide use are core components of their outreach programs. He noted that rice contributes 24 percent to Pakistan's agricultural GDP, and to further enhance this contribution, bridging the yield gap through effective crop protection measures is essential.

Prof. Dr. Waseem Akram, Chairman, Department of Entomology, UAF, pointed out that farmers often receive scattered and unreliable information. He called for the establishment of standardized testing laboratories at UAF to provide credible data for policymakers and the farming community. He also proposed setting up learning centers at UAF and its sub-campuses to train youth and promote modern agricultural practices.

Dr. Arshad Makhdom Sabir, Chief Scientist, Entomology Research Institute, AARI, emphasized the need for a comprehensive Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategy for rice pest control. He stated that reliance on chemical control alone is unsustainable and counterproductive in the long term. Dr. Sabir highlighted the importance of adopting eco-friendly and economically viable IPM components,

including use of resistant varieties, conservation of natural enemies, cultural practices, biological control, and need-based pesticide application. He further proposed joint IPM demonstration trials between AARI, UAF, and Syngenta to validate field-based pest management models that could later be scaled up across major rice-growing regions.

Prof. Dr. Dildar Gogi urged shifting from calendar-based to strategic pesticide applications, which would help minimize pesticide residues in crops.

Dr. Sagheer Ahmad, Associate Professor, Entomology, called upon the private sector to collaborate with UAF in organizing capacity-building programs for farmers, ensuring the safe and responsible use of pesticides and proper container management.

Dr. Khuram Zia, Manager Innovation and Commercialization, ORIC, emphasized the need for data-driven decision-making in pest management through the adoption of innovative technologies to monitor pest dynamics, spatial distribution, and infestation trends in real time. He highlighted that digital monitoring systems, when linked with localized research data, can enable timely interventions and help determine accurate and region-specific action threshold levels for notorious rice pests, particularly the Brown Planthopper (BPH) and Rice Leaf Folder (RLF). Dr. Zia stressed that revising these economic threshold levels (ETLs) is crucial, as outdated



benchmarks often lead to either delayed responses or unnecessary pesticide applications, both of which adversely affect productivity, farmer income, and ecological balance. Drawing parallels with technologically advanced agricultural systems, Dr. Zia noted that organized farmer networks, empowered with empirical data and scientific guidance, can play a pivotal role in promoting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) adoption, responsible pesticide use, and evidence-based policymaking in Pakistan's rice sector. Prof. Dr. Abdul Rehman Bhatti, Chairman, Department of Plant Pathology, cautioned against imposing pesticide bans without empirical data, noting that such actions could create confusion among stakeholders. He urged regulatory bodies to base their decisions on credible scientific evidence.

Other participants included Dr. Imran Nadeem (AARI), Shoaib Safdar (Syngenta), Imtiaz Ali (Syngenta), Dr. Ghulam Mustafa Sahi, Dr. Amir Habib, Dr. Furqan Asghar, Dr. Humaira Razzaq, Mr. Shahzaib Ali, Mr. Muhammad Hanif Chaudhry, and Mr. Abdur Rehman Sukhera.

The session concluded with a mutual commitment to enhance academia-industry linkages, promote IPM-based sustainable crop protection strategies, and advance Pakistan's agricultural resilience through innovation and responsible pest management. It was proposed that UAF, in collaboration with AARI, Syngenta, and regulatory agencies, develop revised, research-backed threshold models incorporating climatic variability, varietal response, and pest resurgence trends to ensure more precise pest control strategies.



IBMS AND BIC ORGANIZE SEMINAR ON “SOURCES OF ISLAMIC FINANCING FOR START-UPS”

The Centre of Islamic Finance (CIF) Institute of Business Management Sciences, arranged seminar on “Sources of Islamic Financing for Start-ups” in collaboration with Business Incubation Centre (BIC) at National Incubation Centre (NIC). It was arranged on the directives of Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Zulfiqar Ali and aimed at fostering an entrepreneurial ecosystem. Talking to the participants, Mr. Huzaifa Abdul Haseeb Akhtar from Shariah Compliance Department at Meezan Bank Ltd said that Islamic finance promotes ethical and socially responsible business practices. He noted that this can be particularly appealing to entrepreneurs and customers who prioritize such values. He briefed about various Islamic finance sources. Director BIC Prof. Dr Iftikhar Ahmad urged the young enterprises to get benefit from the Islamic Financing to start and excel their journey of start-ups. Director IMBS Prof. Dr Abdul Ghafoor said that the Islamic financing system is getting popularity with a large pace and it is the best financial model. Deputy Directors BIC Dr Shahbaz Nasir Khan and Dr Robina Rashid said that these collaborative sessions will help young graduates secure the funding required to transform their innovative ideas into viable business models. They also provided an overview of the BIC's ongoing initiatives to forge stronger industry-academia linkages, thereby supporting the commercialization and scaling up of start-up ventures. Dr Sahar Munir said that country can make its name in the Islamic banking and we need to work on it.



DR. HUMAIRA RAZZAQ AND DR. ENGR. FURQAN ASGHAR JOIN ORIC AS DEPUTY DIRECTORS

Dr. Humaira Razzaq, Assistant Professor in the Department of Plant Breeding & Genetics, and Dr. Engr. Furqan Asghar, Assistant Professor in Energy Systems Engineering, have joined the Office of Research, Innovation & Commercialization (ORIC) as Deputy Directors.

Dr. Humaira Razzaq's research focus is on development of high yielding Oilseeds (canola and sunflower) under changing climate with better oil quality. She is the founding force behind the University's Oilseeds Research Laboratory, which provides advanced research support through data analysis, interpretation, and publication-ready visuals. Her contributions span a broad spectrum facilitating MSc/PhD scholars and researchers with fast, accurate results while continuously pioneering new research directions.

Dr. Furqan Asghar holds a PhD in Electrical, Electronics, and Control Engineering from Kunsan National University. His expertise encompasses smart grids, renewable energy, ICT in agriculture, and AI-driven control systems. With over 55 publications in peer-reviewed international journals and hands-on experience in major energy projects—including a 2MW solar system and a 200kW integrated PV-biogas power system—he brings a robust technical portfolio. His proficiency includes programming ©, C++), automation tools (LabVIEW, Arduino, Matlab), circuit design, and leadership in engineering systems.

Their induction is poised to elevate ORIC's operational excellence and further enrich the University's research and innovation ecosystem. The campus community has warmly congratulated both Deputy Directors and pledged their wholehearted support as they embark on this important professional journey.



BUSINESS INCUBATION CENTER AND TERRA SPARK PVT LIMITED INKED MOU

Business Incubation Center, and Terra Spark Pvt Limited inked a memorandum of understanding to collaborate in research, and development, and implementation of sustainable process optimization and waste-to-energy projects. Moreover, Terra Spark will join hands with BIC for capacity building of the startups and offering internships to the tech startups and collaborate with faculty led startups for joint R&D projects. The MoU was duly inked by UAF Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Zulfiqar Ali and Terra Sparks CEO Dr Sarfraz Ahmad. Director Business Incubation Center Dr Iftikhar Ahmad, Director External Linkages Dr M Tehseen Azhar, Dr Muhammad Rizwan Tabbasum and other notables attended the ceremony. This partnership aims to promote innovation, sustainability, and practical solutions in converting waste to value through thermal and/or biological transformations into clean and other useful forms to drive sustainable urban and rural agriculture & energy and community wellbeing. As per agreement both parties will collaborate on waste-to-energy



initiatives through joint research, pilot projects, and academic exchange, involving the university's departments of Energy Systems Engineering, Environmental Engineering, Horticultural Sciences, Soil & Environmental Sciences.

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