



MANAGE Agricultural Extension “Evening4Learning (E4L)” Webinar Series

Theme:



Agricultural Extension: An Exciting profession for Future (for UG students of Agriculture & PG students of Agricultural Extension)



Topic:

“Research and Academic Careers: Scientist, Faculty, or Research Consultant”




Schedule:

20-08-2025, 16:00-16:45 PM



About the Program

The MANAGE Agriculture Extension “Evening4Learning (E4L)” Webinar Series is aimed at enhancing knowledge and professional engagement in the field of agricultural extension. The five-day series is structured with each day focusing on a distinct topic under a common theme, allowing participants to gain comprehensive insights into key areas of extension. The program is intended for a diverse audience, including postgraduate and doctoral students, agricultural faculty, and industry professionals. It covers broad themes ranging from entrepreneurship and sustainability to emerging technologies in agriculture.


MANAGE
Agricultural Extension
“Evening4Learning”
Webinar Series
August 18-22, 2025
16.00-17.30 PM (IST)

Theme : Agricultural Extension: An exciting profession for Future (for UG students of Agriculture & PG students of Agricultural Extension)



Speaker

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 Sreeram Vishnu

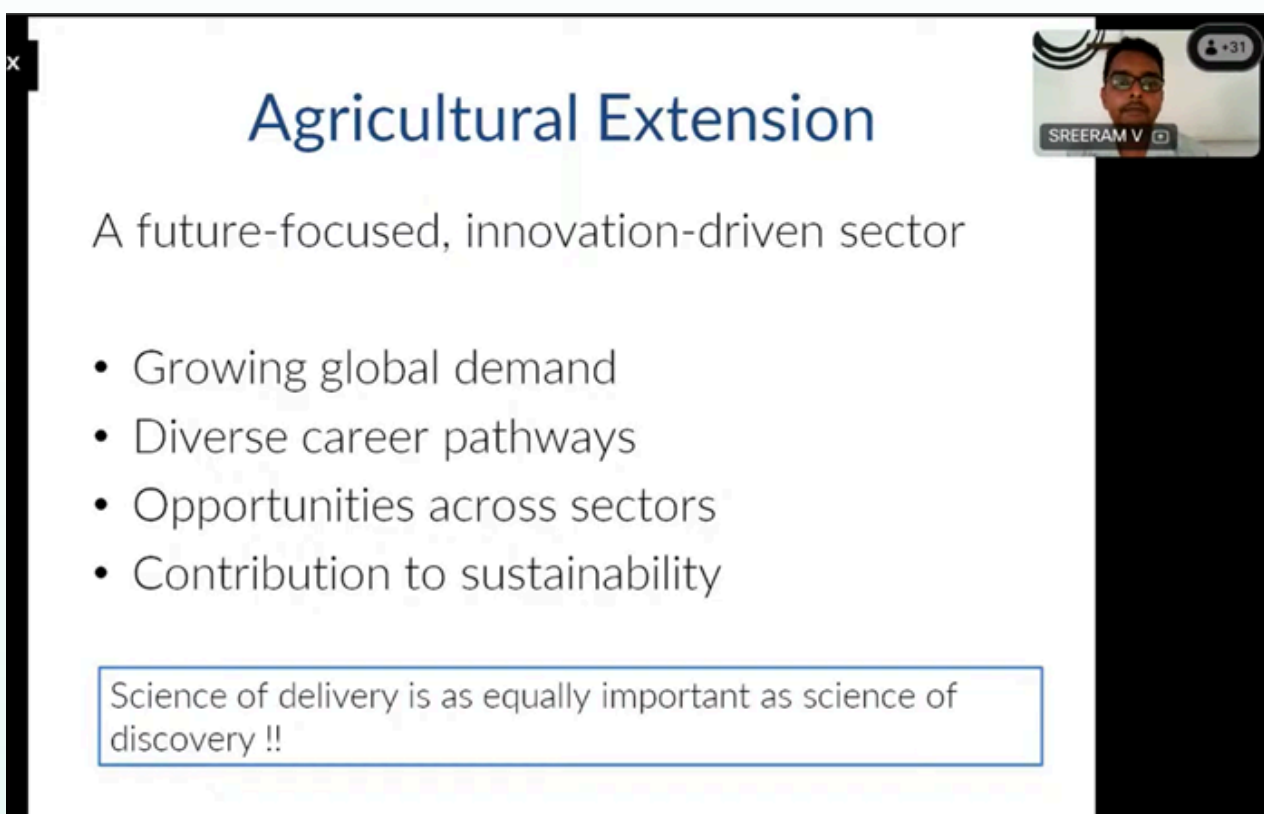
Dr. Sreeram Vishnumoorthy is serving as an Assistant Professor at Kerala Agricultural University, Thrissur, with six years of professional experience. He holds a Master's degree and a PhD in Agricultural Extension. His research interests include agricultural innovation systems, value chains, climate-smart agriculture, and digitalized farming.

Importance of Agricultural Extension in Research and Academia

Agricultural extension is a discipline that provides a crucial human and social science perspective to agriculture. While natural sciences primarily focus on technological discovery, extension professionals contribute through:

- Evidence generation
- Impact assessment
- Technology adoption studies
- Policy and programme evaluation

It was emphasized that agricultural extension is future-oriented and innovation-driven. Major global challenges such as sustainable agriculture, food security, climate change adaptation, and digital agriculture cannot be effectively addressed without strong extension and social science inputs.



The image shows a screenshot of a video conference slide. The slide title is "Agricultural Extension" in blue text. Below the title, it says "A future-focused, innovation-driven sector". There is a list of four bullet points: "Growing global demand", "Diverse career pathways", "Opportunities across sectors", and "Contribution to sustainability". At the bottom, a blue-bordered box contains the text "Science of delivery is as equally important as science of discovery !!". In the top right corner, there is a video feed of a man with glasses, identified as "SREERAM V", and a "+31" icon indicating other participants.

Major Career Pathways

1. Research Scientist

Key roles involves Knowledge generation, Action research and problem solving, Technology refinement and adaptation and Monitoring, evaluation, and impact assessment

Employment Opportunities:

- ICAR institutes and KVKs (through ARS/NET qualifications)
- State Agricultural Universities
- International research organizations (e.g., IRRI, ICRISAT, CIMMYT)
- Private Research & Development organizations

Key Skills Required:

- Strong research methodology
- Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
- Data visualization and scientific writing
- Networking, Collaboration and domain specialization

Pros: Stable employment, access to resources, contribution to national agricultural development.

Cons: High competition, bureaucratic delays, and contractual tenure in some international roles.

2. Faculty

Key roles involve teaching, research, and extension responsibilities.

Employment Opportunities:

- State Agricultural Universities
- ICAR-deemed universities
- Private agricultural colleges

Key Skills Required:

- Subject matter expertise across extension and agricultural domains
- Pedagogical and mentoring skills
- Research publication and project handling
- Ability to balance academic and extension roles

Pros: Academic freedom and direct impact on the next generation professionals.

Cons: Workload management challenges, relatively lower pay in private institutions, and contractual appointments.

3. Research Consultant

Research consultants provide specialized expertise to projects undertaken by NGOs, national and international agencies, and government organizations in short or medium term assignments.

Employment Opportunities:

- International organizations (e.g., FAO, IFDA, World Bank)
- National and international NGOs
- Development agencies
- Private consulting firms and freelance assignments

Key Skills Required:

- Project management + Subject matter expertise
- Excellent communication and report writing
- Rapid learning and adaptability
- Fundraising and proposal development

Pros: Flexibility, exposure to diverse projects, and higher earning potential in international development.

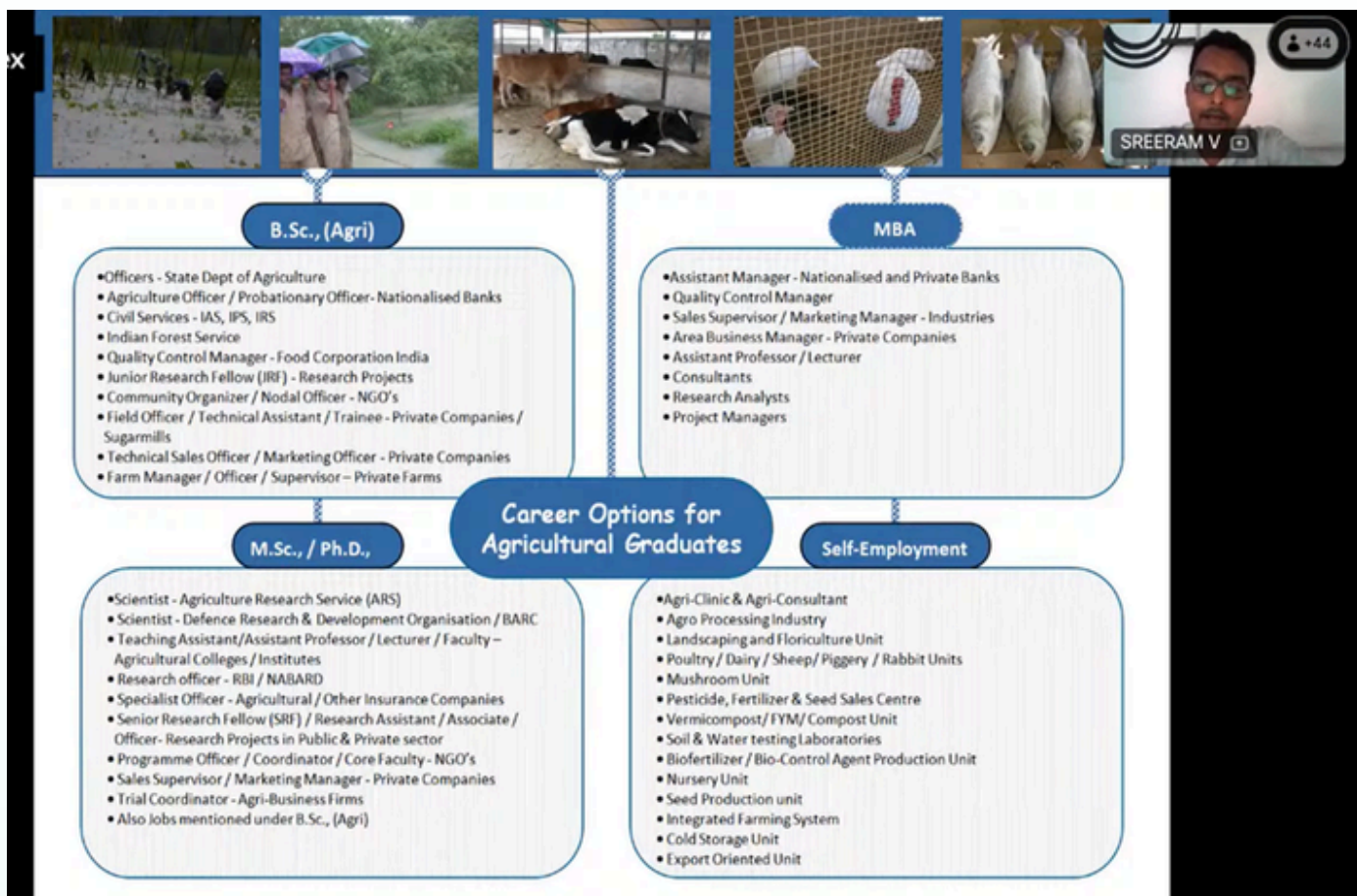
Cons: Income instability and the need for continuous networking and reputation building.

4. Management

This pathway involves pursuing management education after a Master's degree through competitive examinations like CAT and enrolling in programs offered by institutions like Indian Institutes of Management, and MANAGE. It prepares candidates for corporate careers in marketing, finance, supply chain management, and entrepreneurship. Although it requires a strategic career transition, this pathway offers higher remuneration and is particularly suitable for those aspiring to work in the corporate and private sector.

Common competencies across all the career paths

Competencies	Description
Research & Analytical Skills	Essential for research, policy development, and program evaluation across sectors.
Communication Skills	Effective written and oral communication, including policy briefs and farmer engagement.
Networking Skills	Collaboration with agencies, funders, and stakeholders to enhance career opportunities.
Adaptability & Lifelong Learning	Continuous upgradation of knowledge and skills, especially in emerging technologies and methods.



Career options for agricultural graduates

Key highlights

- Agricultural extension offers the vital social science perspective needed to tackle major global challenges like food security, climate change, and sustainable agriculture.
- The field provides diverse pathways including research, academia, consulting, and management across government, NGOs, international agencies, and the private sector.
- Long-term career growth relies on becoming a specialist rather than a generalist, while building core competencies in analysis, communication, and networking.
- Success requires choosing the field deliberately, setting early career goals, and building a solid academic profile through publications in reputable, Scopus-indexed journals.

Interactive discussion

1. What career paths are suitable for professionals with a Master's degree in aquaculture and several years of field experience?

Professionals possessing relevant academic qualifications and practical experience can explore a wide range of career pathways. These include research roles that allow effective application of academic expertise, as well as opportunities to work as service providers or consultants, start an enterprise, engage with the development sector, or undertake farmer training and advisory roles. Such pathways enable professionals to leverage their experience while making meaningful contributions to the aquaculture sector.

2. What are the key skills and methodological approaches required to conduct qualitative and quantitative research?

Qualitative research requires proficiency in methodologies such as grounded theory, thematic analysis, content analysis, and policy analysis. These approaches help capture contextual and in-depth insights that are often not evident through quantitative methods alone. Qualitative research was emphasized as essential for understanding the underlying reasons behind observed outcomes, such as variations in technology adoption among farmers. When integrated with quantitative findings, qualitative methods contribute to a more comprehensive and meaningful research narrative.

3. What guidance can be provided to undergraduate students who are uncertain about agricultural extension as a career option?

Choosing agricultural extension as a career should be a deliberate and informed decision. A purposeful choice helps students clarify their interests, competencies, and future professional roles. In contrast, entering the field without clear intent is often viewed as an easier option or a temporary alternative during preparation for competitive examinations which may limit career direction and professional effectiveness. Participants were therefore encouraged to undertake systematic self-assessment before finalizing their career choice. Such clarity enables informed exploration of diverse pathways within agricultural extension, including research, teaching, and development sector roles, and supports effective career planning and sustained professional engagement.

4. What areas should one prioritize to develop a strong academic profile, particularly with regard to publications?

Students who are aiming for a research career should begin developing their publication during their postgraduate studies. Academic work undertaken for credit seminars can be converted into review articles using approaches such as systematic literature reviews or bibliometric analysis. These skills can be acquired through free online resources or affordable courses available on platforms such as Coursera and edX. Selection of appropriate journals, avoiding predatory or low-quality journals and targeting credible, Scopus-indexed journals should be a priority. Publishing in reputable journals was noted to strengthen research profiles and improve academic writing skills.

YouTube Link:

https://youtu.be/S5UVvw_x0onU?list=PL6mI4tMrzHzTysRywAR7lDXaXQ5ZH5ijL&t=1

5. What career opportunities exist in the private sector for students or scholars of agricultural extension, apart from government and development roles?

Private-sector opportunities for agricultural extension professionals are mainly in agri-input companies, focusing on technology transfer, farmer engagement, and knowledge dissemination. Although fewer than in government or development sectors, emerging areas such as agri-tech startups, AI, climate-smart agriculture, digital platforms, drones, and precision agriculture are creating specialized roles. These positions involve close farmer interaction, field data collection, and support for technology adoption, requiring professionals to proactively identify opportunities and effectively showcase their skills.

E4L Report Prepared by:
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