Seafood exporters seek agri status for fishery sector

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Highlighting the need to accord agriculture status to fishery sector, Seafood Exporters Association of India president V. Padmanabham has urged the aqua-culture farmers to be educated for sustainable growth.

After inaugurating APFishTech 2018 seminar here on Friday, he emphasised on the challenges faced by the fishery sector.

He asked the stakeholders to avoid antibiotics in aqua-culture farms. The usage of antibiotics would dampen the fish exports. Traceability of antibiotic rejections is a challenging issue that needs to be addressed on priority basis. The fish exports worth ₹40,000 crore will be drastically affected if the farmers adopt such shortcut methods, he informed.

Instead of using antibiotics, the exporters' association asked the farmers to focus on cutting down the cost of production.

It also encouraged the youngsters to take up entrepreneurship in fisheries using start-up initiatives of the government.

The state is a leading exporter of farmed shrimp to the US and European countries. It contributes about 20 per cent of Indian fish production and has a huge potential for fish farming as only 30 per cent of water bodies are being used at present.

On the occasion, technical sessions were organised on harvest and post-harvest issues.

ICAR-CIFT director Dr C Ravishankar said that the research institutes have been contributing towards the development of fisheries sector and have been always ready to address the problems faced by aqua-culturists.