

Prof. Dr. P. P. Mahendran

Principal

Distinguished Academician • Soil Scientist • Agricultural Researcher • Visionary Administrator

Prof. Dr. P. P. Mahendran is a distinguished academician, eminent Soil Scientist, dedicated teacher, accomplished researcher, and visionary administrator who has rendered exemplary service to agricultural education and research for more than three decades under Tamil Nadu Agricultural University. Renowned for his contributions to Soil Science, irrigation water management, precision agriculture, and sugarcane production technologies, he has significantly influenced agricultural education, farmer-oriented research, and sustainable farming systems in India.

With an illustrious professional career spanning teaching, research, extension, technology development, and institutional leadership, Prof. Mahendran has earned widespread recognition among students, scientists, farmers, and agricultural institutions across the country.

Educational Qualifications

Prof. Mahendran completed his B.Sc. (Agriculture) from Annamalai University in 1988 with distinction. Driven by his passion for Soil Science, he pursued his M.Sc. in Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University and secured an outstanding OGPA of 4.00/4.00 in 1991. He obtained his Ph.D. in Soil Science from TNAU in 2000 with an exceptional OGPA of 9.49/10.00, specializing in Soil Fertility and Poor-Quality Water Management. His doctoral research laid a strong scientific foundation for his later pioneering contributions in irrigation management and sustainable agriculture.

Professional Career and Leadership

Prof. Mahendran began his academic career as Assistant Professor in the Department of Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry in February 1995. Through dedication, academic excellence, and professional commitment, he rose through the ranks as Associate Professor and Professor.

He served as the Dean of Agricultural College and Research Institute, Madurai, from May 2022 to January 2026. His administrative tenure was marked by academic discipline, institutional development, infrastructure strengthening, student welfare initiatives, faculty coordination, and promotion of quality agricultural education. He also served as Professor and Head in Soil Science in various colleges, contributing extensively to postgraduate education, academic planning, institutional governance, and research coordination.

Teaching and Academic Contributions

Prof. Mahendran is widely respected as an inspiring teacher and mentor who shaped the academic and professional careers of numerous students and researchers.

Courses Handled

- 22 Undergraduate Courses
- 30 Postgraduate Courses
- 9 Doctoral-Level Courses

His teaching methodology combined scientific depth, practical relevance, and student-friendly delivery.

Research Guidance

- Guided 17 M.Sc. (Ag.) Scholars
- Guided 6 Ph.D. Scholars

He also facilitated Junior Research Fellowships (JRFs) through externally funded projects, thereby promoting advanced research and human resource development.

Academic Publications

He authored:

- 8 Textbooks
- 12 Practical Manuals

These publications have greatly benefited students in understanding Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry.

Research Excellence and Technology Development

Prof. Mahendran established himself as a leading researcher in:

- Soil Fertility Management
- Irrigation Water Management
- Precision Agriculture
- Sugarcane Production Technologies
- Sustainable Farming Systems

Research Projects Completed

- 26 Research Projects

- University Projects – 6
- ICAR Projects – 9
- Government-funded Projects – 6
- Private-funded Projects – 5

Among them, 21 projects were externally funded with a total outlay of ₹ 538.44 lakhs.

Major Technological Contributions

Subsurface Drip Fertigation System

Developed a scientifically designed subsurface drip fertigation system for mechanized sugarcane cultivation, later approved by the 42nd Tamil Nadu State Variety Release Committee.

Pit and Paired Row Planting Method

Standardized pit and paired-row planting techniques for enhanced irrigation efficiency and sugarcane productivity.

Mini Portable Sprinkler Irrigation Kit

Introduced an innovative sprinkler irrigation kit suitable for groundnut, pulses, and vegetable cultivation in coastal sandy soils.

These technologies significantly contributed toward water conservation, resource-use efficiency, and sustainable agriculture.

Extension and Farmer Outreach

Prof. Mahendran strongly believed that scientific innovations must directly benefit farming communities. His extension activities focused on dissemination of practical, farmer-friendly technologies.

Key Extension Achievements

- Completed 5 Demonstration Projects sponsored by Government of India, Ministry of Water Resources, and NABARD
- Organized 2 Mega Training Programmes on Water Management Technologies
- Trained 50 Farmer Groups and 17 batches of Trainers and Extension Personnel
- Delivered 7 Radio Talks and over 50 Training Lectures for farmers and officials

Through multi-location trials and extension programmes, his technologies were successfully popularized across nearly 170 hectares in Madurai, Sivagangai, and Ramanathapuram districts.

Publications and Scholarly Contributions

Prof. Mahendran has made remarkable contributions to agricultural literature and scientific research.

Publications

- 88 Research Articles
- 4 Books with ISBN
- 6 Book Chapters with ISBN
- 3 Booklets
- 44 Scientific Abstracts
- 14 Popular Articles
- 3 Extension Leaflets

His research publications focus on irrigation management, soil fertility, precision farming, water conservation, sugarcane technologies, and sustainable crop production systems.

Awards and Recognitions

In recognition of his outstanding contributions to agricultural education, research, extension, and technology development, Prof. Mahendran has received numerous prestigious awards.

Major Awards

- Young Scientist Fellowship Award (2002)
- Best Research Paper Award (2002)
- Best Researcher Award (2009)
- Best Teacher Award (2010)
- P.S.G. Ganga Naidu Medal for Best Research in Sugarcane (2010)
- Best Extension Worker Award (2011)
- International Best Oral Presentation Award, Thailand (2013)
- Prof. Sant Singh Memorial Award for Excellence in Soil Science (2018)
- Scientist of Excellence Award in Water Management (2019)
- Fellow of the Indian Society of Soil Science (2023)

He also received multiple recognition certificates from TNAU for mobilizing externally funded research projects.

Legacy and Vision

Throughout his distinguished career, Prof. Dr. P. P. Mahendran has consistently demonstrated academic excellence, scientific innovation, administrative efficiency, and unwavering commitment to agricultural development and farmer welfare.

His pioneering contributions in Soil Science, irrigation water management, precision agriculture, and sustainable farming continue to inspire students, researchers, and farming communities alike. As an educator, scientist, mentor, and administrator, he stands as a shining example of excellence in agricultural education and institutional leadership.

His professional journey reflects dedication, humility, discipline, and an enduring commitment to advancing sustainable agriculture and empowering future generations.