



WORKSHOP ON SUSTAINABLE FARMING TECHNOLOGIES

CIKS participated in “Madurai Symposium 2009” held in Madurai between 14th – 18th September. The symposium was organized by the Dhan Foundation based in Madurai, Tamil Nadu. The focus of the symposium was advancing development towards millennium development goals. On 15th September, our centre organized a workshop on “Sustainable Agriculture: A Special Focus on Traditional Technologies”. The participants were introduced to various topics including traditional knowledge and organic farming technologies, organic farming and vrkshayurveda, organic methods of soil fertility management and marketing of organic products. A total of 51 farmers and NGO representatives participated in the workshop.



Participants of the Workshop

NEW PROJECTS

EMPOWERMENT OF FARMERS THROUGH TRAINING PROGRAMMES ON ORGANIC FARMING

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, Chennai has sanctioned a project to our Centre entitled “Empowerment of Farmers through Training Programmes on Organic Farming in Nagapattinam district of Tamil Nadu”. The programme is for a period of three months from August 2009 onwards in the Nagapattinam district. Under this project, we propose to train farmers on various organic farming technologies.

INTRODUCTION OF ORGANIC FARMING IN ALANGADU VILLAGE - PHASE II

Our centre was involved in the promotion of organic farming in Alangadu village of Nagapattinam district with the support of a family belonging to Alangadu village. The first phase of the project concluded in July 2009. Now the second phase of the project has been sanctioned to our Centre. The programme is for a period of ten months from September 2009 onwards in the Alangadu village of Nagapattinam district.



PROJECT WATCH *A round-up of our activities*

Enhancing Livelihood and Food Security through Capacity Building for Organic Farming and Natural Resource Management - Phase II

CIKS has concluded the second phase of the above-mentioned project supported by the Ford Foundation. Out of 232.69 ha of land that has been selected from Kancheepuram, Thiruvannamalai, Dindigul and Nagapattinam districts, 86.67 ha are cultivated organically in this season. A series of 27 training programmes on various organic farming technologies have been conducted for the farmers of Dindigul and Nagapattinam districts. About 413 farmers benefited through these training programmes. Two training programmes on organic farming technologies have been conducted for the farmers working with the NGO - Velicham in Pudhukottai and Tamil Nadu Farmers' Technology Center in Erode. Loans have been provided to 20 beneficiaries of Thiruvannamalai, Dindigul and Nagapattinam districts for establishing small scale enterprises. On 7th and 8th August, Mr. Daniel Anandaraj, Consultant visited the project villages to evaluate the project activities. The final consolidated report was prepared and sent to the Ford Foundation.

Capacity Building on Organic Farming

This project, supported by CAPART, New Delhi is being implemented in 8 villages in the Kancheepuram district. Sangam meetings were conducted and discussion on various topics took place. Farmers of Sithalamangalam and Edaiyur villages are involved in the seed production of traditional vegetable varieties and ADT 43 paddy variety respectively. Inputs like vegetable seeds and biofertilizers have been provided to the beneficiaries. Seeds of

vegetable varieties have been provided to the beneficiaries to establish kitchen gardens. Construction of a seed bank in Senthankulam village is in progress.

COMPAS Project

This project, supported by ETC Foundation, Netherlands, is being implemented in Kancheepuram, Thiruvannamalai and Nagapattinam districts from May 2007. Under this project, beneficiaries are involved in the organic cultivation of fodder grass. An organic package of practices for sugarcane is being developed in Adhamangalam village of Nagapattinam district. On 3rd July, a one day discussion meeting on "SRI method of paddy cultivation - Present day problems" was conducted in Nagapattinam district involving farmers and Agriculture Scientists. Dr. R. Rajendiran of Tamil Nadu Rice Research Institute (TRRI), Aduthurai, Dr. S. Natarajan of the Department of Agronomy, Annamalai University and about 35 farmers participated in this meeting. An experiment on effect of fresh cow dung spray against the Bacterial Leaf Blight disease in ADT 43 paddy variety is in progress in Allivilagam village of Nagapattinam district.

Biodiversity Conservation, Reduction of POPs and Livelihoods for Farmers in Tamil Nadu - A Sustainable Triangle

This project supported by UNDP - GEF is being implemented in Kancheepuram, Thiruvannamalai, Dindigul and Nagapattinam districts from November 2008. Under this project, a total of 25 farmers groups have been formed and monthly meetings were conducted. A total of 11 training programmes on various organic farming technologies have been conducted

for the farmers of Nagapattinam district. Two training programmes on the preparation of value added products have been conducted for the farmers of Kancheepuram and Thiruvannamalai districts. Traditional paddy varieties *Arupathamkodai*, *Chithiraikar* and *Karunkuruvai* conserved in Nagapattinam district have been harvested. On 22nd and 23rd September, two training programmes on principles and technologies of organic farming have been conducted for the representatives of NGOs. A total of 18 NGO representatives from Puthukottai, Dindigul, Ramanadapuram, Madurai and Sivagangai participated. The participants were also taken to visit the organic fields in Dharmathuppatti, Palaniyur and Vannampatti villages. Farmers have been selected for the cultivation and conservation of traditional paddy varieties in samba season.

Sustainable Livelihoods through Organic Farming in Tamil Nadu

This project supported by Jamsetji Tata Trust (JTT), Mumbai is being implemented in Kancheepuram, Ramanathapuram, Dindigul and Nagapattinam districts of Tamil Nadu from May 2009. Under this project, a total of 333 farmers have been selected from 32 villages. About 14 farmers' sangams have been formed and monthly meetings were conducted. A total of 183.21 acres has been selected for organic seed production. The seed production fields in Kaliyapettai village of Kancheepuram district was inspected by Seed Certification Officer. ADT 43 paddy cultivated in 1.68 acres for seed production has been harvested. A total of 356.66 acres has

been selected for support through input subsidy and crop loan schemes. Inputs like seeds of paddy, vegetables, green manure, vermicompost, biofertilizers and neem cake have been distributed to the farmers. To establish demonstration fields, about 30.5 acres has been selected. In Ramanathapuram district demonstration fields have been raised in 1.3 acres. Dr. Bhaskar Mitra, Programme Officer of Tata trust visited the Sirkazhi field area on 29th July to review the project activities. On 16th August, a training programme on seed production was conducted for the beneficiaries of Nagapattinam district. This training programme was coordinated by Mr. Ganesan, Agriculture Deputy Director, Sembanarkovil. On 23rd September, a training programme on "seed to seed" was conducted for the beneficiaries of Mogalvadi and Chithiravadi villages. Construction of a seed grading unit and a threshing yard are in progress in our experimental farm in Sukkankollai.

Introduction of Organic Farming in Alangadu Village

Our centre is involved in the promotion of organic farming in Alangadu village of Nagapattinam district. Monthly sangam meetings were conducted regularly and discussion on various topics took place. In the newly established vermicompost unit about 500 kgs of vermicompost was harvested and sold to the farmers. The Alangadu irrigation channel was desilted for about 1.5 km for the easy flow of water to the fields. A total of 21.08 acres of land has been selected for organic paddy cultivation in samba season.

Work in Progress at Sukkankollai

In our experimental farm at Sukkankollai, different varieties of traditional vegetables have been cultivated. Traditional tomato variety *kuzhi thakkali* and greens have been raised under the shade house. Nursery has been raised for 60 traditional paddy varieties for seed multiplication. Sesame, sunflower and traditional paddy varieties that are cultivated during the previous season have been harvested. A low cost cool chamber has been constructed and standardized.

NEWSROOM

Happenings and more.

Conference on Agro Food Processing Technologies

A conference on "Agro Food Processing Technologies" on the theme of quality and safety in the processing of fruits and vegetables was conducted on 24th July. This conference was organized by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) at Hotel Park Sheraton, Chennai. Resource persons were leading processors of fruits and vegetables like Alfa Laval, Jain Irrigation Systems, Buhler Sortex and Maagrita Exports Ltd etc. Our staff M. Suresh attended this conference.

Banana Festival in Chennai

On 25th July, the Banana festival was organized by Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation (TTDC) at Chennai. There were many stalls in which fourteen different varieties of banana as well as innovative food made from banana were displayed. Products made from banana like bags, clothes were also displayed. Our staff M. Suresh and Amrita Nishanth attended this festival.

National Consultation Meet

On 19th August, MSSRF at Chennai had organized a National Consultation on Management of agrobiodiversity hot spots in an era of climate change. On behalf of CIKS, A. V. Balasubramanian and Amrita Nishanth participated in the meeting. A. V. Balasubramanian participated in the panel discussion and made a presentation about the CIKS experience with community managed agrobiodiversity centres.

Staff Capacity Building Training Programme

A three day staff capacity building training programme was conducted between 24th - 26th August, at our Technology Resource Centre in Sukkankollai. A total of 14 staff participated in this training programme. The staff members were trained on various topics including implementation of organic farming in villages, seed certification methods, seed inspection, Internal Control Systems (ICS), biological crop protection methods, sustainable farming, report writing, maintenance of records etc. Mr. S. Magalingakannan,

Agriculture Deputy Director (Seeds), Seed Certification Officers, Mr. Ravi, Mr. Gnanasekaran, and Mr. Prabhakaran, Mr. Subhurathinam, Deputy Director (Seed inspection) and Mr. Rajaraman, Seed inspector served as resource persons.

Meeting in Netherlands

A meeting of the International Management group of the COMPAS programme was held in the ETC Foundation in the Netherlands between 25th and 27th August. On behalf of Asian Coordination, K. Vijayalakshmi and A. V. Balasubramanian participated in the meeting. The meeting reviewed the mid term assessment of the progress of the COMPAS partners from various regions along with the external facilitators for each region. Following this, the COMPAS IMM group also reviewed the changes and discussed the plans for the future period.

Training to NGOs

CIKS conducted a series of training programmes for the representatives as well as the farmers working with the NGOs, NPMi network (Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa) and Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari between 17th - 19th and 24th - 26th September, respectively. The participants were trained on organic farming technologies like alternatives to chemical fertilizers, organic methods of pest and disease management, bio-control agents, biopesticide preparation, System of Rice Intensification (SRI) etc. A total of 39 members participated and benefited through these training programmes.

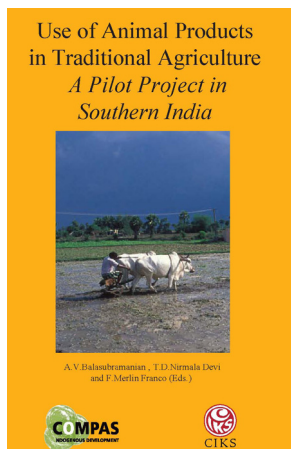
Talk at Bangalore

At the invitation of Tirunarayanan Trust, Bangalore, A. V. Balasubramanian participated in the seminar entitled "In to the future with knowledge from our past" on 25th September. He delivered a talk on the title "Is there an Indian way of doing Science?" The talk was attended by students from some of the colleges in Bangalore and selected invitees from some other educational institutions at Bangalore.

BOOKSTORE

New publications and audiovisuals

USE OF ANIMAL PRODUCTS IN TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURE - A PILOT PROJECT IN SOUTHERN INDIA



During the last ten years the COMPAS partners in India have been involved in wide ranging activities in the area of agriculture, traditional healthcare and natural resources management. A coordinated programme involving the four partners in Southern India on the theme of the use of animal products in traditional agriculture was undertaken. The range of

activities undertaken was large encompassing - survey of literature of folk practices as well as classical texts of Vrکشayurveda, field survey, research in the laboratory and parallel field research and a continuous process of engagement of partners as a group within themselves as well as members of an expert panel. This publication provides the results of this pilot work with a larger readership.

Price : Rs. 200/-

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VISITOR'S BOOK

Who's been dropping in at CIKS

- On 23rd July, Sri G. Vasudeoji, Secretary, Natural Resources Development Programme (NARDEP) of Vivekananda Kendra visited us.
- On 24th July, Mr. D. Nishanth, Area Manager - Tamil Nadu Rural Sales, Birla Sun Life Insurance visited us.
- On 4th August, Mr. Radha, Mr. Ramakrishnan and Mr. Ramesh visited our farm to get to know about our activities.
- On 4th September, Mr. Joseph Thomas, Chief Technology Officer and Ms. Michelle Abraham, Associate - Strategic partnership of VILLGRO visited us.
- On 10th September, a group of 17 post graduate students from Annamalai University, Chidambaram visited our biopesticide unit in Agani village of Nagapattinam district.
- On 14th September, Mr. Maartin La Ferriere, Architect from BIOME based at Bangalore visited our Chennai office and Sukkankollai farm.
- On 22nd September, Mr. Michel Danino of International Forum for Indian Heritage, Coimbatore visited us in connection with the preparation of a set of educational CDs on Indian scientific heritage.
- On 24th September, Dr. Aarti Kawlra from the Rural Technology Business Incubators (RTBI) at IIT Madras visited us.

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