



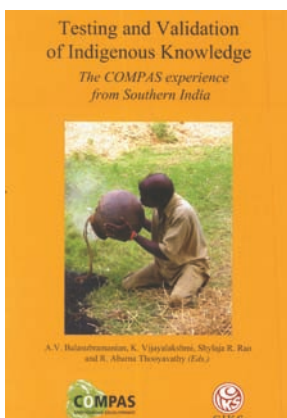
SIXTEENTH FOUNDATION DAY OF CIKS

On 23rd January, all team members of CIKS from various offices gathered for a day long celebration of the sixteenth foundation day of CIKS at the organic research farm at Sukkankollai village in Kancheepuram district. In the forenoon there was a presentation by Director, A. V. Balasubramanian giving reflections about what CIKS set out to do sixteen years back and some of the strengths and limitations of the work. This was followed by a session wherein every single team member of CIKS shared their reflections about CIKS in their perception. The day included cultural programmes that were presented by various team members including some games that were organized. The day concluded with prize distribution for various events.



Cultural event on the theme of importance of organic agriculture by CIKS staff members

Testing and Validation of Indigenous Knowledge



For More Details See Page - 4

NEW PROJECT

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, CREDIT COUNSELING AND MARKET ADVOCACY THROUGH FARMERS CLUBS IN NAGAPATTINAM DISTRICT

A pilot project for technology transfer, credit counseling and marketing advocacy through farmers club has been sanctioned by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). This project is for a period of one year. The objective of this project is to empower farmers on technology transfer, credit and marketing aspects. It will develop selected farmers as trainers who would in turn train other farmers.



PROJECT WATCH *A round-up of our activities*

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

This project supported by UNDP - GEF (United Nations Development Programme - Global Environment Facility) is being implemented in Kancheepuram, Thiruvannamalai, Dindigul and Nagapattinam districts from November 2008. Beneficiaries have been provided with nine training programmes on value addition. Under the component of POP reduction, 14 training programmes have been conducted for the farmers of Dindigul district. A total of six exposure visits were organized for the beneficiaries to organic farms and fields, input production units and processing units. Conservation of 12 traditional paddy varieties is in progress in 69.48 acres in 15 coastal villages of Sirkazhi and Vedharanyam taluks. Seeds of traditional vegetable varieties have been distributed to the farmers of Nagapattinam and Dindigul districts for cultivation and conservation.

Sustainable Livelihoods through Organic Farming in Tamil Nadu

This project supported by Jamsetji Tata Trust (JTT), Mumbai is in progress in Kancheepuram, Ramanathapuram, Dindigul and Nagapattinam districts of Tamil Nadu from May 2009. Production



Organic Sesame Field in Kalathupatty Village of Dindigul District

of certified and truthfully labeled seeds of paddy varieties, groundnut, sesame, black gram, sunhemp and vegetables are in progress in 200 acres. A total of 763.54 acres are being supported through input support and crop loan schemes. Under this support scheme, crops like paddy varieties, oil seeds, cotton, chilli, banana, maize, flower crops etc., have been cultivated in 525.74 acres. Demonstration fields with various organic farming and allied technologies are in place in all the four districts. Two community kitchen gardens and 83 demo kitchen gardens contribute to conserve the traditional vegetable varieties in the project areas. Commercial production of vermicompost is in progress in three community vermicompost units in Kancheepuram and Dindigul districts. Microenterprises established by the beneficiaries are progressing well. Beneficiaries are provided with 17 short term and nine Trainers' Training sessions on various organic farming technologies. Eight exposure visits were also organized. Construction of a biopesticide unit in Kattuemaneshwaram village of Ramanathapuram district has been completed and production would be started shortly.

Introduction of Organic Farming in Alangadu Village

Our centre is involved in the promotion of organic farming in Alangadu village of Nagapattinam district from January 2009. Black gram has been cultivated in 24.65 acres by 24 farmers. Beneficiaries are also involved in the cultivation of fodder grass organically. On 13th January, an on farm training on pest and diseases and their management measures was conducted for the beneficiaries following Farmers' Field School (FFS) method. On 18th January, a training programme on paper bag production



Traditional Pumpkin Variety Conserved in Ramanathapuram District

was conducted for the members of five women SHGs. A nursery of tree saplings named "Poonsolai" and a community kitchen garden are being maintained by the Samba women SHG. Production is in full swing at the community vermicompost unit. The women SHG members are involved in the preparation of handicrafts using palm fronds. They were also participated in the handicrafts exhibition "Thulir" held in Chennai on 16th February.

Strengthening Sustainable Agriculture for Improving Rural Livelihoods: A Project with Focus on Dryland Agriculture

This project supported by Ford Foundation and HIVOS is in progress in Thiruvannamalai and Dindigul districts. The project activities are in progress in 1345.81 acres in 15 villages of Javvadhu hills of Thiruvannamalai district and Sendhurai block of Dindigul district. Sangam meetings were conducted. Crops like niger, horse gram, maize, little millet, black gram and groundnut cultivated in 590 acres have been harvested. Organic kitchen gardens are being maintained by the beneficiaries. Beneficiaries are also involved in the production of vermicompost. Efforts are on to erect

the millet processing machinery in Javvadhu hills. In Dindigul district, fields under organic certification programme have been inspected by Mr. Arumugam from Tamil Nadu Organic Certification Department.

Programme for Supporting Sustainable Organic Farming in Nagapattinam District of Tamil Nadu

This project supported by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) is in progress in Sirkazhi taluk of Nagapattinam district. A total of nine farmers of Agani, Allivilagam, Elayankudi and Murugamangalam villages have been involved in the production of organic seeds of paddy, black gram and green gram in 12 acres. An organic input shop named 'Akshaya' has been inaugurated in Agani village on 21st January. Loan has been provided for the members of the women self help groups in Allivilagam and Aadhamangalam villages for the purchase of milch cows and goats. On 19th March, we have participated in "Safe Food Organic Mela" organized in Chennai and made a display of our products. Three beneficiaries and two staff members participated in a two day training on "Market Linkages for Organic Products" organized by ICCOA in Bangalore on 3rd and 4th March.

Work in Progress at Sukkankollai

In our experimental farm at Sukkankollai, crops like brinjal, groundnut, water melon, paddy, pulses and medicinal gourd have been cultivated. Different vegetable varieties like radish, ladies finger, onion, country bean etc., have been raised in the kitchen vegetable garden. *Kullakar* paddy variety has been cultivated in 42 cents following SRI method of cultivation. Vermicompost production and *Azolla* cultivation are in progress.



Harvesting of Vermicompost

NEWSROOM

Happenings and more.

Meeting on Seeds

On 27th and 28th January, the Restoration of Rainfed Agriculture (RRA) Network of India organized a meeting in Ahmedabad on the theme of Seeds for Rainfed Areas. The meeting was attended by RRA members from various parts of India and special invitees with expertise on seeds drawn from the State Agricultural Universities, Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the seed industry. The members discussed coordinated activities to be undertaken for the coming years and a Coordination Committee was formed to take the activities forward for which A. V. Balasubramanian of CIKS would be Convener. On behalf of CIKS, A. V. Balasubramanian and K. Vijaya lakshmi attended the meeting.

Visit of DST Expert Committee

An Expert committee of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) visited our Centre on 8th and 9th February to make an assessment of progress under the Core Support Programme. The team included Dr. Sunil Agarwal of DST, Dr. Sudha Nair (MSSRF), Dr. Khare (IIT, Delhi), Dr. Bagyaraj (Retd. UAS, Bangalore) and Dr. Baldev Singh (Retd. ICAR). On 8th February, they made a trip to CIKS farm and training centre at Sukkankollai and visited the experiments and work in progress, met our technical staff and presentations were made about work supported by the DST. On 9th February, the team came to the CIKS office at Chennai and presentations were made about proposals for future work after reviewing the current performance.

Visit of Women Farmers from Andhra Pradesh

A group of 45 women farmers from Farmer Training Centre in Anakapalli district, Vijayawada taluk of Krishna

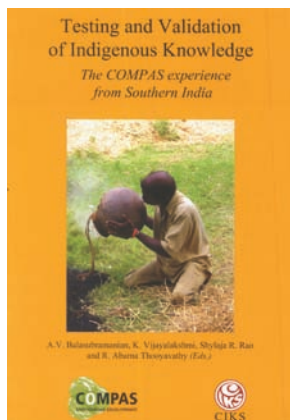
district and Eluru taluk of West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh visited our project area in Sirkazhi taluk of Nagapattinam district in three groups consisting of each 15 members on 9th - 11th February, 8th - 9th and 20th - 22nd March vice versa. They were taken to visit community biopesticide and vermicompost units, value addition unit in Pagasalai village, organic demonstration farm in Ilayamadhukoodam village, seed processing unit in Thiruvengadu etc. Demonstrations of biopesticide preparation, vermicomposting, various other organic farming technologies and preparation of value added product - rice *appalam* were done. They also had detailed discussions with our farmers, members of the organic farmers sangams and women self help groups.

Exhibition and Food Festival on Safe Food

On 19th March, the Safe Food Alliance (SFA) organized an exhibition on Organic and Safe Foods at Chennai at the Tolkapiyar Poonga. CIKS participated in the exhibition and a stall was set up by the Sirkazhi team of CIKS along with the members of the Sirkazhi Organic Farmers Association (SOFA). On display, were a large amount of educational and training material and there were also several traditional varieties of paddy and products made from them. The event was attended among others by Subhashini Sridhar, K. Vijayalakshmi and A. V. Balasubramanian of CIKS besides various other members in the team.

TALK TO US

Send your feed back, comments and suggestions to info@ciks.org

BOOKSTORE*New Publications, Audiovisuals and Educational Materials***Testing and Validation of Indigenous Knowledge - The COMPAS Experience from Southern India****Editors:** *A.V. Balasubramanian, K. Vijaya lakshmi, Shylaja R. Rao and R. Abarna Thooyavathy. March 2011.*

This publication provides an overview of efforts undertaken by the COMPAS partners towards testing and validation of indigenous knowledge of health and agriculture. It encompasses varied themes including local health traditions, ethnoveterinary traditions, bone setting practices, treatment for Malaria, characterization of indigenous seed varieties, disease resistance,

seed treatment and methodology for rapid assessment of traditional agricultural practices. The results have been rich and fascinating and this publication is to share the results of this pilot work with a larger readership.

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VISITOR'S BOOK**Who's been dropping in at CIKS**

- On 6th January, Dr. N. Sukumar from Rensselaer Polytechnic, New York, USA visited our Chennai office.
- On 6th January, Mr. Raffaele Teodonno, Project Manager, ICEI, Kandy, Sri Lanka visited us.
- On 22nd January, Mr. P. Gomathinayagam, Farmer leader from Puliangudi and Mr. Sither, Organic Farmer from Thanjavur visited us.
- On 2nd February, Ms. Shalaka Joshi from UNITUS, New York, USA visited us.
- On 12th February, Mr. P. Ravikumar, Advocate, Bangalore involved in promoting sustainable agriculture visited us.
- On 17th February, Mr. Joss Brooks from Pichandikulam Forest Consultants (PFC), Auroville visited us.
- On 21st February, Mr. Rajasekharan, Assistant Editor, Rural India and Environment, Economic Times, New Delhi visited us.
- On 24th March, Mr. Ambika Prasad Mohanty from Reliance Foundation, Mumbai visited our farm and learnt the seed conservation practices.
- On 25th March, Ms. Akila Balu from Chennai and Mr. Arun of Tiruvannamalai Learning Centre, Tiruvannamalai district visited us.

Editorial Team : *Dr. K. Vijayalakshmi & R. Abarna***Design & Layout :** *R.Anand & S. Ramesh***Book-Post****To****CIKS**

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