



*CIKS Wishes all its friends & Well Wishers
A Very Happy and Prosperous 2012*

DST GROUP MONITORING WORKSHOP AT CHENNAI

CIKS hosted the Group Monitoring Workshop of the Seed Division of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) at Chennai between 14th and 16th December, 2011. About 20 Scientists who were being supported by various projects under the division participated in the meeting and made presentations regarding progress of their work. Also present were members of the Expert Committee consisting of Dr. Usha Dixit of the DST, Delhi, Dr. M. N. B. Nair of the Foundation for Revitalization of Local Health Traditions, Bengaluru, Dr. Swapan Garain of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, Dr. Jose Kallarackal



*Expert Committee Members and Participants of the Workshop
at the CIKS Organic Experimental Farm*



*Dr. K. Vijayalakshmi Addressing the Members of the Expert
Committee at the DST Group Monitoring Workshop
held in Chennai*

of Kerala Forest Research Institute, Thrissur and Dr. K. Vijayalakshmi of CIKS, Chennai. On 15th December evening the participants went on a visit to the campus of A. M. M. Murugappa Chettiar Research Centre at Chennai which is one of the groups receiving Core support from the DST. On 16th December, the participants and the expert committee members went on a field trip to the CIKS Experimental farm and Technology Resource Centre in Kancheepuram district. The participants received feedback from the DST officials and members of the Expert Committee regarding the progress of their activities.



PROJECT WATCH *A round-up of our activities*

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 of certified and truthfully labeled seeds of several varieties of paddy, groundnut, pulses, sesame and vegetables are in progress in 188.89 acres. Under the input support and crop loan schemes, 749.96 acres are being supported and crops like paddy, oil seeds, coconut, maize, banana, vegetables, flower crops etc., have been cultivated in 470.56 acres. A total of 168 organic kitchen gardens and 50 demo gardens are being maintained in all the four districts. Vermicompost production is in full swing in the four community vermicompost units and in 44 demonstration units. All the 27 microenterprises established under this project are progressing well and records are being maintained by the beneficiaries. A total of 12 short term and five Trainers' Training sessions were conducted for the beneficiaries on various organic farming technologies. Exposure visits were organized for the project beneficiaries and for the beneficiaries of SKECH NGO based in Ramanathapuram to CIKS Organic Research Farm in Kancheepuram district.

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 covering 1336.84 acres in 15 villages of Javadhu hills of Thiruvannamalai district and Sendhurai block of Dindigul district. Entire land under this project is registered with Tamil Nadu Organic Certification Department (TNOCD).

Sangam meetings were conducted for all the 15 farmers groups and three womens' groups. Harvesting of crops like maize, groundnut and little millet (*samai*) cultivated during previous season is in progress in Dindigul district. In Thiruvannamalai district, little millet (*samai*) cultivated in 710 acres during previous season was harvested. A total of 88 farming families are involved in the maintenance of kitchen gardens with a range of vegetable varieties. Beneficiaries are also involved in the production of vermicompost. A total of five training programmes were conducted for the beneficiaries on first aid procedures, organic farming certification and preparation of traditional medicine.

Eco-Friendly Management Strategies to Reduce Rat Damage in Agricultural Crops in Sirkazhi Taluk of Nagapattinam District

This project supported by the Department of Science and Technology is being implemented in the Sirkazhi taluk of Nagapattinam district. Under this project, five experiments on eco friendly management practices for rat control have been initiated in the field. Rat management activity with the help of Irula expertise was taken up in 92 acres in Agani, Nemmeli, Ilaiyankudi and Pagasalai villages. Mass campaign on eco friendly management of rats was organized in Kandamangalam, Pagasalai and Thokkalakudi villages and rat management activity was also taken up between 27th - 29th December in 99.5 acres. Under this project, awareness programmes on "Conservation of predators - Snakes for rat management" were conducted for the students of Government schools in Kondal and Vaitheeshwarankovil. A programme of similar kind was also conducted for a diverse group of people. Two training programmes on non-chemical methods of rat management were conducted in

Pagasalai village.

Creating Livelihoods through Organic Farming - A Model

This project is in progress in Sirkazhi taluk of Nagapattinam district with the support of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). Under this project, organic inputs like neem cake, vermicompost, biofertilizers and pheromone traps have been distributed to the beneficiaries. A comparative study of SRI (System of Rice Intensification) method with regular method of paddy cultivation was done and analysis is in progress. Cultivation of saline tolerant paddy varieties Swarna Sub-1 and TRY-3 have been taken up in Pagasalai village. Biopesticide unit established in Aadhamangalam village is being maintained by Ponni Women SHG and production and sale is in progress. A Neem seed processing unit has been established in Agani village and processing will be started shortly. A total of 36 farmers have cultivated different varieties of paddy like CR - 1009, ADT - 38, White ponni, BPT - 5204 and traditional varieties.

Technology Transfer, Credit Counseling and Market Advocacy through Farmers Clubs in Nagapattinam District

This pilot project is being implemented in Nagapattinam district with the support of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). Under this project, a total of 57 training programmes were conducted for the sub trainees on quality seed selection, seed treatment, nursery maintenance, field preparation, demonstration of transplanter, usage of conoweeder etc. A total of four master trainees under this project participated in training programmes on "Sheep and Goat farming" and "Conservation and organic agriculture" organized by the Mecheri Research Station in Dharumapuri

NEWSROOM

Happenings and more.

between 9th and 11th November and by the National Agro Foundation (NAF) in Mathuranthagam between 14th and 16th December, respectively.

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 the Sirkazhi taluk of Nagapattinam district. Under this project, we have participated in a National Conference on "Rural Marketing and Rural Consumerism: Road map to Build Vibrant Rural India" held in Gandhigram Rural Institute on 17th December and presented a paper titled "Community Managed Organic Seed Production and Marketing - an Opportunity for Farmers Groups in Tamil Nadu". Women beneficiaries participated in a training programme on "Maintenance of milch animals and fodder production" held in National Agro Foundation at Madhuranthagam between 2nd - 4th November. We also visited "Bio - Fach 2011" organic exhibition held in Bengaluru on 11th and 12th November. Members of Sirkazhi Organic Farmers' Association (SOFA) participated in a meeting on "Organic Marketing Strategies" held in Dharumapuri on 17th November. Monthly project review meetings were conducted regularly.

Work in Progress at Sukkankollai

In our experimental farm at Sukkankollai, 91 traditional paddy varieties have been cultivated following SRI (System of Rice Intensification) method for seed multiplication, of which, 18 varieties have been harvested. Traditional paddy varieties like *Kitchillisamba*, *Thooyamalli*, *Seeragasamba*, *Kullakar*, *Arcot Kitchillisamba* and *White ponni* have also been cultivated in 3.55 acres. Vegetable varieties like brinjal, tomato, bhendi, cluster bean, cowpea, greens etc., have been raised in the demo kitchen vegetable garden. Vermicompost production and *Azolla* cultivation are in full swing. Experiments on "Testing the effect of neem oil soap solution against sucking pests" and "Testing the effect of *Andrographis Kashayam* against red spider mite" are in progress.

International Workshop

HIVOS and OXFAM-NOVIB Netherlands had organized an international workshop on "Agricultural Biodiversity, Small Holder Farmers and Resilience" between 10th - 12th October, which was hosted by Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) Association, Kenya. The meeting was held at the Sustainable Agricultural Community Development Programme (SACDEP) Training and Conference Facility located in Thika at the outskirts of Nairobi. A. V. Balasubramanian participated in the workshop. The meeting was attended by delegates from Africa, Asia and Europe and it included donors, civil society organizations, researchers and representatives of international bodies among others.

Seminar on Non Profit Organisations

On 8th October, the Southern India Regional Council of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India organized a one day seminar on "Non Profit Organisation - Their Accounting and Management". A. V. Balasubramanian participated in the meeting and made a presentation on the topic "Finance perspective for the not for profit sector and the road ahead"

Talk to Yoga Teachers from England

A group of Yoga teachers led by Ms. Cora Kemball-Cook from Canterbury, U.K were on a two week trip to various Yoga institutions in India which was being coordinated by Kolam Tours. On 22nd October, A. V. Balasubramanian met the team at Chennai and gave a talk on the topic "Seeing with two eyes - How the patient is trying to integrate medical systems and what the professionals can do to help". This was followed by a detailed discussion and then a brief presentation on the topic of Indian scientific traditions.

Staff Capacity Building Training Programme

A one day staff capacity building training programme on "Importance and uses of

medicinal plants" was conducted for the technical staff of CIKS on 22nd October at the CIKS Technology Resource Centre in Sukkankollai. The staff members were trained on topics like importance and uses of medicinal plants, cultivation techniques and cultivation of medicinal plants in the kitchen gardens. Resource persons of this programme were Dr. T. Thirunarayanan, Dr. S. Rajkumar and Ms. V. Sundaravalli from the Centre for Traditional Medicine and Research (CTMR), Chennai.

RRA Meeting at Bengaluru

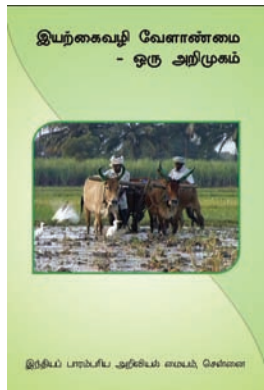
A meeting of the extended Core Group of the Revitalisation of Rainfed Agriculture (RRA) network was held at Bengaluru between 7th and 9th December, 2011. A.V. Balasubramanian participated in the meeting as a member of the group and as a Coordinator for the thematic group on seeds. Presentations were made regarding progress of various groups and discussions were held about the work plans for the coming period.

Development of Integrated Sustainable Community Farm

At the invitation of the Church Council for Child and Youth Care (CCCYC), Bengaluru, CIKS has taken up a task of developing a strategic plan for an integrated sustainable community farm near Thirukadaiyur in Nagapattinam district. CCCYC has supported the development of a farm that has been in existence for the past five years and currently they have requested CIKS to help in the development of a strategic plan to make the farm self sustaining and community managed within a specific time period. At present, CIKS has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with CCCYC and initiated the work. The memorandum was signed following a discussion between CIKS, CCCYC and Kindernothilfe (KNH), Germany along with the representatives of CMS (Catalyst Management Services) and Vrutti, Bengaluru who have also been consultants to this programme.

BOOKSTORE

New Publications, Audiovisuals and Educational Materials

**ORGANIC FARMING -
AN INTRODUCTION (TAMIL)**

This publication in Tamil provides basic information on organic farming and its need in the current scenario. It provides details on organic farming and related technologies in four different chapters - Organic farming, Organic kitchen gardening, Agrobiodiversity and Pests and pesticides. Each chapter ends with a set of exercises for students to improve their understanding on organic farming. It has been modeled in such a way to educate school students on sustainable organic farming by using it as a basic guide.

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at the address given below

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

- On 24th October, Dr. L.N.V. Viswanathan of Parampara Chennai visited us at the Chennai office.
- On 10th and 11th November, Mr. A. Sugumar, Agriculture Officer, Padappai, Kancheepuram district along with a group of 78 farmers visited Sukkankollai farm.
- Between 12th and 14th November, Mrs. Shyamala Raju, Mrs. Mini Joseph and Mrs. Lakshmi Sridhar from NABARD, Chennai visited our project area in Sirkazhi, Nagapattinam.
- On 26th November, Mr. J. Muralikrishnan from Shriram IGNOU Community College, Chennai visited the CIKS experimental farm in Sukkankollai.
- On 27th November, a group of beneficiary farmers from Sirkazhi, Nagapattinam district visited the CIKS experimental farm in Sukkankollai.
- On 6th December, a group of 25 students from Shriram IGNOU Community College, Chennai visited our Sukkankollai farm.
- On 21st December, officials from Raman Naturals, Selam visited our Sukkankollai farm.
- On 22nd December, a total of 21 students along with Mr. V. Arun from The Forest way, Thiruvannamalai district visited our Sukkankollai farm.

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