



LAUNCH OF TRADITIONAL RICE GIFT HAMPER

The Centre for Indian Knowledge Systems (CIKS), Chennai has been involved in various efforts to conserve indigenous rice varieties for over 20 years. Recently, CIKS has also launched the *Namma Nellu* (Our Paddy) programme through which CIKS is conserving indigenous rice varieties (www.nammanellu.com).

A product launch function for the release of a gift box of traditional rice varieties was organised in Chennai on 19th September 2018. The participants included representatives from FPCs, Team members from Sempulam and CIKS as well as friends, well wishers and supporters of this effort. Mr. K. Subramanian (CEO, Marutham FPC) delivered the welcome address. Following this A.V. Balasubramanian (Director, CIKS) made a presentation about the CIKS Journey from conservation and research to scaling up and marketing of cultivated traditional rice varieties. After this, Dr. K. Vijayalakshmi (Director, Sempulam) made a presentation about Sempulam and the efforts leading to the development of the product. Ms. Vijayalakshmi Das (CEO, FWFB, Ahmedabad) who was the guest of honour released the gift box and it was received by Ms. Shanthi Manickasundaram who has been a long term supporter

of efforts in this area. After this, Mr. Nitin Chordia (Retail Marketing Consultant) introduced the product.

Various persons involved in supporting and promoting this work were invited on to the stage, introduced and presented with the Gift boxes. These included – the CEOs of five FPCs, representatives of various agencies supporting CIKS including Mr. Veera Shankar (DGM, NABARD), Dr. Mahanthesh (Samunnati Finance) and Mr. Madurantakam Sathya (NTT Data, Asia Pacific Region). Mr. T.T. Hayagreevan of Turbo Energy and ABI Showatech was also thanked for his substantial support to the programme.

The launch function was followed by a lunch in which dishes made from some of these traditional varieties formed part of the menu. These included *Kullakar* (Idly and *Kuzhipaniyaram*), *Kitchili Samba* (Rasam satham, Bisebelabath and Curd Rice), *Kuzhiadichan* (Sakkarai pongal), *Seeraga Samba* (Biriyan), *Mappillai samba* (Aval Appam) and *Neelan samba* (Table rice).

For Product Information - See Page No. 4



Ms. Vijayalakshmi Das, CEO, FWFB launches the Gift Box



CEOs of FPCs



Biriyan made with Seeraga samba rice



PROJECT WATCH *A round-up of our activities*

Strengthening of Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs) - PHASE : I - IV

This project supported by Tamil Nadu Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (TNSFAC) is being implemented in Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Perambalur, Kancheepuram, Thiruvannamalai and Tiruvarur districts. Three FPCs under this project - Kanchi, Groundnut and Cheyyar have got the sanction of Equity Grant of Rs. 5 lakh per FPC from SFAC. An awareness meeting on Kuruvai Schemes 2018 was conducted on 13th July for the members of the Veerachozhan FPC. A group of BOD and progressive farmers from the Veerachozhan FPC visited the CODISSIA Agri Intex 2018 exhibition on 14th July. An International Food Expo was organised by the Tamil Nadu Food Grains Marketing Yard in Madurai between 11th and 15th August. Three Producer Companies under this project - Perambalur District Small Onion and Maize Farmers Producer Company in Peravoorani, Coconut Agro Producer Company in Thanjavur and Cuddalore District Mangalore Millet Farmers Producer Company in Cuddalore participated in the expo and put up stalls to display their products. More than 10,000 people visited these stalls. A team of BoDs and progressive farmers from Veerachozhan FPC in Nagapattinam and Veerananarayan FPC in Chidambaram also visited this exhibition on 14th August. A team from IFMR (Institute of Financial Management Research) visited the Veerachozhan and Valanadu FPCs in Nagapattinam district to get to know about their activities and status. The Annual General Body meeting of

the Veerananarayan FPC in Cuddalore district, Veerachozhan FPC in Nagapattinam district and Kanchi FPC in Kancheepuram district were held on 6th July, 4th and 17th September, respectively. At the invitation of the State Bank of India, Mrs. Subhashini Sridhar and R. Manikandan participated in a discussion meeting held on 4th September at SBI Campus in Nungambakkam, Chennai. They shared the activities of the Valanadu FPC in Nagapattinam district. Groundnut oil extraction unit constructed by the Groundnut FPC in Udayanandhal village in Thiruvannamalai district was inaugurated on 12th September. Training programmes on "Analysis of Business Activities" were conducted for the BoDs of Cheyyar and Kanchi FPCs on 6th and 7th September, respectively. In the months of July and September, meetings were organised by the Thiruvannamalai District Collector Mr. Kandasamy, IAS to review the status of loan repayments, dhal marketing by Thenpennai FPC and groundnut oil marketing by Cheyyar FPC. A training programme on Neera production was conducted for the shareholders of the Peravoorani Coconut FPC on 27th September. On 29th September, BoDs of Peravoorani FPC were trained on "Balance Sheet - Profit and Loss Statement" by Mr. Sivakumar, Auditor. Monthly review meetings of the CEOs, BoDs and LRPs were conducted regularly.

Project for the Promotion of Farmer Producer Companies Supported by NABARD

This project for the promotion of FPCs is in progress in Kancheepuram,

Dindigul, Thiruvannamalai and Ramanathapuram districts with the support of NABARD's Producer Organization Development Fund (PODF). Ten FPCs covering 7219 shareholders and 348 Farmers Interest Groups (FIGs) have been promoted and operating successfully. The Agri - Information and Service Centres established under these FPCs are providing input supply and other consumer services to the beneficiaries. Project staff participated in the project review meeting held in NABARD office in Chennai on 27th September and submitted the project completion report. Activities of the Kurinji FPC have been documented by the NABARD team from Mumbai. Seeds FPC in Thiruvannamalai district has got the crop loan of Rs. 50 lakhs from FWWB, Ahmedabad. Monthly meetings and review meetings of the BoDs, CEOs, shareholders, FIG leaders and members have been conducted regularly and activities carried out and future business plans were discussed in detail. Monitoring assessment and accounts updating were completed for all the ten FPCs.

Capacity Building of Farmer Producer Companies through Training Programmes

This programme has been granted by Friends of Women's World Banking (FWWB), Ahmedabad for providing a series of training programmes for Farmer Producer Collectives and building their capacities during January - December 2018. Two training programmes on Business plan preparation were

conducted for the beneficiaries of Melnellimarathur village of Jawadhu hills in Thiruvannamalai district on 18th July and for the members of Seeds and Kanchi FPCs at CIKS Technology Resource Centre in Sukkankollai on 9th August. A total of 40 beneficiaries including 18 women participated. The participants prepared the draft business plans for their planned enterprises. Under this programme, an impact study on FPCs and shareholders was conducted with the Seeds and Pudupalayam FPCs in Thiruvannamalai district.

Other Project Activities

- Under NABARD TDF project, monitoring visit and assessment of activities was conducted by Mr. Uma Maheswara Rao from NABCONS (NABARD Consultancy Services). NABARD DGM, Mr. Mashar visited the project villages in Jawadhu hills for monitoring the activities in progress on 31st August. 300 WADI and 150 Non-WADI beneficiaries were visited by the officials from NABCONS for the monitoring of activities. Regular processing of oil seeds and marketing of oil is being carried out through the oil extraction unit. Construction of a value addition unit and a storage godown are in progress in Jawadhu hills.
- Under *Namma Nellu* programme, conservation of indigenous rice varieties are in progress. Six review meetings were conducted. Fifty different indigenous paddy varieties have been distributed to 50 farmers for the cultivation and multiplication in samba season.
- Under Alangadu project, a new building for the evening tuition centre "*Arivu Maiyam*" has been constructed in the Alangadu village and inaugurated on 5th July. A small library has also been setup in the tuition centre. CIKS publications have been donated to this library.

NEWSROOM

Happenings and more.

Meeting with Social Venture Partners (SVP), Bengaluru

On 14th July, A.V. Balasubramanian had a meeting with two representatives of Social Venture Partners (SVP) namely Mr. Kannan Gopalakrishnan and Mr. K.L. Mukesh at Bengaluru. He discussed with them about possible ways in which CIKS can partner with SVP for work relating to Sustainable Agriculture and Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs).

Meeting with Samunnati Value Chain Finance

On 18th July, A.V. Balasubramanian visited the office of Samunnati Value Chain Finance at Chennai. He had a meeting with Mr. Hari Rajagopalan and Mr. Mahantesh about possible ways in which FPCs supported by CIKS can interact with Samunnati.

Paddy Festival - "*Nel Thiruvizha*"

On 21st and 22nd July, *Nel Thiruvizha* (Paddy Festival) was organised by Nalam Arakattalai in Sirkazhi in collaboration with Create in Thiruthuraipoondi. Mrs. Subhashini Sridhar participated in this and delivered a lecture on "Traditional Paddy Varieties - Value Added Products". More than 1000 farmers and general public participated in this programme. A stall was put up to display traditional paddy varieties and value added products.

Field Visit by Supraja Foundation Team

On 28th July, three persons representing Supraja Foundation, Bengaluru namely Dr. Venkatesh Tagat, Mr. N. Srinivasan and Mr. H.K. Lakshminarayana visited the CIKS TRC at Sukkankollai in Kancheepuram district. They had a discussion with the CIKS team as well as the CEOs and selected Board members of 12 FPCs initiated and supported by CIKS from various parts of Tamil Nadu. Possible linkages between the

FPCs and Supraja Foundation were discussed and explored.

NABARD Regional Advisory Group Meeting

A.V. Balasubramanian attended a meeting of the NABARD Regional Advisory Group that was held at Chennai on 5th September 2018. At the invitation of NABARD he made a presentation on "Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) - The Way Forward and the Role of FPOs in Increasing Farmers Income".

Interactive Workshop of Non-Profits with the Income Tax Department

On 7th September, the Loyolla College Society organised and hosted a one day workshop on "Interface of NPOs with Commissionerate of Income Tax Exemptions of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry". The participants in the workshop included the Commissioner and all the senior officials from the Directorate of Exemptions, Income Tax Department and a large number of Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs). On behalf of CIKS, A.V. Balasubramanian participated in the workshop and served as a facilitator for one of the groups during the group discussion.

Meetings with FPCs

- On 12th September, a one day meeting of 11 CEOs of FPCs supported and promoted by CIKS was held at the CIKS Technology Resource Centre at Sukkankollai in Kancheepuram district. During the meeting the progress of the work was reviewed.
- On 28th September, a meeting of the Board of Directors of Marutham Sustainable Agriculture Producer Company was held at the CIKS office at Chennai. A.V. Balasubramanian and K. Vijayalakshmi participated in the meeting as special invitees during a review of the progress of work.

TRADITIONAL RICE GIFT BOX



The products launched have the following special features.

- The Rice varieties are vacuum packed and have a shelf life of a year.
- The Gift box has six rice varieties.
- The box includes a listing of the varieties and suggestions about cooking (water required, cooking time and its suitability for various specific dishes).
- The box includes a Greeting card from the farming community and a brochure about the *Namma Nello* programme with art work specifically designed for the box.
- The rice varieties can also be purchased as individual mini boxes and customised boxes with 3, 4 and 5 varieties can also be made upon special request.

Orders can be placed with ordersempulam@gmail.com and product information and photographs can be found on the Sempulam website (<https://www.sempulam.com/products>)

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

- On 2nd July, Ms. Akila Balu and Ms. Sowmya Karthik visited CIKS office at Chennai to discuss about sustainable agriculture and development activities of CIKS in the Alangadu village of Nagapattinam district being supported by them.
- On 5th July, Ms. Girija Srinivasan, Consultant and Expert in the area of development visited CIKS.
- On 5th July, Mr. Seshadri and Mr. Patrick from ICICI Bank, Chennai visited CIKS.
- On 1st August, a team of officials from Samunnati - Mr. Prabhu, V.P. Business (Agri Enterprises), Mr. Babu, Relationship Manager and Mr. Jagadeesan, Manager visited the CIKS farm in Sukkankollai to discuss about the possibilities of providing credit facilities to the FPCs promoted by CIKS.
- On 18th September, Mr. Ashwin and Mr. Badri from CARE India Solutions for Sustainable Development in Cuddalore visited the Valanadu FPC in Nagapattinam district.
- On 27th September, Dr. Alexander Iskandar and Ms. Sherley from Sahabat Lingkungan Hidup, Bandung, Indonesia visited CIKS.
- On 28th September, Mr. Srinivasan Murali from Numeral Consulting Services visited CIKS.
- On 28th and 29th September, a group of 20 students from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru College of Agriculture & Research Institute (PAJANCOA & RI), Karaikal and Anbil Dharmalingam Agriculture College and Research Institute in Trichy visited the Valanadu FPC in Nagapattinam district.

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