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## *Follow up workshop on organic farming*

In December 2001 CIKS had conducted a Trainer's Training Programme on organic farming to NGO representatives from Southern India. We have been having constant interaction with them. On the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of January 2003 we had a two day follow up workshop for these participants at Chennai. The workshop was conducted at the CIKS office. Various NGO members explained in detail as to how they have benefited from the training and how they have been disseminating it in their work area. It was heartening to note that the training programme has had a significant impact. Various trainees have started organic farming projects in their work area and also translated our educational material into Kannada, Malayalam and Telugu and have distributed it amongst farmers. During this follow up workshop we had also requested the UNDP- GEF / SGP Coordinator Mr. Iswar Poojar, from CEE, Bangalore to interact with the participants. Mr. Iswar gave guidelines to the participants to prepare specific project proposals for funding under UNDP – GEF / SGP.



***Participants of the workshop in a Group Discussion***

### ***Board of Trustees' Meeting***

The CIKS Board of trustees' meeting took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> February at our field centre in Sukkankollai. The trustees were taken around the experimental farm and various on going activities were explained by the CIKS staff. After this a video presentation which we have made regarding our biodiversity conservation programme was shown to the trustees. The next five year programme of CIKS was also presented and discussed in detail with the trustees.

### ***New Project at CIKS***



The Department of Science and Technology has sanctioned a project on "Demonstration of Non-chemical Pest Management in Cotton : Action Research in Different Agroclimatic Zones of Tamil Nadu" for two years. This project would be implemented in the Kancheepuram, Nagapattinam and Dindigul districts of Tamil Nadu.

***For latest information on sustainable agricultural practices***

***Subscribe to "Indigenous Agriculture News" of CIKS. — Details on Page 4.***

## PROJECT WATCH

*A round-up of our activities this quarter*

### **Follow up workshop**

A follow up workshop to an earlier organic farming workshop was conducted on 8<sup>th</sup> January at our Sukkankollai farm. 30 farmers participated in this programme and shared their experiences. They also undertook to pursue organic farming in a serious fashion in future.

### **Training workshop on experimental design**

On 22<sup>nd</sup> January a training workshop for the technical field staff on experimental design and statistical methods was conducted at our office. This training was conducted by Dr. Arivudainambi, Dept. of Entomology of the Annamalai University. He explained in detail techniques for assessing the mode of action of the plant based biopesticides that we are experimenting with. He also gave excellent guidelines for designing field experiments and statistical methods for computing data. It was decided that we would collaborate with him on an ongoing basis and take his help for our experiments with biopesticides.

### **Annual review meeting**

On 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of January the core members of CIKS met together to take stock of the various

programmes of CIKS and also make a plan for the coming five years. Issues regarding policies for staff recruitment, training and upgrading skills of staff, motivation and capacity building were also discussed.

### **Visit to the COMPAS Partner in Nepal**

A. V. Balasubramanian made a visit to Nepal between 5<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> March in his capacity as the Asian Coordinator for the project COMPAS (Comparing and Supporting Endogenous Development). His visit was hosted by ECOS, one of the COMPAS partners located at Nepal, working in the Chitwan district. During the visit, he participated in the training programme for Tharu spiritual leaders that took place in Divyanagar on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> March. He also visited the experimental farm of ECOS located in Gaighat near Narayangarh. On 8<sup>th</sup> March, he delivered a talk at the Institute for Agricultural Sciences and Animal Husbandry of the Tribhuvan University (Rampur campus) on – “Conservation of Biodiversity and Bioresources: lessons from traditional knowledge” Later that day, along with Mr. Maheswar Ghimire of ECOS, he visited a group of farmers at Ujwalnagar who are involved in participatory plant breeding work with guidance from Mr. Sanjaya Gyawali,

who is a plant breeder working with a voluntary agency, LIBIRD.

### **Training workshop on organic farming**

On 18<sup>th</sup> March a training programme on organic farming was conducted at our S P Kovil training centre for a group of 43 farmers from the village of Alavai. This workshop forms part of our project on enhancing livelihood security through organic farming technologies in 3 villages in the Thirukazhukundram block of Kancheepuram district. This project is currently being supported by CAPART, Hyderabad.

The topics covered during the one day session included pests of paddy and non-chemical control, importance of organic farming and indigenous seeds and plants in pest control. A practical session on preparation of specific plant products was also conducted. This workshop was coordinated by K. Vijayalakshmi, S. Arumugasamy, M. Jayashankar and K. Subramanian.

As a part of this project organic farmers sangams have been formed in the villages of Alavai, Venpakkam & Anoor. They also met every month to discuss the implementation of the programme. .

### **News from our Farmer's Network**



Mr. Palanivel is a farmer who hails from the Arasankudi village (Tiruvarumbur taluk) of Trichy district. A part of his land is very close to the irrigation canal and there is water seepage in this land continuously. The soil type is a mixture of alluvium and

clay. In the rainy seasons the land looks almost like a pond due to water logging. Mr. Palanivel approached CIKS and got the seeds of Sambamosanam which withstands water logging. Except for 12 - 15 days throughout the duration of the crop there was water logging. In spite of this in 70 cents of land he obtained an yield of 2280 kg. of paddy. His total income from paddy and fodder was Rs.13,170/- and his expenditure was Rs.3,050/-. **His net income was Rs.10,660/- from 70 cents of land.**

#### **Contact address:**

**Mr. A. Palanivel, Arasangudi village, Tiruvarambur (via, taluk), Trichy.**

# CIKS TALK

*Seminars, Discussions, Presentations, Workshops, Fairs...*

## **Gramodaya park meeting**

On 6<sup>th</sup> January, 2003 A.V. Balasubramanian had a meeting in Chennai with Shri Vasudeo and Dr. Gana-pathy of Vivekananda Kendra for a detailed discussion and suggestions regarding developing the content for the Traditional Medicine section of – “Gramodaya Park” which is coming up in Kanyakumari at the Vivekananda Kendra.

## **Women Scientists and Entrepreneurs meet at Biotech Park**

H. Saraswathy attended a National Fair on “Women Scientists and Entrepreneurs and Shaping India’s Bio-future” held on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> January 2003 at the Biotech Park for Women at Siruseri village in Kancheepuram district. The fair was jointly organised by the Golden Jubilee Biotech Park for Women, Department of Biotechnology, Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women and M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation. The fair was inaugurated by the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. This seminar had exhaustive sessions on opportunities for women entrepreneurs in various sectors like agriculture, food and nutrition industry, pharmaceuticals, traditional medicine etc. The support offered by the

Government and Banking Sector was also highlighted. Eminent women from different walks of life delivered lectures.

## **Visit to Sarada Ashram**

On 17<sup>th</sup> January, A.V. Balasubramanian and K. Vijayalakshmi visited Sri Ramakrishna Sarada Ashram near Ulundurpet in Tamilnadu. The Ashram is located in a 160 acre campus and is actively involved in Organic Farming and Agriculture related activities.

## **CIKS Foundation Day**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> January CIKS turned 8. All the staff had lunch together with some invitees followed by a movie.

## **Meeting with Dean of GRI**

On 24<sup>th</sup> January, Professor T. T. Ranganathan, Dean – Faculty of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, Gandhigram Rural University visited our Centre. We discussed the possibility of collaborative work and we are exploring the formalities to be completed for signing an MOU for collaboration.

## **Meeting with CAPART official**

On 24<sup>th</sup> February Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Joshi, IAS

Head of the Monitoring and Evaluation Division and also the Chief Vigilance Officer of CAPART visited us with Mr. P. Srinivasan, Member Convenor, of CAPART, Hyderabad. Mrs. Joshi had a detailed discussion with A.V. Balasubramanian and K. Vijayalakshmi as to how the monitoring and evaluation could be improved.

## **Awareness programmes for NGOs**

Care Earth, a Chennai based NGO had requested CIKS to conduct an awareness programme on organic farming for about 50 farmers drawn from the villages where they are currently involved in a watershed programme.

Similarly PREPARE, a Chennai based NGO also had requested CIKS to conduct an awareness programme on organic farming for about 25 farmers drawn from the villages where they are currently involved in field based programmes. CIKS conducted a one day training programme for these farmers on 26<sup>th</sup> February and 22<sup>nd</sup> March respectively. This programme was coordinated by Arumugasamy and other field workers. After theory sessions in the morning they were taken to our Sukkan-kollai farm in the afternoon. The participants were taken around the farm and they

had a good interaction with the field staff. Farmers were quite encouraged by this programme and they look forward to collaborating with us in future.

## **Workshop on indigenous technologies at Gandhigram**

A workshop on indigenization of Indian Farming : Problems and Prospects was conducted at the Gandhigram Rural Institute on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of March. S. Arumugasamy participated in this meeting and presented a paper entitled – “Conservation of indigenous agricultural resources - the CIKS experience”.

## **Meeting for HEKS Partners**

HEKS is a Swiss based funding agency and has a coordination office at Chennai. On 11<sup>th</sup> March K. Vijayalakshmi gave a lecture to the HEKS partners from Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu on community seed banks and biodiversity conservation. The talk was followed by a video programme which was prepared by CIKS. A lively discussion took place after this. The partners of HEKS are keen to implement such programmes in their areas and expressed their interest in taking the help of CIKS to start such activities.

## VISITORS BOOK

A look at who's been dropping in at CIKS

### INDIGENOUS AGRICULTURE NEWS BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER



The newsletter **Indigenous Agriculture News** is an improvised version of our earlier newsletter "Pesticide Post". It provides information on various aspects of organic farming, indigenous methods of agriculture and alternatives to pesticides. It presents case studies of farmers successful with natural farming. It is

published bimonthly both in English and Tamil. The Tamil version is called "**Parampariya Velanmai Seidhimadal**" which is an improvised version of "Poochikolli Seithi".

#### Indigenous Agriculture News - Annual Subscription

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On 28<sup>th</sup> January Mr. Prabhjot Singh Sodhi, National Coordinator of GEF small grants programme visited us. He discussed with us regarding the outcome of the UNDP Project which has just concluded and also gave important suggestions for taking it forward. .

On 4<sup>th</sup> February Dr. Ranjit Daniels and Dr. Jayshree Venkatesan of Care Earth visited us.

On 7<sup>th</sup> February Mr. Jaganathan and Dr. Rajalakshmi of ANSA, Trichy visited us.

On 10<sup>th</sup> February Mr. Shobakanth Dass and Mr. Venkatesan of Tamilnadu Crude drug manufacturers association visited us.

On 12<sup>th</sup> February Mr. G.C. Siluvappan, National Coordinator of HEKS a funding agency based in Switzerland visited us.

On 19<sup>th</sup> February Mr. V. Ganesan, Wildlife Warden of Indira Gandhi Wildlife Sanctuary, Pollachi visited us.

Mr. Shahid Ali from Inheritance India visited us between 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> March. He was here to explore the possibilities of a CIKS collaboration with Inheritance India on land conservation projects.

Dr. Mariapia Macchi from Kuttralam visited us on 12<sup>th</sup> March to discuss the possibility of CIKS's participation in a workshop at Rome, Italy.

Mr. Sashikumar of EID Parry visited on 20<sup>th</sup> March to discuss the possibility of CIKS providing consultancy on organic paddy cultivation at Nellikuppam.

Mr. Natarajan of Trignet Software, Bangalore visited on 21<sup>st</sup> March to seek help regarding organic gardening workshop that they propose to start in Bangalore.

Ms. Kavitha Krishnan of AID-INDIA, Washington, USA visited us on 24<sup>th</sup> March to seek our collaboration to make a film on Ayurveda.

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