



BRAINSTORMING MEETING ON ORGANIC FARMING

The Centre is organizing a series of brainstorming meetings on organic farming in four districts of Tamil Nadu. The objective of these meetings is to take stock of efforts relating to organic farming, identify constraints and problems and suggest specific help that can be provided by the government, scientists and NGOs and initiatives that can be taken by farmers groups themselves. The first brainstorming meeting was held in Kancheepuram district which was organized at the CIKS Technology Resource Centre at our farm in Sukkankollai on 25th March. About twenty persons including farmers, NGO representatives and scientists attended this meeting. The major outcome of this meeting are as follows :

- NGOs should focus on capacity building of small and marginal farmers on organic farming.
- Farm scientists should undertake research on different aspects of organic farming and transfer it to the field for adoption.
- Bring farmers in the research advisory committee of universities and research institutions.



Participants visiting Sukkankollai farm

- Recognize innovations/research findings of organic farmers.
- Use Information and Communication Technology in rural areas to access the market for organic products.



Judges (CIKS Staff) tasting the food items prepared by their colleagues

CIKS TURNS THIRTEEN

The 13th CIKS foundation day was celebrated on 23rd January at our Technology Resource Centre in Sukkankollai farm. There were various programmes including Cookery competition, Quiz, Cross word puzzle and Cultural. A brief talk on progress of CIKS since inception and future vision of the organization was given by A. V. Balasubramanian. The day concluded with prize distribution for various events.



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 is implementing the second phase of the above-mentioned project with support from the Ford Foundation. Under this project, a total of 210.63 ha of land has been selected from Kancheepuram, Thiruvannamalai, Dindigul and Nagapattinam districts, out of which 138.73 ha are cultivated organically in this season. A total of 54 on-farm trainings were conducted for the beneficiaries. The participants were trained on topics such as importance of organic farming, Internal Standards, preparation of biopesticides, organic cultivation practices, uses of pheromone traps, SRI method of paddy cultivation, seed production in paddy, maintenance of soil fertility and fodder grass cultivation. Nearly 687 farmers benefited through these training programmes. On 8th and 11th February, training programmes on "Awareness on organic certification" and "Organic vegetable cultivation" were conducted for the farmers of Sitthivinayagapuram and Pagasalai villages respectively. As a component of this project, under the capacity building of NGOs, a four-day training programme was conducted for the farmers working with the NGO, SIMCODESS at Dindigul, between 13th and 16th March. The participants were trained on various organic farming technologies. On 18th March, beneficiaries of Dindigul district were taken for an exposure visit to the organic fields in Kaliyapettai and Chithravadi villages. A biofertilizer unit has been constructed and production has also been started at our Sukkankollai farm. Construction of oil expeller unit is in progress in Velukampattu village of Thiruvannamalai district.

Capacity Building on Organic Farming

This project, supported by CAPART, New Delhi is being implemented in 10 villages in the Kancheepuram district. Sangam meetings were conducted regularly and discussion on various topics took place. Sangam records were updated. Seed banks in Narapakkam and Thiruvanaikoil villages were cleaned and records updated. Paddy has been cultivated organically in Edaiyur, Narapakkam and Korapattu villages.

Paddy Organic Chain - Seed to Harvest

CIKS is implementing a pilot project on "Paddy organic chain - Seed to harvest" in Tamil Nadu with support from HIVOS, Bangalore. Monthly meetings were conducted in Chithravadi, Kolathancherry and Kaliyapettai villages. During these sangam meetings, discussion on various topics took place. Non-harvest zones have been established in the farmer's fields in Kaliyapettai village. Construction of soil testing laboratory has been completed and all equipments required have been procured. Construction of baby rice huller unit is in progress. On 20th and 27th January, two training programmes on SRI method of paddy cultivation were conducted for the farmers of Kaliyapettai and Kolathancherry villages respectively. As a component of this project, a staff capacity building training programme on "Approaches to Commercial Seed Production" was conducted by Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore between 12th and 14th February. Ten technical staff from CIKS attended this training programme. On 22nd and 23rd February, selected farmers from our project villages along with three of our staff members visited the organic farm of Mr. Anthonisamy at Puliangudi village in Thirunelveli district. Dr. Narayanasamy from the Department

of Extension, Gandhigram University, conducted an evaluation of the work done under this project between 23rd and 25th February.

DST Project on Storage Forms of Biopesticides

A DST supported project on storage forms of biopesticides is being implemented in Sirkazhi from September 2005. Bioassays have been conducted on pulse Aphids using neem oil soap solution, *Adhatoda kshaaram* and ginger garlic and chilli extract. Techniques for the management of *Spodoptera* were documented. On 21st January, a training programme on biopesticide preparation and vermicompost production was organized by a NGO named SCORD in Thiruvarur. Nearly 54 participants from 34 villages participated in this training programme.

Compas Project - Phase II

This project, supported by COMPAS, is being implemented in Kancheepuram, Thiruvannamalai and Nagapattinam districts from May 2007. Ten acres of land has been selected for the cultivation of fodder crops. To establish fodder grass nurseries, two acres of land has been selected from two villages. Experiment on seed germination is being conducted in brinjal using raw cow's milk. A report on evaluation of morphological and physiochemical traits of traditional paddy varieties was prepared with the help of Dr. A. Anandan, Annamalai University. Dr. Anandan and Dr. Sabesan of Department of Plant Breeding, Annamalai University trained eleven farmers and three of our CIKS staff on methods for the documentation of characteristics of traditional paddy varieties. CIKS staff along with four farmers visited Krishi Prayog Pariwara (KPP), Karnataka between 20th and 22nd

NEWSROOM

Happenings and more.

February. On 25th March, a brainstorming session on “organic farming – existing problems and suitable solutions” was held at our Technology Resource Centre in Sukkankollai. A training programme on “Zero budget farming” was conducted between 22nd and 25th March, in Coimbatore. Two of our farmers attended this training programme.

Improving Livelihoods of Farmers Through Organic Vegetable Cultivation

CIKS is implementing a project on “Improving livelihoods of farmers through Organic Vegetable Cultivation in the irrigated areas of Dindigul district in Tamil Nadu” with support from Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai from November 2007. Under this project, a total of thirty farmers from three villages have been selected. Orientation trainings were conducted for these beneficiaries. A total of 8.09 ha of land has been selected and crops like tomato, brinjal, ladies finger, bottle gourd, chillies, maize and sunflower are cultivated.

Technology Resource Centre Activities

The Technology Resource Centre activities of CIKS commenced from October 2005. As a part of this programme, organic farming technologies have been implemented in Thiruvallur, Thiruvannamalai and Kancheepuram districts. Beneficiaries are involved in the implementation of various organic farming technologies. New beneficiaries have been selected from Chithiravadi and Kolathancherry villages. Internal inspection of farmers fields were conducted. On 8th and 9th February, two trainings were conducted for the farmers of Vepampattu village. The participants were trained on topics like, organic cultivation of paddy and groundnut, management of pest and diseases of paddy and maintenance of organic kitchen garden.

Work in Progress at Sukkankollai

In our experimental farm at Sukkankollai, banana, sun hemp and fodder grass have been cultivated. Traditional paddy varieties cultivated during the previous season have been harvested. Experiments on “Testing the effect of neem cake on earthworm population” and “Testing the effect of different growth promoters on onion” are being conducted.

Training on Soil Science

On 5th and 6th January, a two-day training programme on “Understanding our soil” was conducted for the technical staff of CIKS in Chennai. This training programme was coordinated by Dr. Sultan Ismail, Professor and Head, Department of Biotechnology, New College and Mrs. Dhatchayani, Lecturer, Department of Microbiology, Dr. M.G.R. Janaki College of Arts and Science for Women. Participants were trained on various topics such as structure and types of soil, soil microbiology, nutrient cycles and macroorganisms of soil with major focus on earthworms.

Training at TNAU

A training programme on “Approaches for commercial seed production” was conducted by Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) between 12th and 14th February at Coimbatore. Ten technical staff from CIKS Chengalpet and Sirkazhi offices participated in this training programme. Participants were trained on various topics like, production of breeder seed, foundation seed and certified seed production and seed hardening.

Talk on Eye Donation

On 21st February, Sri A. P. Irungovel, Head - Medical Sociology Department, Sankara Nethralaya, Chennai gave a talk regarding eye care and eye donation for all CIKS staff at Chennai. He gave an outline regarding the situation with respect to blindness in India, forms of blindness that can be helped through eye donation and procedures for donating eyes.

Technology Resource Centre Consultation

The Council for Advancement of People’s Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) of the Government of India has recognized twenty three agencies throughout India as Technology Resource Centres (TRC). Currently, CAPART has undertaken a review of the functioning of the Technology Resource Centres. At the request of CAPART our Centre hosted a

consultation of TRCs from the Southern Zone on 17th March, 2008. The meeting was attended by Mr. M. S. Desalphine, the Director General of CAPART, Mr. P. N. Srinivasan, Director of the Rural Technology Division of CAPART, Mr. L. B. Singh, Member Secretary of South Zone Regional Office of CAPART at Hyderabad and representatives of the TRCs from the states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala. The meeting discussed about the functioning of the TRCs, suggestion for better relationship with CAPART and networking between the TRCs.

LIST OF AVAILABLE ORGANIC PRODUCTS

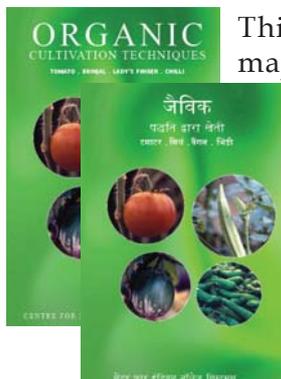
S. No	Items	Rs./ Kg
1.	Raw Rice	30/-
2.	Boiled Rice	28/-
3.	Idly Rice	21/-
4.	Chick Pea	65/-
5.	Friedgram	75/-
6.	Groundnut	50/-
7.	Groundnut Candy	160/-
8.	Groundnut Oil/lit.	135/-
9.	Sesame Oil/lit.	135/-
10.	Jaggery	35/-
11.	Flattend Rice	42/-
12.	Coconut (nos)	7/-
13.	Red Banana (nos)	5/-
14.	Vermicompost	10/-

Those interested in purchasing these products may contact 2743 0625 / 2743 1971 or 99427 96303. You can also place your orders by e-mail : ciksfo@gmail.com / samyciks1@gmail.com

BOOKSTORE

New publications and audiovisuals

Organic Cultivation Techniques - Tomato, Brinjal, Lady's Finger and Chilli - (English & Hindi)



This publication describes the major pests and diseases affecting the four major vegetable crops cultivated in Tamil Nadu. It also provides information on various non-chemical pest management methods, procedures for the preparation of various botanicals and plant growth promoters and organic cultivation techniques.

Organic Fodder Cultivation (Tamil)

This booklet gives detailed information on the organic cultivation techniques for important fodder crops of Tamil Nadu.



Organic Food (Tamil)

This publication in Tamil gives basic information about organic food. It provides answers to frequently asked questions about organic food. Besides this it also gives information on where to get organic foods in Tamil Nadu.



For copies, contact 'Centre for Indian Knowledge systems' at the address given below.

VISITOR'S BOOK

Who's been dropping in at CIKS

- On 11th January, Dr. Neils Halburg, Head, Danish Research Centre for Organic Food and Farming, Denmark and Researcher, Mr. Panneerselvam from the same Centre visited us.
- On 12th January, Mrs. Sheela Rani, I.A.S and Mrs. Radha Narayanan visited our Sukkankollai farm to get to know about the various organic farming technologies.
- On 26th January, Dr. Anandan and Mrs. Sangeetha from Annamalai University visited our experimental farm at Sukkankollai.
- On 26th and 28th January, farmers from Tribal Health Initiative, Dharmapuri visited our Sukkankollai farm to get to know about the various organic farming technologies.
- On 29th January, a group of three students from the Department of Extension, Annamalai University visited our farm and biopesticide unit in Agani village, Sirkazhi.
- On 1st February, Dr. T. T. Ranganathan, Professor, Gandhigram Rural University, Gandhigram visited us.
- On 13th February, Shri Vasudeoji, Secretary, Natural Resources Development Programme (NARDEP), Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari visited us.
- On 26th February, Dr. Sundharavaradharajan, Professor, Department of Economics, Annamalai University visited our Sirkazhi office.
- Between 1st and 3rd March, Ms. Anna Marie Nicolaysen, student of Anthropology from University of Connecticut, USA visited our field office at Sirkazhi, to get to know about the various activities of CIKS.
- On 3rd March, Mr. C. Raghu, Assistant Anthropologist, Anthropological Survey of India, Southern Regional Centre, Mysore visited us.
- On 17th March, a group of 13 farmers from Pazhaniyur and Dharmathupatty villages of Dindigul district visited our Sukkankollai farm.

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Design and Layout : R.Anand & S. Ramesh

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