



DEMONSTRATION OF ORGANIC FARMING TECHNOLOGIES

An organic demonstration farm has been setup in a farmers' field in Ilayamadhukoodam village of Sirkazhi taluk of Nagapattinam district. The major objective of this is to disseminate the organic farming technologies to a wide range of farmers in Nagapattinam district. Different crops like paddy varieties, vegetable varieties, flower crops, banana, coconut etc., are being cultivated following organic farming methods. Technologies like using pheromone traps, mechanical traps, application of biopesticides, biofertilizers, plant growth promoters, SRI (System of Rice Intensification) method of cultivation etc., are being implemented. Traditional paddy varieties are conserved in this farm. *Azolla* cultivated in the field is also used to supplement the cattle feed. A farm pond in 25 cents area is utilized for rain water harvesting and irrigation. Cow's urine from the cattle shed is collected in a pit and then released along with irrigation water. The vermicompost is being produced in a unit of 35' x 15' size and utilized for the crops.



Weeding of traditional paddy field using cono weeder

NEW PROJECTS

ECO-FRIENDLY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES TO REDUCE RAT DAMAGE IN AGRICULTURAL CROPS

The Department of Science and Technology has sanctioned a project to our Centre entitled "Eco-friendly management strategies to reduce rat damage in agricultural crops in Sirkazhi taluk of Nagapattinam district". The programme is for a period of two years from July 2010 onwards in Sirkazhi taluk of Nagapattinam district. Under this project we propose to develop eco-friendly technologies for management of rats in paddy fields, reduce the pesticide used for rat control and conserve predator population and empower farmers with these technologies for rat control.

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CREATING LIVELIHOODS THROUGH ORGANIC FARMING - A MODEL

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development has sanctioned a project to our Centre entitled "Creating livelihoods through organic farming - A model". This programme will be implemented for a period of two years from August 2010 onwards in Sirkazhi taluk of Nagapattinam district. Under this project we propose to improve the livelihoods of farmers through capacity building trainings, setting up organic inputs production units, input support for cultivation etc.

**Certified Organic Products for
A Safe and Healthy Life**

For more details : See Page - 4



PROJECT WATCH *A round-up of our activities*

COMPAS Project

This project, supported by ETC Foundation, Netherlands, is being implemented in Kancheepuram, Thiruvannamalai and Nagapattinam districts from May 2007. Under this project, a one day brain storming on "Needs and problems in SRI cultivation" was conducted in Nagapattinam district. An experiment on SRI cultivation was conducted in a farmer's field in Ilaiyankudi village using ADT 43 paddy variety. As a part of the study on gender in agriculture, a discussion was held with five women Self Help Groups (SHGs). On 22nd May, a discussion meeting was conducted on "problems faced by the farmers as consumers" at Agani. The capacity building training programmes were conducted for the members of women SHGs in Allivilagam, Pagasalai and Agani villages. An orientation meeting on formation of community organic vegetable garden was conducted in Adhamangalam village. Followed by this 10 cents has been selected and land preparation is in progress for setting up a community vegetable garden.

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

This project supported by UNDP - GEF is being implemented in Kancheepuram, Thiruvannamalai, Dindigul and Nagapattinam districts from November 2008. Monthly meetings of farmers groups were conducted. Production of value added products using traditional paddy varieties are in progress in collaboration with IICPT (Indian Institute of Crop Processing Technology), Thanjavur. A total of four training programmes on preparation of rice *appalam* have been conducted for the women SHG members of Nagapattinam and Kancheepuram districts. A case study on organic cultivation of traditional paddy varieties was undertaken. Traditional

paddy varieties *Karunkuruvoai*, *Poongar* and *Chithiraikar* have been conserved in two acres in three villages of Nagapattinam district. A total of five training programmes on POP (Persistent Organic Pollutants) reduction were conducted for the farmers of Dindigul district. The activities of the project were evaluated by the funding agency on 17th and 18th June.

Sustainable Livelihoods through Organic Farming in Tamil Nadu

This project supported by Jamsetji Tata Trust (JTT), Mumbai is being implemented in Kancheepuram, Ramanathapuram, Dindigul and Nagapattinam districts of Tamil Nadu from May 2009. Under this project, a total of 26 farmers sangams have been formed. Monthly meetings were conducted and discussion on various topics took place. ADT 43 paddy variety has been cultivated in 33.53 acres in Kancheepuram and Nagapattinam districts for certified seed production. Production of truthfully labeled (TFL) seeds of sesame is in progress in 2 acres in Kancheepuram district. A total of 408.57 acres have been selected under input support and crop loan schemes. Crops like paddy, oil seeds, pulses, cereals, chilli, cotton etc., are being cultivated under these schemes. Demonstration fields have been established in 24 acres and various organic farming technologies are being implemented. Internal inspection of farmers fields in all the four districts were completed. A total of 11 short term and ten Trainers' Training sessions were conducted for the beneficiaries. Two exposure visits were organized for the beneficiaries of Nagapattinam district to organic farms in Pune and Karnataka and a vermicompost unit and an organic fertilizers unit in Kadinelvayal village. Under the component of capacity building of NGOs, a total of eight training programmes on various organic farming technologies and organic certification

were conducted for CIRHEP in Nilakottai and Gandhi Peace Keeping Centre in Thiruthuraiipoondi. An exposure trip was organized for the members of Gandhi Peace Keeping Centre to organic farms, fields and community input production units. Efforts are on for establishing kitchen gardens in beneficiary villages. The first year work report of the project was prepared and sent to Tata trust.

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. The second phase of this project has begun from September 2009 onwards. Monthly sangam meetings were conducted and discussion on various topics took place. The production of vermicompost is in progress in the community vermicompost unit that is being maintained by Samba women SHG. On 8th April, an orientation programme on income generation activities was conducted for the women SHG members and young women of Alangadu village at Manpower Training Centre in HOPE Foundation, Tharangampadi. The Alangadu irrigation channel was desilted for about 1.25 kilometers. A total of two exposure visits were organized for the beneficiaries to organic farms in Pune, Karnataka and to the site of afforestation activities in Thiruvannamalai district. A review meeting of Alangadu irrigation network was conducted on 25th May by the Department of Agricultural Engineering, Mayiladuthurai.

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

NEWSROOM

Happenings and more.

districts. A total of 1237.46 acres has been selected from 452 beneficiaries belonging to 13 villages of both the districts and registered with Tamil Nadu Organic Certification Department for organic farming certification. Thirteen sangams have been established and sangam meetings were conducted. Three farmers of Kalathupatty village of Dindigul district are involved in the demonstration of vermicompost production and apiculture. Five training programmes on organic farming technologies have been conducted for the farmers of Dindigul district. A total of 133 sample farmers have been selected from both the districts. Soil samples were collected and analyzed for all the sample farmers and the analysis of soil health is in progress.

Increasing the Income Level of Farmers through Implementation of Organic Farming Technologies in Chilli Cultivation

This project supported by the Tamil Nadu State Council for Science and Technology is being implemented in Ramanathapuram district from December 2009. Project activities are being implemented in Keelathooval, Sambakulam, Sathanur and Keelakulam villages of Muthukulathur and Kamudhi taluks of Ramanathapuram district. Detailed baseline survey has been conducted. A training programme on organic cultivation techniques of chilli was conducted for the farmers of Kadamangalam village of Mudhukulathur taluk on 2nd June. A training module on organic cultivation techniques of chilli has been prepared. The details on organic cultivation techniques of chilli have been compiled to bring out a pamphlet.

Work in Progress at Sukkankollai

In our experimental farm at Sukkankollai, traditional paddy variety *Kullakar* has been cultivated in 80 cents following SRI method of cultivation. CO3 fodder grass and hedge Lucerne (*Velimasal*) have been cultivated in 45 cents. Vegetables like bhendi, radish, cluster beans and greens have been cultivated in demo kitchen garden. Germination test has been conducted for the 80 traditional paddy varieties conserved in the farm. Compost and vermicompost production is in progress. Experiment on management of sucking pests in Brinjal using biopesticides has been completed.

Meeting on Enhancement of Soil Fertility

As part of the efforts of the nation wide network on "Restoration of Rainfed Agriculture (RRA)" working groups have been constituted on a set of themes. The working group on restoration of soil fertility met at Hyderabad between 6th and 8th April. From CIKS, the meeting was attended by A. V. Balasubramanian, Subhashini Sridhar and K. Subramanian. The CIKS team made presentations regarding their various experiences including use of composting techniques, farmyard manure, vermicomposting, community based units for producing vermicompost, panchagavya and liquid biofertilisers as well as the use of green manure seeds. Followed by this the RRA Core group meetings were held at Hyderabad on 14th May and at New Delhi on 3rd and 4th June. The group discussed the results of the thematic workshops that were held in the area of ground water, millets and soil fertility and also the plans for future activities including pilot projects to be taken up.

Meeting with the Commissioner of Civil Supplies

On 27th May, A. V. Balasubramanian and N. Lalitha of CIKS had a meeting with Thiru K. Rajaraman, IAS, Commissioner of Civil Supplies and the Consumer Protection Network Agency of Tamil Nadu government. They had a discussion about CIKS initiatives relating to protection of rights of farmers as a consumer and to explore ways of working together with the government for a meeting between the consumer protection agencies and farmers groups.

Farmers and Consumer Laws

On 1st June, a workshop was organized on the topic 'Farmer as Consumer' for CIKS staff members and the resource persons were Ms. Akila Ramalingam and Ms. B. Poongkhulali, Advocates, Madras High Court. The meeting was attended by the technical staff of CIKS. Presentations were made about the Consumer Protection Act as well as a variety of legislations pertaining to

agriculture, farming and farmers' rights. Problems that are routinely faced by farmers were presented and discussed.

Workshop on Agrobiodiversity

A state level consultation on 'Community Agrobiodiversity Management in an Era of Climate Change' was organized by M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation in Chennai on 7th June. On behalf of CIKS, Research Director K. Vijayalakshmi participated in this meeting and made a presentation on a topic 'Agrobiodiversity Conservation in Tamil Nadu - The CIKS Experience'.

Brainstorming on Organic Groundnut Cultivation

A brainstorming meeting on organic groundnut cultivation was organized at CIKS Technology Resource Centre in Sukkankollai on 28th June. The meeting was attended by beneficiary farmers from Kancheepuram, Thiruvannamalai, Dindigul and Ramanathapuram districts and respective field staff. During this meeting various problems faced in the groundnut cultivation from seed to harvest was discussed in detail and suitable solutions were suggested for the same. This meeting was coordinated by consultant Mr. Daniel Anandraj.

Meeting on SRI Cultivation

A district level exhibition cum meeting on SRI cultivation and integrated farming was organized by the Department of Agriculture on 30th June at Mayiladuthurai. More than 1500 farmers from Nagapattinam district participated in this meeting. On behalf of CIKS, 20 farmers of Sirkazhi Organic Farmers Association and 10 members of TANWABE women SHG participated in this meeting and also put up a stall and made a display of our educational materials, organic inputs and value added products.

TALK TO US

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

ORGANIC PRODUCTS

FOR GOOD HEALTH

RANGE OF CERTIFIED ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS AND INPUTS



Arogyam Organics Private Limited based in Chengalpatt is involved in the marketing of certified organic products and inputs in Tamil Nadu. These organic products are certified by national and international certification agencies. A range of organic products like cereals, pulses, oils, spices, rice varieties, beverages etc., are available under the brand name 'Bhojanam' and organic inputs (seed, neem cake and biofertilizer) are sold under the brand name 'Valam'. It is the first company in India to produce and market double certified organic paddy seeds.

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VISITOR'S BOOK

Who's been dropping in at CIKS

- On 21st April, Ms. Revathi and Ms. Devi of Vanavil, an NGO working in Sikkal in Nagapattinam district.
- On 23rd April, Rev. Dr. R. Daniel Premkumar, Commission on Justice, Peace and Creation, National Council of Churches in India, Adoni, Andhra Pradesh visited us.
- On 3rd May, Mr. V. V. Bhat, I.A.S, Member (Finance), Space Commission / Atomic Energy Commission / Earth Commission and Secretary to the Government of India, Bangalore visited us.
- On 7th May, Ms. Sujatha Ramchandran of Prakriti Ayurvedic and Mr. K. S. Vaidyanathan, Advocate, Madras High Court visited us.
- On 12th May, a group of nine farmers and three staff members from the Department of Agriculture, Karaikal visited our field station in Sirkazhi to get to know about our activities.
- On 5th June, a group of 28 technical members from VILLGRO visited our organic research farm in Sukkankollai.
- On 19th June, Mr. K. V. Natarajan, Mr. Sridhar and Mr. Ravichandran from the Swadeshi Jagran Manch visited us.
- On 12th June, Ms. Claire Hancock from SIERRA LEONE, Africa along with Mr. Poomurugasen from KKFF, Thiruvankadu and Mr. Ulaganathan from CCD Madurai visited our Sirkazhi field station.
- On 21st June, Mr. Rajeev Khedkar of ADS, Maharashtra visited our Centre.
- On 23rd June, Mr. Paul Basil and Mr. Sabyasachi from VILLGRO visited us.
- On 25th June, Mr. C.S.R. Murthy, Assistant General Manager and Mr. A. Chandrasekar, Deputy General Manager, NABARD, Chennai Office visited us.

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