



## A SUSTAINABLE TRIANGLE

### Highlights of our project on Biodiversity Conservation, Reduction of POPs and Livelihood of Farmers

Our Centre implemented this project in Tamil Nadu with support from UNDP – GEF. The project activities were implemented in Kancheepuram, Thiruvannamalai, Dindigul and Nagapattinam districts. Some of the highlights of this project are as follows,

- Seven value added products like rice *appalam*, *vadaam*, *puttu* mix, rice *vermicelli* etc., were standardized.
- Members of 58 Self Help Groups (SHGs) were trained on value addition.
- Two women SHGs in Nagapattinam district are involved in the commercial production and marketing of value added products.
- A 225 sq. ft. structure has been constructed for the preparation of value added products in Kancheepuram district.
- More than 25 traditional paddy varieties are being conserved in the coastal villages of Nagapattinam district.
- Eleven types of five indigenous vegetable varieties are being conserved in Dindigul and Nagapattinam districts.
- Case studies on the cultivation of traditional paddy varieties were conducted.
- Intensive trainings on reduction of POPs (Persistent Organic Pollutants), organic farming and related technologies were conducted for the beneficiaries.



*Practical training on biopesticide preparation conducted for women beneficiaries*

- Capacity building trainings were conducted for the farmers and representatives of other NGOs.
- Informative calendars on "Rice biodiversity" and "Organic farming technologies" were brought out.

## ORGANIC FOOD FESTIVAL

CIKS had organized an organic food festival to create awareness about the importance and nutritional value of traditional and organic foods in Dindigul district on 26th May 2011. The chief guests of the occasion were, Bank Managers, officials from the Departments of Agriculture, Horticulture and Agricultural Engineering etc. Nearly 350 farmers participated in this function. The participants were served with different traditional dishes made out of traditional varieties of rice, pulses and cereals. During the event 11 farmers groups under the guidance of CIKS have been recognized as farmers' clubs by NABARD.





## 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. Production of certified and truthfully labeled seeds of paddy varieties, pulses, oil seeds, sunhemp and vegetables are in progress. A total of 749.94 acres are being supported through input support and crop loan schemes. Under this support scheme, crops like paddy varieties, pulses, oil seeds, cotton, chilli, banana, flower crops etc., have been cultivated. Demonstration fields implemented with a range of organic farming and related technologies are in place in all the four districts. Harvest of vegetables is in progress in the community kitchen gardens and in the demo kitchen gardens. Commercial production of vermicompost is in progress in three community vermicompost units. A total of 27 microenterprises related to organic farming technologies have been established under this project. A total of 15 short term and 11 Trainers' Training sessions on various organic farming and related technologies were conducted for the beneficiaries. We have participated in the Agri Expo 2011 held in Coimbatore. Trial production of botanicals has been taken up in the biopesticide unit constructed in Ramanathapuram district. The second year work report of the project was prepared and sent to Tata trust.

### **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 1341.59 acres in 15 villages of Javvadhu hills of Thiruvannamalai district

and Sendhurai block of Dindigul district. Sangam meetings were conducted. Entire land under this project has been registered with Tamil Nadu Organic Certification Department (TNOCD). External inspections were conducted in both the districts by TNOCD. Beneficiaries are involved in the maintenance of organic kitchen gardens and in the production of vermicompost. A total of seven short term and three Trainers' Training programmes were conducted for the beneficiaries on various technologies of organic farming, poultry farming, animal husbandry etc. An exposure visit was also organized for the beneficiaries to our project areas in Nagapattinam district. Under this project, an organic farming food festival was organized in Dindigul district.

### **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. Surveys on "livestock population and maintenance", "tree species of Alangadu" and "economics of organic cultivation of paddy and black gram" have been conducted. In *Pooncholai* nursery, saplings of 17 tree species are being maintained. Nearly 480 saplings of ten tree species have been planted in Alangadu village. The community kitchen garden raised is being maintained well with a range of vegetables and greens. In the community vermicompost unit, 11.36 tonnes of vermicompost has been produced. The women SHG members are involved in the preparation of handicrafts and paper bags. Members of the women SHG were taken for an exposure visit to the organization CAST in Tirunelveli and learnt the method of making handicrafts using *Aloe vera* fiber, hand weaving etc. On 27th and 28th May, a training programme on basket

making was conducted for the women beneficiaries.

### **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). The project activities are in progress in Adhamangalam, Pagasalai and Ilayamadhukoodam villages. A total of 17 farmers covering 20.97 acres are involved in organic cultivation of paddy, cotton, groundnut and vegetables. On 2nd April, a training programme on waste management and soil fertility management was conducted for the farmers of Pagasalai village. A training programme on SRI (System of Rice Intensification) cultivation was conducted on 29th April at Ilayamadhukoodam village by Dr. Rajendran from TRRI, Aduthurai. Training programmes on preparation of botanicals, basic aspects of organic farming and SRI method of cultivation were also conducted for the beneficiaries. Under this project, a pulveriser has been purchased and installed at the biopesticide unit in Agani village. A survey on cattle population in the beneficiary villages has been conducted.

### **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, 36 farmers belonging to 22 farmers clubs have been selected to train as farmer trainers. Details about each farmer has been collected and documented in specific format.

# NEWSROOM

*Happenings and more.*

On 6th May, a training programme on maintenance of milch animals was conducted for the beneficiaries at the Farmers Training Centre (FTC) at Thiruvavur. Dr. Shankaran, Professor and Head of FTC served as a resource person. A total of 26 farmers participated in this training programme. The beneficiaries were trained on "Maintenance of milch animals and Credit counseling" on 9th, 20th and 22nd June 2011. A total of 48 beneficiaries participated in these training programmes. Dr. A. Shankaran and Dr. Kathirselvan from Farmers Training Centre in Vilamal, Thiruvavur and Mr. Ravichandran from Rural Self Employment Training Institute (RSETI), Thanjavur served as resource persons.

## **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 Sirkazhi taluk of Nagapattinam district. Processing of grains of organic paddy varieties (64.4 tonnes) procured from the farmers is in progress. A consumer survey on organic rice was conducted in Sirkazhi and Mayiladuthurai using specific formats. Under this project, members of Sirkazhi Organic Farmers Association (SOFA) and four women Self Help Groups participated in the Agri Expo 2011 held in Coimbatore between 27th and 30th June 2011. They made a display of various organic rice varieties and value added products.

## **Work in Progress at Sukkankollai**

In our experimental farm at Sukkankollai, crops like black gram, pearl millet, fodder sorghum, finger millet, sunhemp, chillies etc. have been cultivated. Different vegetable varieties like radish, ladies finger, country bean, cow pea etc., have been raised in the demo kitchen vegetable garden. *Kullakar* paddy variety, groundnut, sunhemp and green gram cultivated during the last season were harvested. *Azolla* cultivation, compost and vermicompost production are in progress. Seed germination has been tested for 82 traditional paddy varieties conserved by CIKS.

## **COMPAS Asian Partners Meeting in Sri Lanka**

A.V. Balasubramanian and K. Vijaya lakshmi attended a meeting of the COMPAS Asian partners that was organized in Kandy in Sri Lanka between 4th and 7th April. The meeting was attended by field groups from India and Sri Lanka during which the progress of the field work and Asian Coordination work during the concluding phase of the project was discussed. Plans were also made about future activities. The COMPAS Indian and Sri Lankan partners are planning to work together with other organizations for a programme to help communities in various parts of South Asia to develop - Bio Cultural Protocols (BCP).

## **Annual Planning Meeting of NPMi**

The Annual planning meeting of NPMi Network was held at Nainital in Uttarakhand state between 7th and 10th April. More than 20 representatives from partner organisations such as CHIRAG, Samuha, Chetna Organics, Wassan etc., participated in this meeting. On behalf of CIKS our staff K. Subramanian and R. Manikandan participated and presented about the activities of CIKS in Tamil Nadu and experiences of Sirkazhi Organic Farmers Association in marketing of organic paddy. Topics like the annual requirements of Safe Harvest Company, NPM certification etc., were discussed in detail. The participants were also taken to visit the organic farm of CHIRAG, a NGO based at Nainital.

## **RRA Meeting at New Delhi**

A meeting of the Revitalisation of Rainfed Agriculture (RRA) network was held at New Delhi on 25th and 26th May. A. V. Balasubramanian attended the meeting as a member of the core group of RRA network. The meeting discussed and decided about the human resources requirement of the network for which an effort for collective recruitment was planned. This was followed by a

discussion regarding the comprehensive and thematic pilot programme that is to be launched.

## **National Workshop**

A National workshop on "Improving Soil Productivity in Rainfed Areas" was organized by Revitalisation of Rainfed Agriculture (RRA) network at Indian Institute of Soil Science (IISS), Bhopal, between 28th and 29th June 2011. More than 25 participants from various institutes such as IISS, Bhopal, ICRISAT, Hyderabad, Green Peace, Bangalore, Chetna Organics, Andhra Pradesh, SPS, WASSAN, Andhra Pradesh, AME Foundation, Bangalore etc., participated in the meeting. On behalf of CIKS, Subhashini Sridhar participated and made a presentation on "Community vermicompost production - Local initiative for recycling the organic waste - Case study of Allivilagam village".

## **Participation in Agri Exhibition**

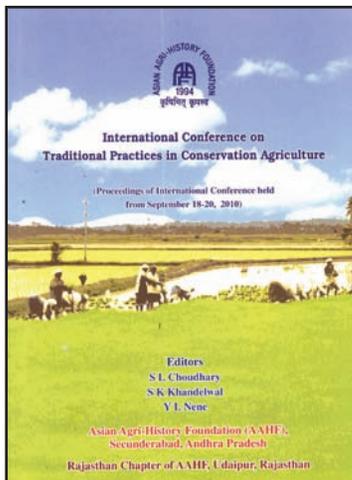
The Agri and Horticultural Exhibition 2011 was held in Coimbatore between 27th and 30th May 2011. There were stalls which displayed agricultural inputs, implements, products etc. CIKS participated in this fair and exhibited its publications, audio visuals, indigenous paddy varieties, organic products etc.

## **Visit to Sirkazhi**

On 16th and 17th June, A. V. Balasubramanian and K. Vijayalakshmi visited the field office at Sirkazhi. During the course of the two days they discussed the progress of various projects, made visits to the field locations in Alangadu village and had meetings with the office bearers of Sirkazhi Organic Farmers Association (SOFA). A. V. Balasubramanian also had a meeting with Mr. K. Venugopal, Assistant General Manager, NABARD, Nagapattinam district.

## **TALK TO US**

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

- On 15th April, Mr. Ranjit Henry of Kolam Tours visited us.
- On 16th April, Mr. Ashwin and Ms. Rathi, Consultants for data base work visited us for discussions relating to the work for creating a database on the economics of organic farming.
- On 21st April, Mr. N. S. Krishnakumar, CEO of Food Barn, Chennai visited us for a discussion regarding procurement of organic produce from farmers groups.
- On 27th April, a group of 30 students and three staff members from Maharishi Vidhya Madhir Junior College, Chennai visited our experimental farm in Sukkankollai.
- On 5th May, a group of 23 school students headed by Mr. Subhash of Loyola College, Chennai visited our experimental farm in Sukkankollai as a part of their vacation training programme hosted by Loyola College.
- On 14th May, Dr. V. Viswanathan and Mr. K. Srinivasan from Parampara, Chennai visited our farm to get to know about various organic farming technologies.
- On 30th May, Mr. Yuvaraj Galada, formerly of the National Council for Skill Development visited us.
- On 9th June, Mr. Harry Jonas and Ms. Holly Shrumm from the organisation Natural Justice, Malaysia visited us.
- On 10th June, Dr. T. T. Ranganathan, Dean, the Department of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, Gandhigram Rural University, Gandhigram visited us.
- On 14th June, Mr. S. Ramakrishna Rao, Architect from Oman visited us.

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