



IFOAM ORGANIC WORLD CONGRESS

The 17th IFOAM Organic World Congress was held in Korea between 26th September and 1st October. The pre conference was held between 26th and 28th September at Heuksalim Research Institute, Geosan County. On 26th September, in the pre conference on the theme of seeds, CIKS Research Director K. Vijayalakshmi made a presentation on "System of Rice Intensification as a Tool for Indigenous Seed Conservation and Organic Seed Production". The conference was held between 29th September and 1st October at Namyangju Culture and Sports Centre, Paldang Region, Geonggi Province, Korea. More than 3000 participants from 130 countries participated in this conference. On behalf of CIKS, Research Director, K. Vijayalakshmi, Programme Directors Subhashini Sridhar and K. Subramanian participated in this conference and also made presentations on "Community Vermicompost Units as a Tool for Promoting Organic Farming and Women Empowerment" and "Impact Analysis of an Organic Farming Project in Tamil Nadu, India". During the event the participants were taken for a bio tour around Geosan - Biofarm, Geosan Farmer Cooperative, Heuksalim Research Institute etc.



Participants visiting conservation field of indigenous rice varieties in Geosan - Biofarm

UPDATES FROM RAMANATHAPURAM DISTRICT



Distribution of accessories for the biopesticide unit

A community vermicompost unit and a biopesticide unit have been established in Pottakulam and Kattuemaneshwaram villages respectively. They were inaugurated on 14th July by Director A.V. Balasubramanian. Following this an organic food festival was organized in Agathariruppu village of Ramanathapuram district. More than 400 farmers from 15 villages participated in this function. Chief guests of the occasion were Director A.V. Balasubramanian, Bank Managers, officials from the Department of Agriculture and Organic Certification. The participants were served with 13 types of dishes made from traditional varieties of rice, pulses, cereals, millets etc. During the event agriculture implements like power sprayers and hand sprayers were distributed to the farmers' sangams.



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 in 79.44 acres. A total of 749.96 acres are being supported through input support and crop loan schemes. Demonstration fields are in place in all the four districts. A total of 174 farming families have raised organic kitchen gardens. Vermicompost production is in full swing in the community vermicompost units as well as in demonstration units. A total of 27 microenterprises established under this project are progressing well. A total of 17 short term and four Trainers' Training sessions on various organic farming technologies were conducted for the beneficiaries. Two exposure visits have also been organized. Under the component of capacity building of NGOs, three training programmes on various organic farming technologies were conducted for the NGO SKECH based in Ramanathapuram. We have participated in an organic farming exhibition between 16th and 18th July held in Vellore. An organic food festival was organized in Ramanathapuram district on 14th August. Followed by this the newly constructed biopesticide unit and a community vermicompost unit in Ramanathapuram district were inaugurated. A veterinary camp was organized in Dindigul district on 21st September at Vivespuram village.

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 1336.84 acres in 15 villages. Sangam meetings were conducted for all the 15 farmers groups and three womens' groups. Crops like different varieties of millets, maize and groundnut have been cultivated in 852.55 acres in both the districts. A total of 73 farming families are involved in the maintenance of kitchen gardens. Beneficiaries are also involved in the production of vermicompost. A total of four Trainers' Training Programmes and a short term training were conducted for the beneficiaries. An exposure visit was organized for the women beneficiaries to the community vermicompost unit in Malayandipuram village of Dindigul district. Experiments on assessing and comparing the growth and yield parameters of an improved variety (Co4 variety) with a traditional variety of Samai (little millet) and effect of Pungam cake and Neem cake on growth and yield parameters of little millet have been conducted in Javadhu hills. On 21st September, a veterinary camp was organized in the Karuthanayakanpatty village of 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. Under this third phase of the project, Alangadu irrigation channel was cleaned manually to a distance of 6.5 kms. A total of 14 farming families are involved in the maintenance of organic kitchen gardens using a variety of vegetables. In the community vermicompost unit, 3.09 tonnes of vermicompost has been produced. Production of paper bags and other handicrafts are in progress by women beneficiaries. On 17th October, the Akilandeshwari farmers' group was inaugurated. Chief guests of the occasion were Mr. K. Venugopal, Assistant General Manager, NABARD, Professor

K. Varadharajan, Rain water Harvesting Research Institute, Thiruvarur, Mr. K. Thankaiyan, Village President etc. During this event farmers shared their experiences gained through this project.

Eco-Friendly Management Strategies to Reduce Rat Damage in Agricultural Crops in Sirkazhi Taluk of Nagapattinam District

This project supported by the Department of Science and Technology is being implemented in the Sirkazhi taluk of Nagapattinam district. Under this project, rat control activity with the help of Irula expertise was taken up in 34.5 acres in Nemmel, Kandamangalam and Pagasalai villages. Traditional rat traps such as *Tharjavur kitty* and *Vil kitty* have been distributed to the beneficiaries for rat management in their fields. Data collection on traditional practices in rat management was conducted in Vettaikaraniruppu village. Project staff visited the Department of Zoology, Nehru Memorial College in Trichy and had discussion with Dr. Neelanarayanan regarding conservation of barn owl species in paddy ecosystem. Efforts are on to test the management of rats through mantras in Nemmel village. Low cost barn owl boxes have been fabricated and being installed in the project villages to encourage their population. A survey on cultivation in Kuruvai 2011 was conducted in project villages and details on rat management methods followed, money spent for rat management activities, yield obtained and yield loss due to rat damage were documented.

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). Under this project, organic cultivation has been

taken up in 38.72 acres. A biopesticide unit has been established in Aadhamangalam village and production is in progress. Training programmes on "Identification of pests and predators in paddy ecosystem" "Pest and predator population in organic and conventional fields" and "Technologies of organic paddy cultivation" were conducted for the beneficiaries. On 19th August, demonstration of laser leveler was conducted with the help of the Department of Agriculture Engineering in Mayiladuthurai. Documentation on 'Economics of paddy cultivation in Samba 2010' was done by participatory method. Organic kitchen gardens are being maintained by the beneficiaries. A veterinary camp was organized in Pagasalai village on 7th September.

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 NABARD. Under this project, 36 farmer trainers and 300 farmer sub-trainers have been selected. A total of 14 training programmes have been conducted for the beneficiaries on various topics including agro ecosystem analysis, usage of machineries in paddy cultivation, post harvest technologies, marketing, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques, seed treatment, SRI method of cultivation, credit counseling etc.

Programme for Supporting Sustainable Organic Farming in Nagapattinam District of Tamil Nadu

This project supported by NABARD is in progress in Sirkazhi taluk. On 23rd July, a capacity building programme was conducted for the partners of UPNRM project by NABARD at Dhan Academy, Madurai. Representatives of 20 NGOs, CIKS staff and representatives of Sirkazhi Organic Farmers' Association (SOFA) participated in this meeting. A survey on current status of organic foods was conducted in Chennai. An exposure visit was organized for the beneficiaries to Nagapattinam Milk Producers Company (NAMPCO). A total of 20 farmers including four women from four villages participated in this exposure trip. They learnt the methodology involved in the processing and packing of milk and production of milk based value added products.

NEWSROOM

Happenings and more.

Visit to Project Districts

On 14th July, A. V. Balasubramanian visited various project villages in Ramanathapuram district. He participated in the food festival that was attended by representatives from the Directorate of Agriculture, Department of Horticulture and bank officials. On 15th July, he visited the villages in Dindigul district and attended a meeting of farmers' representatives and also visited the organic farm of Mr. Kuzhandaivelu in Dharmathupatty village. Following this he had a meeting with the Joint Director of Agriculture in Dindigul district

Consultation Meeting with Catalyst Management Services (CMS)

An assessment of the current situation, performance and future activities of Sirkazhi Organic Farmers Association (SOFA) was carried out by CMS, Bengaluru. On 5th August, a review meeting was held in the CIKS Technology Resource Centre at Sukkankollai in Kancheepuram district. The meeting started with a report on the findings by the CMS team, comments and responses to it from the SOFA and CIKS team. This was followed by a discussion about future plans of SOFA.

Staff Capacity Building Trainings

A one day workshop on "Evolving business plans" was organized at the CIKS training centre at Sukkankollai on 6th August. The meeting was attended by the senior team members of CIKS. This workshop was coordinated by CMS Bengaluru and participating on behalf of CMS were Mr. Raghunandan, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Manuel. A detailed presentation was made on all aspects of the development of business plans and practical exercises were undertaken based on the field experiences. On 20th August, a one day training programme on "Mushroom cultivation" was organized for the technical staff of CIKS Sirkazhi office. This was coordinated by consultant Mr. Rahul.

Visitor from the Ford Foundation

On 12th and 13th September, Dr. Vasant Saberwal, Programme Officer, Ford Foundation visited CIKS to know about the Ford Foundation funded project entitled "Strengthening Sustainable Agriculture for Improving Rural Livelihoods: A Project with Focus on Dryland Agriculture". On 12th September, he made a trip to the Javadhu hills of Thiruvannamalai district. He had a meeting with various farmers and sangam leaders. He also visited the experimental plots where trials of various natural fertilizers on different millets are being carried out and also the millet processing unit that was under construction. On 13th September, he visited the CIKS Technology Resource Centre at Kancheepuram district. The meeting was held in which various technical members of the CIKS team participated along with the senior team members of SOFA (Sirkazhi Organic Farmers Association) as well as members of various women's self help group working with CIKS in Nagapattinam district. Presentations were made on various aspects of the work by members of the Self help groups, SOFA team and CIKS team members.

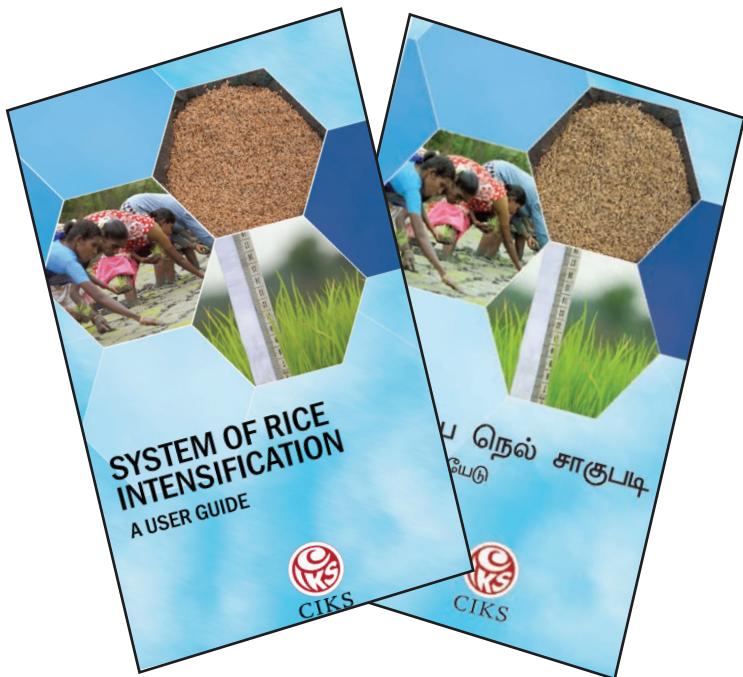
Visit of Delegates from South Africa

On 14th September, a delegation from the Northern Cape Province of the Republic of South Africa visited CIKS. The delegation consisted of Ms. Sylvia Elizabeth Lucas, MEC for Environmental Affairs and Nature Conservation, Ms. Pauline Palesa Victory Mocumi, Support to Ministry, Mr. Gothatamang Norman Shushu, MEC for Agriculture, Land and Rural Development, Ms. Ntombizanele Lovedelia Mogorosi, Support to Ministry and they were accompanied by Mr Basu from HeyMath. They visited the CIKS experimental farm at Sukkankollai. Presentation on CIKS activities on sustainable agriculture was made which was followed by a detailed round of discussion and visit around the farm.

BOOKSTORE

New Publications, Audiovisuals and Educational Materials

System of Rice Intensification – A User Guide



This book is designed in such a way that it can either be used as a book or the material in it can be separated and used as individual posters. There are seven posters which deal with basic technologies of SRI including season, seed varieties, seed selection, nursery management, transplantation, water and nutrient management, crop protection methods, pest and disease management etc. This user guide would be a useful tool for anybody to learn and adopt SRI method of cultivation.

For Copies, Contact
CENTRE FOR INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS
at the address given below

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VISITOR'S BOOK

Who's been dropping in at CIKS

- On 13th July, Ms. V. Abhirami, Agribusiness Marketing Officer, Canara Bank, Chennai visited us to explore possibilities of working with CIKS and associated farmers groups to develop agribusiness proposals.
- On 23rd July, a group of students and staff members from Maharishi Vidhya Mandhir Junior College, Chennai visited our experimental farm in Sukkankollai.
- On 26th July, Mr. A. C. Mohamed Fareed, Agricultural Extension Officer, Ampara, Sri Lanka visited us for a discussion about helping their effort to promote organic farmers through training.
- On 27th July, a group of students from the Department of Social work, Loyola College, Chennai visited our farm to get to know about various organic farming technologies.
- On 7th August, Mr. T. Ragul from the Centre for Advanced Studies in Botany, University of Madras visited our biofertilizer laboratory in Sukkankollai farm.
- On 8th August, Mr. Kalpathi S. Suresh, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Kalpathi Investments visited us.
- On 11th August, Mr. Rai Joseph, Executive Director, Young Africa International, Mozambique, Africa visited us.
- On 11th August, Dr. Kausthub Desikachar, Ms. Sandhya and Mr. Sriram of Krishnamacharya Healing and Yoga Foundation visited us.
- On 30th August, Mr. Ramakrishna Rao, Architect from Oman visited us.

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