



CIKS NEWS

The CIKS quarterly newsletter

October 2005 Vol. 6 No. 4

For more CIKS news updates, visit www.ciks.org



Organic World Congress (OWC)

The Organic World Congress (OWC) was held by IFOAM at Adelaide, Australia from 20th to 27th September. More than 1000 participants from 72 countries across the world participated in this congress. The OWC was inaugurated on 20th September and held for three days. An organic exhibition was also inaugurated on the same day. K. Vijayalakshmi and S. Arumugasamy from CIKS participated in the World Congress and presented two technical papers. The general assembly of IFOAM took place between 25th and 27th. As a member of the international task force, K. Vijayalakshmi had been involved in rewriting the principles of organic agriculture for the last two years. She presented the final draft of the principles of organic agriculture in the general assembly. After several hours of discussion, the revised principles of organic agriculture were taken up for voting. After obtaining acceptance from majority of the members, they were finally adopted as the new principles of organic agriculture. On the way back, they visited Singapore for a couple of days.

DST Core Support Groups Meeting

At the request of Department of Science and Technology, CIKS hosted a one day meeting of various NGOs which are / were receiving "Core Support" from DST on 22nd September 2005. The objective of the meeting was to review replicable technology packages generated by the NGOs and evolve projects to identify areas that need support to take them to completion. Representatives of eight different NGOs from Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry and Kerala attended this meeting. Dr. Raghunandan and Dr. Subodh of Centre for Technology Development, New Delhi and Dr. V.C. Goyal, Head of the Science and Society Division, DST were also present for the meeting.



K. Vijayalakshmi addresses the gathering.



For details call 98403 57487 or visit www.ciks.org/arogyam.htm



PROJECT WATCH *A round-up of our activities*

Organic farming festival at Thiruvannamalai

A review of the Ford supported project was taken up on 30th July, where all the district coordinators presented the highlights of the programme. (For highlights, see page 4) In all the three districts- Kancheepuram, Tiruvallur and Thiruvannamalai, more than 90% of the farmers use organically cultivated indigenous varieties. Farmers have also got a good price for their produce.

During July and September, two trainer's training programmes (TTP) were conducted for the beneficiaries of all the three districts. In the first TTP, Dr. Gowtham, the ayurvedic physician trained the farmers on preparation of ayurvedic medicines. In the other TTP, organic farmers from various districts like Mr. Gomathinayagam and Mr. Antonyswamy from Puliyangudi, Mr. Sundarraman from Erode and Mr. Mukundan from Chengalpet shared their experiences on organic farming with our farmers. Bank officials also participated in this training programme and provided information on the role of banks in providing support to farmers.

An organic farming festival was organised at Thiruvannamalai on 13th September. Mr. Sathyaprada Sahoo, IAS was the guest of honour. The Joint Director of Agriculture Mr. Kothandapani, the AGM of NABARD Mr. Shankaranarayanan and the Tasildar participated in this function. Agricultural implements were distributed to the sangams and prizes were also distributed for the best performing sangam. The seed banks and a biopesticide unit constructed in the villages of Tiruvallur, Thiruvannamalai and Kancheepuram districts were also inaugurated during August and September.

CAPART PC project

As a part of the CAPART project for "Enhancing Livelihood Security through

Organic Farming Technologies" in 10 villages of Kancheepuram district, trainings on organic farming was conducted for the sangam members of Senthankulam, Sithalamangalam, Edaiyur, Korapattu and Thiruvanaikovil. In these trainings the farmers were exposed to organic cultivation of rice and vegetables. They were also trained on several techniques to improve soil fertility. Inputs like paddy seeds, vegetable seeds, neem cake and biofertilizers have been provided to the beneficiaries. About 40% of the beneficiaries have undertaken cultivation. Sangam meetings are being regularly held in all these villages.

Vrkshayurveda for Vegetables

Under the DST supported project on "Use of Vrkshayurveda for Vegetable Cultivation", data of the experiments conducted during the previous crop season were consolidated and several new experiments have been designed for the coming season. In Patharakudi village, vegetables such as beans, bottle gourd, brinjal and ladies finger have been cultivated in half an acre of land. Discussions were held with Dr. Manivannan of Annamalai University regarding the collection of indigenous vegetable varieties. Subhashini Sridhar and P. Krithika visited the library at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University to obtain reference materials.

Compas project on Endogenous Development

- A.V. Balasubramanian made a visit to Sri Lanka between 2nd and 8th August. He had discussions with the Compas Sri Lankan Coordinator, Mr. K. A. J. Kahandawa and made a visit to the field area of the Sri Lankan partner, NRDF (Nawla Resources Development Fund) on 3rd August. The next day, he attended a meeting of all the Sri Lankan partners held at Kandy. A meeting on "Traditional Sciences and Technologies" was

organized by CERD, Sri Lanka in Kandy between 5th and 7th August. A.V. Balasubramanian participated in this meeting and made a presentation entitled "Walking on two legs and seeing with two eyes: Reflections on the blending of traditional and modern systems in India".

NEW PROJECT

FAO intercooperation project

FAO, New Delhi and National Center of Organic Farming (NCOF), Ghaziabad together conducted a two-day workshop on the 18th and 19th July at Ghaziabad to finalise the Intercooperation project that FAO plans to take up with the Government of India. Representatives from five states, NCOF and FAO staff attended this meeting. A.V. Balasubramanian and K. Vijayalakshmi participated in this workshop and made presentations on "The status of organic farming in Tamil Nadu" and "Problems in upscaling of organic farming" respectively. CIKS has been assigned the task of developing package of practices for organic cultivation of four crops in Tamil Nadu. We have started putting together various organic cultivation details for Paddy, Groundnut, Bhendi and Tomato.

Storage forms of biopesticides

CIKS has launched a new project on "Storage forms of biopesticides" at Sirkazhi with support from the Science and Society Division of the Department of Science and Technology. As part of this project, we would be standardizing the preparation and shelf life of biopesticides as per ayurvedic approach. We would also impart training to the farmer groups on the method of preparation. We have started with the rearing of Spodoptera and Aphids in the laboratory for conducting various bioassays. Our staff are being trained by Dr. Arivudai Nambi on the rearing procedures. Various experiments are being planned with the different extracts. Insect boxes and herbarium are also being prepared.

NEWSROOM

Happenings and more.

- In the insect rearing laboratory at Sirkazhi, Spodoptera is being reared and various bioassays are being conducted to test the efficacy of biopesticides. Dr. Arivudai Nambi of the Entomology Department, Annamalai University visited the lab on 13th July. He gave suggestions on how to avoid NPV infection in the cultures. On 26th and 27th September, A.V. Balasubramanian and R. Sridevi visited Sirkazhi to review the laboratory work.

- Under the Compas programme, three farmers in Narapakkam village are being supported for complete conversion to organic farming. On 21st July, training on organic farming was conducted for these farmers and on 27th September, they were taken for an exposure visit to the organic farm of Mr. Sundarraman at Sathyamangalam, Erode district. Our field staff R. Ayyasamy and V. Suresh accompanied them during their visit.

Restoration work in Tsunami affected area

In connection with the restoration work taken up in the tsunami-affected area in Nagapattinam district, experiments are being conducted with groundnut and indigenous paddy varieties. Kundali, a traditional rice variety is being cultivated on an experimental basis in one acre of land in the Koozhaiyar village. A skimming well has also been successfully established in this village. Bore well facilities were provided for two farmers by the centre. Twenty five farmers have been selected and they have been supplied with the vegetable seeds. A meeting on restoration work in agriculture was conducted by Navdanya, New Delhi at Nagapattinam. Our Sirkazhi staff participated in this meeting.

Work at Sukkankollai

Various activities related to organic farming are being undertaken in our experimental farm at Sukkankollai. For the first time, Azolla cultivation has been taken up. In the in-situ conservation centre, about twelve traditional paddy varieties have already been transplanted and the nursery has been raised for 28 other varieties. Vegetable garden has also been set up in the farm. Ten varieties of four different types of vegetables have been sown in the garden.

Paddy chain workshop

On 4th and 5th of July, a two day workshop was conducted by HIVOS in Hyderabad to discuss and understand the entire paddy chain from seed to harvest. CIKS was one of the core committee members for this meeting. A.V. Balasubramanian participated in this workshop and made a presentation. Besides this he visited the National Institute of Nutrition and met scientists there.

Entrepreneur's development programme

An entrepreneur's development programme was conducted by the Annamalai University on 19th July. Our Sirkazhi staff Subhashini Sridhar and R. Maheswari participated for a day in this ten day workshop conducted for the undergraduate agriculture students. They gave a talk on preparation of plant extracts and its possibilities for income generation.

CIKS at Agri Expo

Agri expos were held at Madurai and Thiruvannamalai in July and August respectively. Our staff participated in these expos and stalls were put up in these expos where our books, rice and other products were exhibited and sold.

Round table on Seeds Bill

On the 23rd July, a one day Round table was organized by Green Foundation, ATREE and BAIF at the National Law School of India, Bangalore. The meeting was basically to discuss the ways in which the proposed "Seeds Bill 2004" would affect farmers rights and to come up with suggestions to make it more farmer friendly. K.Vijayalakshmi participated in this meeting.

Visit to watershed areas

NABARD proposes to introduce watershed development programmes in some new districts. Kancheepuram has been identified as one of the new districts. An exposure visit to an ongoing project was arranged by NABARD for the prospective NGOs identified by them for the implementation of the programme.

S. Arumugasamy and P. Kalidoss participated in this two day visit to the project of Bhomi Trust at Natrampalli in Vellore on 28th and 29th of July.

Arogyam promotion programme

In connection with the Arogyam promotion programme, our sales executive S. Sivakumar visited Pondicherry and Coimbatore and discussed possibilities of marketing organic rice with supermarkets. He also visited the AVP trust. We participated in an organic festival organized by Ahumcaara, Chennai. On 26th August (Krishna Jayanthi day), stalls were put up at various branches of Odyssey and free samples of organic aval (flattened rice) was distributed to around 2000 customers. The response was good.

Visits and trainings

- Based on the experience gained from the recent Thailand workshop, Subhashini Sridhar conducted a training programme on farmers field school for our field staff.

- On 29th August, Mrs. Logeshwari from Indian Farming Insurance Corporation conducted a workshop on Insurance related to Agriculture for our staff in Chengalpet

- On 5th and 6th September, A.P. Gnanasekar and S. Arumugasamy visited the Technology Resource Centre at Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari. They also visited the medicinal plant nursery at Athmanilayam.



Talk to us.

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

ENHANCING FOOD SECURITY THROUGH CAPACITY BUILDING FOR ORGANIC FARMING - PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

- After cultivation for two seasons organically, farmers have observed tremendous changes in the quality of the soil. This has increased their enthusiasm for organic farming.
- Several farmers have come forward to double the area of cultivation organically even without project support.
- Cultivation expenses have come down by 20 - 30% and expenses for pesticides have come down by 60%.
- All the beneficiaries have learnt to establish home gardens in their backyards and get good organically cultivated indigenous vegetable varieties for home consumption. The nutritional security of the household has been ensured. Women farmers get vegetables worth Rs. 300 - 350 per month. Additional income is also raised through sale of vegetable seeds.
- Members save a particular amount every month. As a result, borrowing from outside agencies for a higher interest rate has decreased. Because of the collective savings that the farmers have put together banks have also come forward to provide them loans for a variety of agricultural activities.
- Because of the reduction of cultivation costs farmers have reduced borrowing from outside for agricultural purposes.
- The training programmes conducted under the project have empowered farmers with organic farming technologies.
- Some of the trainees are already training others in the villages on several biopesticide preparations and compost preparations.

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

- On 8th July, Dr. V. Sujatha of the Dept. of Sociology of JNU, New Delhi visited us.
- On 8th July, Dr. G. Raju of GMCL visited us and appraised us regarding the medicines manufactured by GMCL.
- On 26th July, Mr. Ranjit Henry of Kolam, Chennai and Malaya Iletto of People tree, Tokyo visited us. They addressed us on organic fair trade of cotton done by People tree.
- On 5th August, Dr. Ramalakshmi Dutta of Vivekananda Biotechnology Institute, West Bengal and Mrs. Deepavarma of MSSRF visited our farm at Sukkankollai.
- On 10th August, Mr. O. B. Ramasubramanian of SAMANVAYA group visited us for a interview in connection with the COMPAS programme.
- On 17th August, six researchers and 14 farmers from the Pondicherry Science forum visited our biopesticide unit at Sirkazhi.
- On 19th August, Mr. Griff from the Regional Centre for Organic Farming, visited us.
- On 3rd September, Prof. T.T. Ranganathan, Dean faculty of agriculture and animal husbandry of Gandhigram Rural University, Gandhigram visited us.
- On 19th September, Mr. Vikram Bokey, Chairman, Maharashtra Organic Farmers Federation (MOFF) and Mr. Ashith Wele of Nomin Agro Biolimited, Pune visited us.
- On 25th September, as an exposure trip on organic farming, a group of 36 farmers from Malaysia visited our farm.
- On 28th September, five members from Sri Aurobindo Society visited our farm.

Editorial Team : Dr. K. Vijayalakshmi & T.D. Nirmala Devi

Design and Layout : R.Anand



Real-world solutions from traditional science.

30 Gandhi Mandapam Road, Kotturpuram,
Chennai - 600 085. INDIA
Phone : 91-044-24471087 / 24475862
Fax : 91-044-24471114
E-mail : ciks@vsnl.com
<http://www.ciks.org>

To

Book-Post