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CIKS AT IFOAM

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movement (IFOAM) has constituted an International Task Force for rewriting the principles of organic agriculture. The first task force meeting took place at the IFOAM head quarters in Bonn, Germany on 4th and 5th of May. K. Vijayalakshmi, the Asian representative of the Task Force attended this meeting along with other members from USA, UK, Senegal, Africa, Israel, Peru, Australia and Germany. The task force has put together an initial document which would be modified after receiving comments from the consultative group members.



Task Force members in action

COMPAS ASIAN PARTNERS MEETING

A meeting of all the Asian partners of the Compas programme was hosted by CIKS at Chennai between 19th and 21st May. All the Asian partners, the Asian Regional and International Coordinators were present for the meeting. On 19th morning, there was an introductory session, finalisation of programme agenda and general orientation to the meeting by Mr. A.V. Balasubramanian followed by presentation of Compas - past, present and future and agenda for group discussion by Mr. Bertus Haverkort. Mr. Laurens made a presentation on training, upscaling and capacity building. This was followed by presentations on topics of University consortium, Strengths of each partner, Linkages, Mass media usage, Policy dialogue and Use of local language in publications. Each presentation was followed by a brief discussion. The partners shared experiences regarding the progress, worked out methods for common programmes in areas of mutual interest and agreed on a time table for reporting and preparation of the proposal for the next phase that commences in January 2005.



Participants in a training programme at CIKS farm

PROJECT WATCH

A round-up of our activities this quarter

Trainings at Sukkankollai

As a part of our HIVOS project on "Establishing kitchen gardens to improve the nutritional security of households", organic farmers sangams have been set up in ten villages in the Madurantakam taluk. Fifty women farmers from these sangams were provided with advanced training on organic vegetable and herb cultivation. Theory and practical sessions on uses of medicinal plants was also conducted for the same group at Sukkankollai in May and June.

In connection with this project, a series of training programmes were conducted between 5th and 9th April. Farmers from five villages of Madurantakam taluk participated in the training programme. They were trained on the importance and methods to develop home gardens, use of herbs and natural methods of pest control and crop protection.

Organic cotton cultivation

Our centre has been implementing a DST supported project on "Organic cotton cultivation in three different agroclimatic zones of

Tamilnadu". The project is being implemented in three districts of Tamilnadu. The first year of the project has been successfully completed in Nagapattinam and Dindigul. The project has just been launched in three villages of Kancheepuram district. In this connection, a model cotton cultivation area of fifty cents size has been set up in Kolathancheri village. This will serve as a demonstration centre for the full range of technologies for organic cotton cultivation. A poster booklet on organic cotton cultivation in Tamil has also been brought out under this project with partial support from DST.

Testing of biopesticides

Under the Compas programme, an Insect Rearing Laboratory has been set up in our field station at Sirkazhi. Dr. Arivudainambi of the Entomology Department, Annamalai University is providing the technical guidance in this regard. The laboratory is mainly to test the efficacy of biopesticides by performing bioassays. In connection with this, A.V. Balasubramanian and R. Sridevi visited Sirkazhi on 19th and 20th April. They had detailed discussion with Subhashini Sridhar

regarding the work in the insect rearing laboratory and Vrکشayurveda experiments to be conducted in Sirkazhi. They also met Dr. Arivudainambi to review the progress of the insect rearing laboratory. They made a visit to the experimental field at Patharakudi and the biopesticide unit at Agani.

Experiments at Sirkazhi

Our centre has been conducting experiments based on Vrکشayurveda for pest control and crop protection. In this crop season, Vrکشayurveda experiments are being carried out in the village of Patharakudi at Sirkazhi. Plant products are being tested out for control of fruit rot in chillies. In addition, growth promotion experiments that were being carried out with Amaranthus crop are being reviewed.

Oxfam project completed

CIKS had undertaken a project with support from Oxfam on "Preparing IEC material on organic cotton farming". This project has been completed successfully and a booklet on organic cotton cultivation has been prepared by CIKS. The poster booklet has been produced both in English and Telugu. For details, refer page-4 of this newsletter.

Compas Partners at Bangalore

A.V. Balasubramanian and R. Sridevi visited Bangalore between 16th and 18th May for discussion with the Compas partners at Bangalore. They were joined by Mr. Bertus Haverkort and Mr. Laurens from the Compas International Coordination team. They visited the office and field area of the two Compas partners namely, FRLHT and GREEN Foundation.

UNDP CCF(II) Programme

UNDP is in the process of identifying potential partners for the UNDP Country Cooperation Framework II programme on "Medicinal plants for livelihood". As part of this effort, Dr. Divya Mudappa, UNDP consultant visited CIKS on 2nd and 3rd June. She had discussions with our technical staff and made a visit to our field area.

TRC Expert Committee at CIKS

In connection with the proposal submitted to CAPART for being recognised as a "Technology Resource Centre", an expert committee consisting of three members visited CIKS office and field area between 6th and 8th May. They held discussion with a cross section of farmers and beneficiaries in the field.

CIKS TALK

*Seminars, Discussions, Presentations,
Workshops, Fairs...*

Team Day at CIKS

Team day was celebrated at CIKS on 14th April. The follow up action regarding the programmes and activities of CIKS that took place during the Foundation Day was reviewed. There was a review of the training programme that was conducted by Swami Someswarananda. The various events that can be hosted to celebrate the tenth anniversary of CIKS was discussed in detail.

Research on Epilepsy

Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram (KYM) has undertaken a project on "The use of Yoga as supplementary therapy for the treatment of Epilepsy" funded by Central Council for Research in Yoga and Naturopathy. At the invitation of KYM, A.V. Balasubramanian attended the meeting as a member of the panel for the research project on 25th April. The yoga teachers and research staff of KYM made a presentation on the project before the panel members.

At Nagapattinam

At the request of CAPART, A.V. Bala-

subramanian carried out a post funding evaluation of a project on 21st April. This project is being executed by an NGO, SOSOD (Society for Social Development) based in Nagapattinam.

Organic Farming Exhibition at Pattukottai

An exhibition depicting different aspects of organic farming was conducted at Pattukottai on 18th and 19th of May. This was attended by our field staff K. Subramanian and C. Sathya. CIKS publications and indigenous seed varieties were displayed in the stall. There was a good response from farmers.

Round Table on Cotton Cultivation

APCOT-Andhra Pradesh Consultative Committee on Cotton conducted a two day round table on 'Cotton Cultivation' at the Central Research Institute in Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA), Hyderabad on 8th and 9th June. This was attended by our technical staff Subhashini Sridhar. She also made a presentation of our work experiences on organic cotton cultivation. Nearly thirty

representatives including farmers, NGOs and academics involved in cotton cultivation participated and shared their experiences in the meeting. The representatives were from the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

International Congress of Ethnobiology

A.V. Balasubramanian attended the 9th International Congress of Ethnobiology that was hosted by the Department of Anthropology at the University of Kent, Canterbury, England between 13th and 17th of June 2004. As part of a panel that was organised on the theme of - "Asset Building and Community Development in Rural landscape", A.V. Balasubramanian made a

presentation on the theme of - "Building on traditional agricultural knowledge to strengthen capacity for sustainable agricultural practices: Experiences from Tamilnadu in India".

Agri Expo at Coimbatore

Agri Expo - Agriculture, Dairy and Poultry Exhibition was conducted by Interface Trade Fair Pvt Ltd., Coimbatore between 17th and 20th June. T.D. Nirmala Devi and T. Subbulakshmi participated in the exhibition. All our publications were available for sale and the indigenous rice varieties were displayed in the exhibition. Besides this, the various activities of CIKS was also explained to the visitors. There was an overwhelming response to this exhibition.

UNDERSTAND SOCIAL ACTION & CHANGE THROUGH GANDHI

When Gandhi could sway millions and change the country, why can't you?

SAMANVAYA, a consulting firm providing knowledge services for the development sector is about to conduct a course entitled - "SwaRaj - Understanding and Initiating Social Action". The course is being scheduled between 9.00 - 12.00 p.m. in the weekends of August and September 2004 at Chennai. The course includes workshops, panel discussions and field visits. The last date of registration for the course is 15th July 2004. The registration fee is Rs. 2,500/-

For more details :

Contact Ms. Priya Nagesh @ 91-44-2555 0781 /
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BOOKS, VIDEOS & EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

Organic Cotton Cultivation



Cotton suffers attack of over 40 insect pests. The crop consumes highest share of insecticides and pesticides of the country. Organic cultivation of cotton reduces the use of these hazardous chemicals and enriches the soil nutrients.

This booklet "Organic cotton cultivation" 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. The first

three posters highlight identification of important pests of cotton and their control measures. The fourth poster deals with identification of important diseases of cotton and their control measures. Poster five deals with nutrient deficiency and nutrient management. Posters six to nine deal with pest management techniques and poster ten explains in detail composting techniques. In poster eleven and twelve general techniques for organic cotton cultivation are discussed.

This booklet has been produced in English and Telugu for Oxfam and in Tamil by CIKS with partial support from DST. Please contact us for copies in Tamil.

VISITORS BOOK

A look at who's been dropping in at CIKS

On 7th April, Dr. Ramachandra Pillai of ARTS Division, CAPART visited us to discuss the Technology Resource Centre proposal of CIKS and the plans for prefunding evaluation.

On 9th April, Ms. V. Saras-wathi and Ms. Usha Narayanan of KYM visited our office to seek our involvement in the KYM research programme on Epilepsy.

On 21st April, Dr. Vijayaraghava Chariar of IIT, Kharagpur visited us.

On 22nd April, Dr. Jayveer Anjaria, a well known expert on Ethnoveterinary medicine visited us.

On 23rd April, Dr. Ramasubramanian, Department of Theoretical Physics, Madras University visited us.

On 1st May, Dr. Sultan Ismail visited our Sukkankollai farm to provide technical inputs for vermicomposting.

On 3rd May Mr. Ranvir Shah, accompanied by a team of his technical colleagues visited us to seek a long term arrangement for consultancy from CIKS for their organic farming activities.

On 18th May, a group of farmers from AARRC Trust based in Dindigul visited our farm to learn about organic home gardening.

On 22nd May, Mr. Laurens of COMPAS International Coordination visited the CIKS farm .

On 4th June, Mr. Paul of Rural Innovations Network visited us to seek our collaboration in assessment of innovations relating to herbal products.

on 7th June, Ms. Priya and Mr. Ramasubramanian of SAMANVAYA visited CIKS to seek our involvement in the forthcoming training programme entitled - S W A R A J .

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