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Organic Farming Festival



Mr. T.S. Sridhar, IAS, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, releases the publication

was put up by CIKS. Dishes prepared out of indigenous varieties were distributed to the visitors. Mr. A.V. Balasubramanian, Director of CIKS welcomed the guests which was followed by the Research Director of CIKS Dr. K. Vijayalakshmi providing details of the work of CIKS. The function was presided over by Mr. T.S. Sridhar, IAS, Secretary of State for Agriculture. In his presidential address, he stressed the need of shifting from chemical to organic farming. He also praised the work of CIKS for disseminating the technologies in a very simple manner that it can be understood even by a layman. Mr. Sridhar honoured Mr. V. Jeyachandran and his family for donating land for the construction of community seed storage structures. Mr. K. Dhanavel, IAS, Director of Horticulture gave a special lecture on organic farming and horticulture. In his lecture, he stressed the importance of organic farming for horticultural crops. Mr. P.N. Srinivasan, Director of CAPART, listed out in detail the various schemes of CAPART for rural people. He also highlighted the importance of people's participation in most of these programmes.

During the function, sprayers and other agricultural implements, materials required for the biopesticide unit were distributed to the members of the farmer's sangams by the VIPs. A poster booklet on "Organic Methods of Pest and Disease Management" in English, Tamil and Hindi supported by CAPART was also released during this occasion. More than 700 farmers attended the festival.

An "Organic Farming Festival" was conducted by CIKS in collaboration with CAPART on 19th September at Singaperumal koil. The function was to mark the inauguration of 3 public facility centres at villages of Anoor, Alavai and Venpakkam in Thirukazhukundram block of Kancheepuram district under the CAPART Public Co-operation scheme. With the financial help of CAPART, CIKS has constructed a community seed storage structure at Alavai, a rural library at Anoor and a biopesticide unit at Venpakkam. On 19th September morning, these three facility centres namely the rural library, seed storage structure and a biopesticide unit was inaugurated by Mr. P.N. Srinivasan, Director, CAPART, New Delhi in the respective villages. This was followed by the festival at Singaperumal koil in the afternoon.

As a part of the festival, an exhibition on organic farming



Mr. P.N. Srinivasan, Director, CAPART at an exhibition stall

PROJECT WATCH

A round-up of our activities this quarter

Enhancing Livelihood Security Through Organic Farming

Our centre has been implementing a project in three villages in the Thirukazhukundram block of Kancheepuram District to enhance the livelihood security of small and marginal farmers by providing a package of organic farming technologies. As a part of this project three training programmes on organic farming were conducted. Training programmes were conducted on 7th, 9th and 12th of July for the beneficiaries of Alavai, Anoor and Venpakkam villages respectively. These training programmes were co-ordinated by our field staff. The farmers were given orientation on different aspects of organic paddy and vegetable cultivation. Training programmes included

both theory and practical sessions.

UNDP Meeting at New Delhi

On 6th August, A.V. Balasubramanian visited Delhi to attend a meeting of the Steering Committee of the UNDP programme on medicinal plants conservation in seven identified states in the North East and Central India that is being implemented by FRLHT.

Training on Biopesticide Preparation

In connection with the setting up of a plant based biopesticide unit in the village of Alavai in Thirukazhukundram block under the CAPART project, a one day training on the preparation of different plant based biopesticides was conducted at our Sukkankollai farm on 21st August. Mr. Arumugasamy co-ordinated this training workshop.

Participants of this workshop were practically trained to make different biopesticides. Issues such as understanding and assessing the demand and potential for sales, distribution of profits between members of the unit, co-ordination of the group members were also discussed. A biopesticide preparation unit has already been set up in the village of Venpakkam in Thirukazhukundram block for these members. This has been set up with the assistance of CAPART-Hyderabad.

Workshop on organic cotton cultivation

As a part of implementing the DST's project on organic cotton cultivation in Kancheepuram, Nagapattinam and Dindigul districts of Tamilnadu, CIKS conducted a two day training programme on "Organic Cotton Cultivation" in Kodai Road. Mr. Arumugasamy, Mr. Subramanian, Mr. Murugan and Dr. K. Vijayalakshmi of CIKS served as the resource persons. A special lecture on "WTO and Indian Agriculture" was

delivered by Dr. T.T. Ranganathan, Dean of Gandhigram Rural University during the Programme. Forty farmers from different villages of Dindigul participated in this training and got benefitted.

Meeting for Development of a User's Package

On 9th September, a meeting was held at CIKS consisting of members of the NGOs from People's Agricultural Farm (PAF), Pudukottai, Society for Rural Development (SRD), Dharmapuri and FRLHT, Bangalore. PAF and SRD, the NGOs working with FRLHT's MPCP had expressed interest in developing a user's package on biopesticides and nutrition. This meeting was to discuss the role of CIKS in developing this package. At the end of the meeting, it was decided that CIKS would conduct ten Training of Trainer's (TOT) for these two NGOs and help develop and use these packages. The trainings have already commenced.

Indigenous Rice for Filariasis Control

Filariasis is a disease spread by mosquitoes. Even modern medicines do not have a complete cure for this disease. During our field work, we came across a very interesting piece of information which suggests that an indigenous variety called "**Karungkuruvai**" could provide a cure for filariasis. Mr. Murugadasan, hails from the village Thiruppurambiam which is 5 kilometres from Kumbakonam. According to him, the Karungkuruvai paddy is boiled with cactus milk (Thirugukallipal), cow's milk and honey and made into a lehyam. This is stored in a mud pot. People who are afflicted with filariasis should have it for five days continuously and after an interval of three days, again for five days. During the intake of this medicine, certain dietary restrictions are suggested. Mr. Ramu of the same village had already undergone this treatment 15 years back and has been cured. He is now 80 years old. This paddy variety was cultivated near Kollidam and currently they do not have this variety. CIKS has from its collection given seeds of Karungkuruvai to a farmer Mr. Gunasekaran of this area for cultivation in 20 cents. The method for preparing the lehyam using Karungkuruvai also finds a reference in the ancient tamil text "**Pulippani Vagadam 500**".

CIKS TALK

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

Herbal Expo at Chennai

Voluntary Health, Education and Rural Development Society (VHERDS) in association with CAPART organised an International Herbal Expo and Seminar from 4th to 6th July at Chennai Trade Centre. H. Saraswathy attended the session on Research and Development.

Training on organic cotton cultivation

On 22nd and 23rd of July, S. Arumugasamy and Subhashini Sridhar attended a two day training session on organic cotton cultivation at Central Institute for Cotton Research at Coimbatore. The Director of the institute Dr. T. Rajendran and his colleagues shared their experiences on organic cotton cultivation. This was followed by a useful interaction and visits to various departments of Tamilnadu Agricultural Universities.

Aurobindo Ashram Organic Farm

On 28th July, A.V. Balasubramanian and Dr. K. Vijayalakshmi visited the Aurobindo Ashram Organic Farm located in the village of Pillayarkuppam in Pondicherry. During the visit, they had a detailed discussion with the Farm Manager Mr. Mahindra Pal regarding the field activities and in particular about the traditional practice for clonal propagation of

paddy. The visit was combined with a visit to the bio-village project of MSSRF located in the same village.

Visit to Gandhigram and Madurai

A.V. Balasubramanian visited the Gandhigram Rural University on 4th August and had a meeting with the members of the Faculty and the Dean of the Department of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, Professor T. T. Ranganathan as well as the Vice Chancellor of the University, Dr. Pankajam. Based on the discussion, the University has submitted a work plan and proposal to be implemented as part of the COMPAS Universities Consortium programme.

Visit to TVS Education Centre

On 14th August, A.V. Balasubramanian undertook a pre-funding appraisal of a proposal submitted by TVS Educational Centre at Hosur on Organic Farming.

Traditional Indian approach on Natural Resources Management

On 22nd and 23rd of August, A.V. Balasubramanian was at Aluva in Kerala attending a symposium on "Research on National Resurgence" organised by Bharatiya Vichara Kendra, Kerala. During the inaugural address, A.V. Balasubramanian

delivered a talk regarding "Traditional Indian approach on Natural Resources Management". The meeting was attended by more than 300 Ph.D. students and five vice chancellors of various universities of Kerala.

Visit to Mr. Ranvirshah's Farm

At the request of Mr. Ranvirshah, an Industrialist, S. Arumugasamy visited his farm located at Kuzhungalchery village near Padappai. Arumugasamy gave a detailed report on the visit with suggestions to improve the farm and to grow the trees organically.

Visit to CAST

CAST - Community Action for Social Transformation is an NGO based in Cheranmahadevi at Tirunelveli. At the request of CAPART, RC-Hyderabad, Dr. K. Vijayalakshmi undertook a mid-term appraisal of a project of CAST on 26th of August.

Training Programme on Vermicomposting and Roof Gardening

A training programme on 'Vermicomposting' was conducted by 'Urban Horticulture Development Centre' on 27th August 2003. The training was attended by our Research Associate, H. Saraswathy. On 12th September, our programme assistant Ms. R. Sridevi, attended a seminar on "Roof Gardening" conducted by the same centre.

Visit to Arya Vaidya Nilayam, Madurai

On 12th September, H. Saraswathy visited Arya Vaidya Nilayam, Madurai. During her visit, she met Dr. Ramesh Varier, Managing Partner of Arya Vaidya Nilayam and discussed the various possibilities of preparation of storage forms of biopesticides.

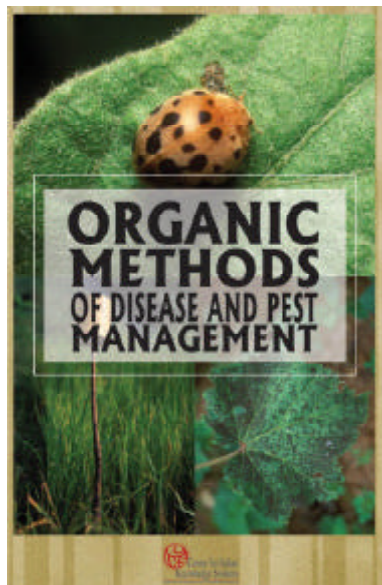
Meeting on Indian Knowledge Systems

A meeting on "Indian Knowledge Systems" was hosted by the Indian Institute of Advanced studies at Shimla on 29th and 30th September. A.V. Balasubramanian attended the meeting and made a presentation on "Sociology of organisation of Indian Knowledge Systems : Folk and Classical Traditions".

Science and Technology for SC&ST

The Science and Society division of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India has requested FRLHT to coordinate an All India Programme for Science and Technology for Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes population. A.V. Balasubramanian attended a meeting of the potential partners organised by FRLHT on 10th September at Bangalore. CIKS has submitted a proposal for implementation in the Madurantakam taluk of Kancheepuram district under this project.

“Organic Methods of Pest and Disease Management”



Organic methods of Pest and Disease Management is a set of posters designed in the form of a booklet. This booklet has been released in English, Tamil and Hindi. The booklet consist of the three sections with 10 colour posters. The first section consists of 3 posters discussing about the various pests attacking vegetables, highlighting identification of important pests of vegetables and their control measures. The second section of 3 posters deals with the various

diseases attacking vegetables, their identification and control measures. The third section of four posters give general information on various non-chemical pest control methods and methodology of preparing various plant extracts.

The descriptions are accompanied by colour photographs, making it easier even for a layman to identify the various pests and diseases attacking vegetables. This booklet would serve as a useful tool for anybody wanting to shift to organic agriculture.

If you are interested in obtaining copies please write to the publications incharge, CIKS.

VISITORS BOOK

A look at who's been dropping in at CIKS

☞ On 8th August, Ms. Riya Sinha and Mr. Vivekanandan of National Innovations Foundation, visited us to seek our help in assessment and evaluation of innovations in the area of traditional health-care.

☞ On 12th August, Mr. Biswadeep Ghose, Programme officer of HIVOS, Bangalore visited us to get to know about our work.

☞ On 13th August, Mr. Nishant Pandey, Programme officer of OXFAM, Hyderabad visited us to get to know about our work. He visited both our office in Kotturpuram and research farm in Sukkankollai.

☞ On 18th August, Dr. Bharat Jhunjunwala of Motilal Bhimraj Charitable Trust visited us regarding possible collaboration in the area of Vrکشayurveda.

☞ On 18th August, Dr. Perumal, Scientist and Mr. M.V. Murugappan, Chairman of the Murugappa

Chettiar Research Centre accompanied by Dr. Balzer from Germany and three others from Australia and Columbia who had conducted a course at MCRC on biodynamic farming visited us to know about the work of our Centre particularly in the area of Vrکشayurveda.

☞ On 29th August, Mr. Hariramamoorthy of FRLHT, visited us to discuss regarding the meeting FRLHT plans to conduct in September towards developing an all India coordinated proposal for submission to Department of Science and Technology.

☞ On 4th September, Mr. Anirban Mukherjee, Manager – Strategic Partnerships, Emerging Market Solutions-e-inclusions, Hewlett Packard, Bangalore visited us to discuss the possible involvement of CIKS in their KUPPAM project in Andhra Pradesh.

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