5th National Organic Farming Convention

Mainstreaming Organic Farming

28th February 2015 - 2nd March 2015 | Chandigarh, India



Proceedings Report

Celebrating International Year of Soils for Sustaining Food and Farming Systems

PATRONS: **Bhartiya Jnanpith Laureate Dr Gurdial Singh**
Padma Bhushan Dr Inderjit Kaur **Dr M P Poonia**

Key Organizers

Organic Farming Association of India OFAI

ASHA Food . Farmers . Freedom

TEAMING TOGETHER NITTTR CHANDIGARH

KVM

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October 2015

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Background

Low external input, diversity-based, chemical-free farming along with livestock-rearing has been an age-old practice in India. In an attempt to ensure food security, the Government of India introduced the Green Revolution in the 1960s. Punjab, which has been the heartland of India's Green Revolution, now bears testimony to what can happen if agricultural development is planned without integrating sustainability aspects. It is well established that the soils in Punjab have degraded, the groundwater has become depleted and contaminated, the crop biodiversity has been lost and the indebtedness of farmers has increased. The region is reeling under a severe environmental health crisis, with chronic illnesses plaguing those very people who have fed the nation by pumping their environs with excessive chemicals and water. The situation in Haryana is not very different. The official reports clearly highlight the worsening of socio-economic, environmental and health parameters including the decline in quality of soil, depletion and contamination of surface and groundwater, high increase in energy consumption, higher cost of cultivation, increased levels of toxins and greater level of indebtedness leading to distress and suicide amongst farmers. Unremunerative agricultural markets and natural disasters have compounded the problem.

Worldwide, there is a strong realisation that agro-ecological approaches, especially for small landholders and women farmers, are the best way forward for addressing poverty, hunger, malnutrition, livelihood insecurity, climate change and natural resource degradation. It is also worth noting that the 68th United Nations General Assembly has declared Year 2015 as the International Year of Soils (IYS) so as to increase the awareness and understanding of the importance of soil for food security and essential ecosystem functions.

Given all the above developments, several policy documents in India have been recommending approaches to promote diversification and sustainability of Indian agriculture. Many state governments have adopted organic farming policies and have been implementing large scale eco-farming projects to improve farm based livelihoods.

In addition, several farmers and ecologists across India have decided to shift to ecologically sound, economically viable, progressive and scientific ways of farming known by various names such as natural farming, organic farming, biodynamic farming, cow-based farming, natu-eco farming, zero budget farming, ecological agriculture, sustainable farming or permaculture. Basically, all these approaches discourage the use of synthetic agrochemicals and seek to promote soil health and farm diversity by using natural resources in a sustainable way. They essentially rely on nature's processes and products.

The Solution Exists, Requires Mainstreaming!

Thus, it is the need of the hour to learn from such numerous success stories, and mainstream agro-ecological farming for making Indian food and farming systems sustainable. This Convention attempted to do so.

Introduction

Organic Farming Conventions organized every two years by Organic Farming Association of India (OFAI) are a unique and popular programme in the organic farming movement of our country. These Conventions are attended by thousands of farmers, activists, urban consumer activists, scientists and policy makers who share their experiences and work collectively for the spread of sustainable agriculture and safe food systems.



5th National Organic Farming Convention

The Conventions are intended to create a platform for the sharing of scientific and technical knowledge and experiences amongst farmers, agri-scientists, policy makers, government agencies and financial institutions, marketing specialists and consumers. The 5th Convention was jointly organized by OFAI, NITTTR, ASHA and KVM. The Convention attempted to provide a platform for farmers, consumers and governments of this region to carve out their own way forward for organic food and farming systems by bringing together the best knowledge and skills in this sector into the Convention.

Objectives

This 5th National Organic Farming Convention in Chandigarh was aimed at achieving the following specific objectives:

- Demonstrate lasting solutions to the current crises in agriculture and address the challenges with regard to farm economics, environmental sustainability and food safety

- Provide a platform to support marketing of the organic produce for the benefit of both organic farmers and consumers including by increasing the level of consumer awareness to build support for organic food

- Address the issues of diverse, safe and nutritious foods, Nature-Culture-Agriculture continuum, dignity in farming, as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation

- Establish active linkages and increase solidarity among organic farmers, activist movements, policy-makers, relevant government agencies, scientists, media, consumers and others

- Strengthen the scientific discourse and practices of organic farming

- Draw a roadmap for sustainable farming in India in collaboration with the key stakeholders

Key Organizers

- **ORGANIC FARMING ASSOCIATION OF INDIA (**www.ofai.org**):** Many farmers across the nation, without knowing each other (and their techniques) started independent journeys in their quest for sustainable farming. In the late nineties, a well-known ecological activist from Goa i.e. Dr. Claude Alvares personally visited most of these farmers, activists and organizations, with a purpose to publish the first 'Organic Farming Source Book of India' (published by Other India Press), which was the first organized effort to record & acknowledge the efforts underway to establish and promote organic farming. This book became an important tool for people involved to know each other. Through a series of meetings and consultations facilitated by ICRA (Bangalore), Organic Farming Association of India (OFAI) was born and was formally registered in 2004. Since its inception, a practising organic farmer remains its President (the first was Dr. Bharamgouda of Karnataka and the second, till date, is Mr. Sarvadaman Patel of Gujarat). OFAI is the largest organization of organic farmers of India with its membership (across the decade) running into a few thousand farmers. Today, activities of OFAI include research, publications, training and organizing biennial conventions, apart from promotional work done by individual farmers and

various groups. OFAI has remained instrumental in establishing the PGS Organic Council of India to facilitate the Participatory Guarantee System as a form of farmer-led, farmer-friendly certification.

- **NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNICAL TEACHERS TRAINING & RESEARCH** (www.nitttrchd.ac.in)**:** The Ministry of Human Resource Development (the then Ministry of Education), Government of India established four Regional Technical Teachers' Training Institutes (now National Institute of Technical Teachers Training & Research or NITTTR) at Bhopal, Chandigarh, Chennai and Kolkata in 1967. The Institute at Chandigarh is one of these four NITTTRs, which was started in collaboration with Royal Netherlands Government (upto 1974). It was designed to meet the requirements of developing polytechnic education in the northern region covering the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttrakhand, Delhi and Union Territory of Chandigarh. The institute also set up the Department of Rural Development and the Department of Entrepreneurship Development to assist polytechnics in directing their efforts towards training human power and disseminating information in these areas. NITTTR today runs numerous short term and long term courses including Ph.D. in Engineering. NITTTR has also conducted courses on organic farming towards fulfilment of its mandate related to environment and rural development. The secret that brings fresh air into this institute lies in its ever-welcoming eyes and extended helping hands with warm heart to new ideas, programmes and people who work for the cause of sustainability.

- **ALLIANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE AND HOLISTIC AGRICULTURE** (www.kisanswaraj.in)**:** Alliance for Sustainable & Holistic Agriculture (ASHA) is a large, nation-wide informal network of more than 400 organisations drawn from 20 states of India, that have come together in 2010 to organise a Kisan Swaraj Yatra, a nation-wide mobilisation to draw attention to issues pertaining to our FOOD, FARMERS, FREEDOM. The network consists of farmers' organisations, consumer groups, women's organisations, environmental organisations, individual citizens and experts who are committed to the cause of sustainable and viable farm livelihoods in rural India including by ensuring that productive resources are in the control of farming communities and thereby, safe, nutritious, diverse and adequate food for all Indians. From the dialogues that emerged during the KisanSwarajYatra and subsequent work, ASHA articulates a 4-pillared KisanSwarajNeeti and calls on governments to adopt the same. This policy articulation provides a framework for a forward-looking agricultural policy approach for India. The four pillars of KisanSwaraj are (1) income security for farm households; (2) ecological sustainability of agriculture; (3) people's control over farm resources like land, water, forests and seed; and (4) access to safe, healthy, nutritious and sufficient food for all.

- **KHETI VIRASAT MISSION** (www.khetivirasatmission.org)**:** The voluntary and social ventures evolved by Kheti Virasat Mission (KVM) since 2005 to raise awareness

around the fallouts of the intensive agriculture paradigm and the need for a pro-nature and pro-farmer sustainable farming model has successfully created a social movement in Punjab. Through its tireless work, Kheti Virasat Mission has created debate and discourse on alternative paths to sustainable agricultural and development amongst farmers, scientists, consumers, academics and the government. It has also led to many farmers successfully shifting to organic farming in this heartland of the Green Revolution. In the last 9 years, KVM has built awareness and capacities of thousands of farmers across Punjab through workshops, seminars, trainings, village level meetings, farmer field schools and publications. KVM has also successfully brought women into Natural Farming movement through Organic Kitchen Gardening work. In 2015, KVM will celebrate its 10 year long journey towards achieving imperishable agricultural prosperity in accordance with Nature and Environmental Justice.

Other Contributors

- **SAHAJA SAMRUDHA** or Bountiful Nature, a brainchild of a group of organic farmers was born over a decade ago mainly out of concern to protect our Mother Earth. The formation of Sahaja Samrudha was the culmination of their individual efforts into a more exciting and powerful force to make sustainable agriculture a way of life of the farming community. Sahaja Samrudha has spread out its network on publications, workshops & trainings, organising different melas and on marketing in order to encourage more farmers towards organic farming.

- **CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE (CSA):** Centre for Sustainable Agriculture is a professional resource organization engaged in establishing models of sustainable agriculture working in partnership with NGOs and Community Based Organizations by scaling up the successes and engaging with the establishment for a policy change.

- **LIVING FARMS:** Living farms is an organisation working to provide food sovereignty for small and marginal farmers in the eastern state of Odisha in India. Living Farms works mainly with Adivasi farmers to improve food and nutrition security, food safety and to uphold food sovereignty. Sustainable agriculture and Natural Resource Management are the key strategies adopted by the organisation.

Highlights

The 5th National Organic Farming Convention saw participation from **1865 registered delegates** (Annex V) and several other non-registered visitors. Thus, it turned out to be the **largest congregation of organic farmers anywhere ever in the world. This Convention was mostly crowd-funded, with the participants themselves contributing to nearly one-fourth of the financial requirement with others like the Government of Haryana, Government of Punjab, Government of India (National Centre for Organic Farming), Chandigarh administration in addition to NABARD stepping forward to support this** (Annexure VII gives details of the donors). The convention also attracted **extensive media attention and coverage** as listed in Annex VI. The special features of this year convention included:

- **Farmer-to-Farmer sharing, learning and dialogue:** Group discussions, workshops, live demonstrations and other programs for exchange of knowledge and solidarity-building were an important feature of this Convention. These were augmented by the technical expertise of NITTTR through ***live transmission and interactions*** with farmers and scientists at selected 'centres' around the country.

- **Live demonstrations:** Special agricultural plots were prepared around Chandigarh by the Dr Sarvadaman Patel, President of OFAI, who is a pioneer organic farmer. Many other farmers and scientists demonstrated their skills, knowledge and innovations with ecological practices & products.

- **Scientific Conference on 'Mainstreaming Agro-Ecology':** The Indian Society for Agro-Ecology along with the Centre for Sustainable Agriculture held a Scientific Conference which included presentation of the research papers by scientists and researchers in the field of sustainable agriculture.

- **Policy debates:** As part of its technical deliberations, the Convention hosted debates for better policy formulation on a variety of themes like seeds, millets, certification, marketing, organic farming policies, promotion of bio-diversity conservation etc.

- **Exhibition for innovations:** An exhibition was set up to make the citizens aware of the need for organic farming, various organic practices, inputs, machinery and innovations from farmers and entrepreneurs.

- **Kisan Haat:** The Kisan Haat was a key attraction for the Tri-city consumers to interact and procure authentic organic farm produce directly from farmers. It also opened up marketing opportunities for organic producers from the region and organic farmers from other parts of the country.

- **Biodiversity festival:** The success of organic farming depends on the preservation and protection of bio-diversity. A number of farmers and organizations working for the

agro-diversity conservation and revival displayed India's rich crop bio-diversity. This festival was led by Sahaja Samrudha. Similarly, uncultivated foods were on display, led by Living Farms.

- **Organic food festival:** The delegates as well as general public to a small extent experienced a first-of-its-kind organic and traditional food festival to enable them to reconnect with the healthy food traditions of India.

- **Urban gardening workshops:** Workshops were organized for common people to take up kitchen gardening based on organic principles.

- **Cultural programmes:** Cultural programmes were organised which included the famous singer Rabbi Shergill performing on the opening day of the Convention.

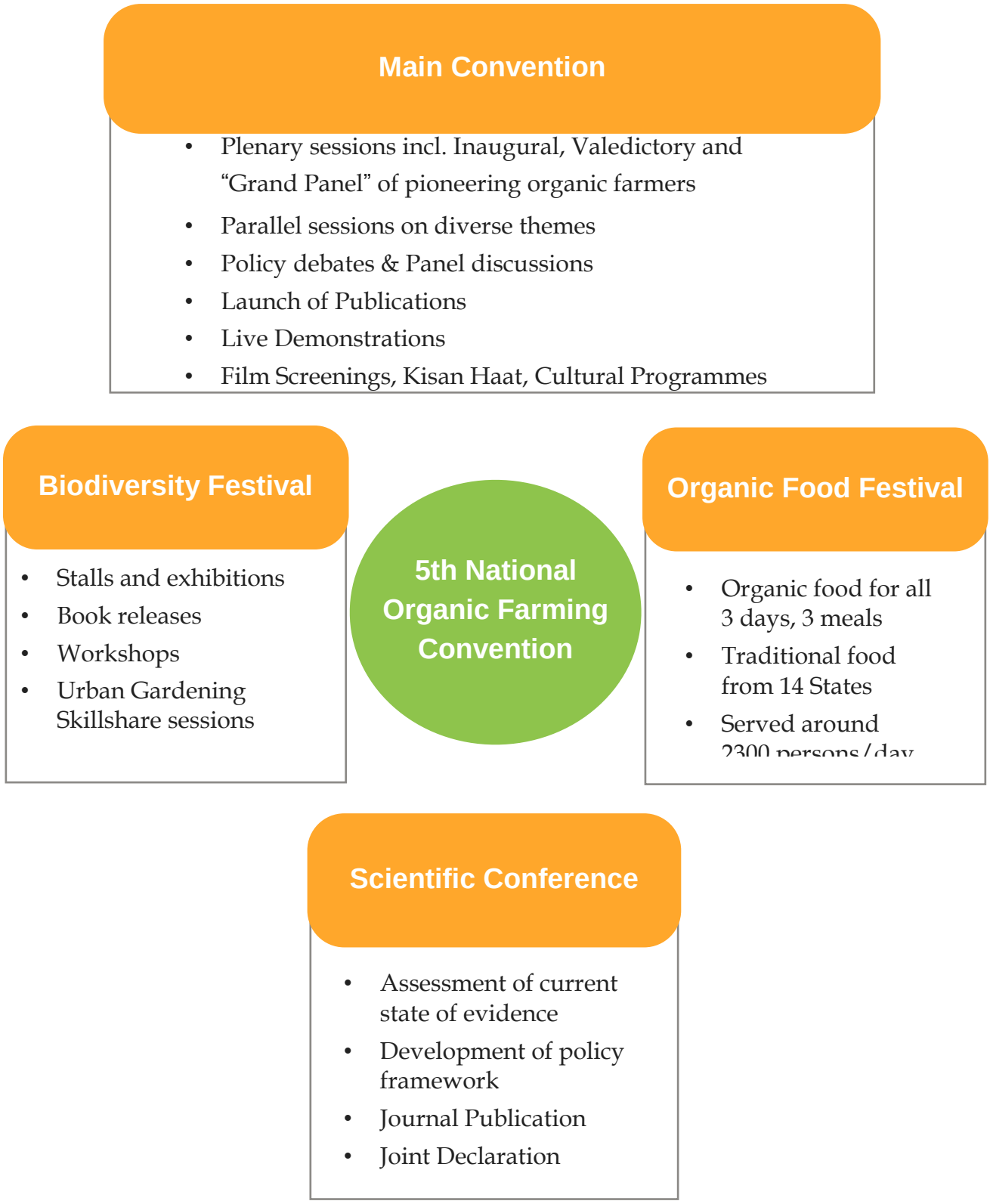
- **Publications:** Books and CDs/DVDs were launched, displayed and sold.

Keeping the objective of extensive interactions in mind, many parallel sessions were organized each day, broken up into technical and policy-level themes so that all delegates could choose a topic of their interest and join a discussion on the same, for learning, for voicing their views and experience and for policy influencing. Some of the scheduled activities could not be implemented in the way they were planned by the organisers due to a uninterrupted rain with heavy winds disrupting the programme considerably, especially on the last day of the Convention. This also meant that the valuable work put in by Mr Sarvadaman Patel in some farms near Chandigarh could not be shown to the delegates with the path to the fields becoming inaccessible. However, a film on the designing and development of these demonstration plots was shown in an evening plenary of Day 2.

Similarly, Kisan Panchayats to brainstorm on issues and challenges related to organic farming specifically in the context of Punjab and Haryana could not be organized. This caused some disappointment in the delegates – however, the efforts related to the biodiversity festival and food festival received very positive and encouraging response, in a feedback process that the Convention organisers initiated after the Convention.

Programme Structure

The detailed programme and schedule of the convention is provided in Annex III. In a nutshell, the Convention Programme had 4 main components:



Main Convention | Feb 28 - Mar 2, 2015

Day One | Saturday | February 28, 2015

Inaugural Session

The first day of the 5th National Organic Farming Convention started with a grand inaugural ceremony and an enthralling music performance by Sh Gurpreet Singh Rattu. The event saw participation from distinguished audience comprising policy makers, seed conservators, organic farmers, social activists and representatives from other national and international bodies who support the cause of sustainable agriculture and food systems.



Inaugural Session on Day 1

The key speakers on the dais included:

On the Dias		
Chief Guest	Sh Manohar Lal Khattar	Chief Minister of Haryana
Special Guest of Honour	Sh Om Prakash Dhankar	Agriculture Minister of Haryana
Honourable Guest & Patron	Padma Bhushan Bibi Inderjeet Kaur	Chairperson, All India Pingalwara Society
Speaker	Smt Sabarmatee	Organic Farmer & Seed Conservator
Speaker	Sh Hartej Singh Mehta	Organic Farmer & President, Kheti Virasat Mission
Speaker	Sh Umendra Dutt	Executive Director, Kheti Virasat Mission
Speaker	Sh Andre Leu	President, IFOAM
Speaker	Sh Sarvadaman Patel	President, OFAI
Speaker	Dr Claude Alvares	Director, OFAI
Speaker	Dr K K Talwar	Chairperson, NITTTR
Speaker	Dr MP Poonia	Director, NITTTR
Welcome Address	Smt Dilnavaz Variava	Convenor, ASHA
Anchor	Sh Kapil Shah	Secretary, OFAI

✦ **Sh Kapil Shah,** Secretary, OFAI, welcomed all the participants on the dais with following words:

"**This is the largest family gathering of the organic farmers of India. Thirty years ago, there began a movement across India. The movement was spearheaded by Sh Sardar Pooran Singh in Punjab, Sh Nammalvar in Tamil Nadu, Sh Ardhendhu Chatterjee & Sh Debal Deb in Eastern India, Sh Bhaskar Save in Western India, and many others. Dr Claude Alvares from OFAI and ASHA have brought all these people as streams together like the prayag of rivers.** The organic farmers' movement runs across 130 countries in the world.

Our first convention was at Sevagram in Bapu's land. The second one was in Tamil Nadu in South India, the third one in Gujarat, the fourth one in Odisha and the fifth one is happening in Chandigarh which is the heartland of the green revolution states i.e. Punjab and Haryana.

I welcome all the scientists, farmers, parents, children, medical practitioners and all those who have made it here from different parts of the country. This is like a family

gathering and function. There is always some discomfort in such gatherings and if the delegates have faced any such inconvenience, I apologize for the same."

✦ Smt Dilvanaz Variava, Convenor, ASHA

"This is a historic moment for all of us, for not merely India but all of the world. This is the largest gathering of organic farmers in the world. We had expected 1000 delegates and there are today around 2500 delegates, which makes it the largest convention of organic farmers in the world. It is my pleasure to welcome the Honourable Chief Minister and the Agriculture Minister of Haryana, Padma Bhushan Bibi Inderjit Kaur, and others. The four organizers are – OFAI, KVM, ASHA and NITTTR.

Dear Chief Minister, we are aware that you have worked much in the villages and you have enormous respect and concern for the welfare of the farmers. We thank you for the same. In the last 15 years, we have had 3 lakh farmers committing suicide in this country. I have been associated with the farmers in Vidharbha for the past 10 years and through ASHA have been interacting with farmers continuously. I was also in a committee constituted by the Government of Maharashtra. When I visited farmers in the Vidharba region, I found that the suicides were highest among the chemical farmers and the farmers growing the genetically modified crops – Bt Cotton. Whereas the organic farmers' community didn't have a single farmer committing suicide.

Organic farmers are big hearted, and share knowledge. There are no toxins in the food they grow. Today our food is so much filled with toxins that we don't know whether we are consuming food or poison in this country, particularly in our cities. When we produce food in consonance with the environment, we produce food that is healthy. **As per the IAASTD study sponsored by the World Bank, World Health Organization and others, 400 scientists from 50 countries who have studied agriculture as part of this process have said that chemical farming is not the answer and genetic modification is not the answer.** India is one of the countries that adopted the IAAASTD study in 2008 and it is a sad state of affairs that we have not done anything about it. We have several other studies that have said the same thing and it is unfortunate that these studies are not widely known and that there is a lack of understanding.

ASHA has been facilitating the spread of ecological agriculture and it is truly our hope that through this historic convention, we'll be able to provide some kind of a direction to organic farming, and ensure that our water tables do not fall or get polluted. **India has the largest number of organic farmers in the world; they only need some encouragement, some support to be productive and serve the**

nation. Today as I welcome all of us and the CM, it is our hope that we are blessed with a new form of agriculture which includes the traditional knowledge of agriculture that we need to revive."

Inaugural Session Speeches:

- **Sh Sarvadaman Patel, President, OFAI**

"I have been an organic farmer for the past 15 years. I have seen that the organic farming happens all over the country today. We know that the chemical farming started in Punjab and Haryana 40 years ago which set a trend for the rest of the country soon afterwards. Today, the farmers of this state have seen that the soil has degraded and has become toxic. **We come here with a hope that this land that had set a trend earlier will be able to do so once again, that it will set a trend for organic farming in this country.** We have tried and shown through several demonstration plots, the potential of what is possible. The universities need to do some serious work; they need to experiment with organic farming. They need to ensure that the diseases resulting from consuming chemical food are reduced. **This three day function has participants from all over the country. If there is a beginning from here, it would reach all over the country."**

- **Dr. K K. Talwar, Chairperson, NITTTR**

"Being a medical professional, when we realize the harmful effects of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, we understand the causes of cancer and reproductive issues faced by the community. In Kerala, the use of endosulfan in cashew farms resulted in several health issues which made the Government of India ban this chemical. **The health issues caused by the chemical fertilizers need to be thoroughly assessed.** People like me prescribe others to have healthy and nutritious food. I express my gratitude to the organizers in choosing our institution for this important event."

- **Sh Andrew Leu, President, IFOAM**

"The organizers have worked hard to put on a spectacular show. I first came here 39 years ago and India has always been a special place for me. **You are the oldest and greatest civilization in the world. Your knowledge systems have influenced the world and today we are in an organic farming convention.**



Opening Speech by Sh Andrew Leu, President, IFOAM

The British government had sent Mr Albert Howard to teach farming to the 'backward farmers' of India. Eventually, he learned organic farming from Indian farmers and started teaching what he learnt here, in Europe. This is where organic farming comes from. **You, the farmers of India, have a critical role to play today; once again you need to show the world how to do agriculture."**

✦ Sh Umendra Dutt, Executive Director, Kheti Virasat Mission

"Bharat Mata has no longer remained a healthy mother of this country. **If divinity is in nature, every assault on nature is an assault on divinity**. **If today in Punjab and Haryana, we buy wheat from Chattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, then where are we heading?** We have cancer among new born children, what do we do with this situation? When sometimes our health takes a bad turn, we have to infuse glucose in our body. We cannot have this becoming a habit and demand that the glucose becomes a part of our lives. Similar is the case of getting chemicals and doing chemical farming in this country.

I wish to share that the two dignitaries, the Chief Minister and the Agriculture Minister have given their wholehearted support. We conceived this programme to be a large gathering of farmers, but with support from various organisations

and individuals, this has become a grand function. We have also received a great support from the Chief Minister and we hope that he will give some words of encouragement and commitments today in this august gathering."



Opening Speech by Sh Umendra Dutt, Executive Director, KVM

✦ **Sh Om Prakash Dhankar, Minister for Agriculture, Govt of Haryana**

"**T**he Chief Minister is himself a farmer who is sensitive to the issues of farmers. I know Sh Umendra since 3 decades. In 2005, we organized a convention for farmers here and did a review of the four decades of Green Revolution. The



Opening Speech by Sh Dhankar, Agriculture Minister, Haryana

situation of our farming was very different before 1965. We got new fertilisers followed by high yielding varieties and then came the pesticides. We could get many technologies and were able to provide food to the nation, but the by-product of this has been the cancer and other forms of illness. **Today, even our elite farmers have stopped eating what they grow and instead consume food from other parts of the country where there is relatively lower usage of chemicals. Wherever there is a high usage of Bt, there is also a large increase in suicide rate. When I got visitors from Monsanto, I told them that we feed cotton oilcake to our buffaloes and this has an effect on our milk. I asked them if they have studied the impact of this. They haven't done any such study so far.** I had their representatives meet me again but there was no response from them.

We need to advance, but, we need to know that the advancement and progress is not about reaching a position where we are facing destruction. Organic farming is not about learning anything new; it is about stopping all those things that we are doing which are destructive. **We are bringing a new law to bring back the Desi Cow into the farmers' house.** We realise that there is so much of nutritive value in the Desi Cow's milk. While formulating the policy, we are considering ways to ensure that the farmer can earn a better price even if there is not much yield in the Desi cow's milk. This is what we are currently working on. If we can ensure that the farmer gets good returns, then we can make him adopt these ideas.

In organic farming, there is so much more involved. The inputs for (chemical) agriculture are organized very well, they have big lobbies and they have influence in the government. But, are the markets for the farmer's produce well organised? We don't have an organised market. Hence, we are missing out and are not able to command the same influence. Today, the governments pay heed to the market forces when they are organized. So, we too need to get organized. **As an Agriculture Minister, my biggest concern is how to organize the market for farmers.** This is the challenge I face every day. When the farmers can directly reach the consumers and ensure their command and influence in the market, we will be able to do something serious.

We are having a similar summit on 13-15 March where we will place the farmer in the centre. We want to ensure that the farm produce can earn better returns and we are able to reach the far-off markets."

✦ **Smt Sabarmatee, Organic Farmer & Seed Conservator**

"I come from Odisha. In all the training programmes, our farmers are labeled as 'backward' while the farmers from Punjab and Haryana are considered 'forward'. **I don't have any great message to provide; the lives and works of all the farmers who are here is a lesson and inspiration in itself. Our clan of organic farmers is growing and that is encouraging**; we don't need to be worried about 'family planning' here. In a democracy, we need to have such growth as otherwise we may remain a minority. **We have started a programme called 'Adopt a Seed' whereby if each farmer can preserve one variety, then together we can save a lot of varieties.** We also need to ensure that the requisite privileges to our women farmers are provided. We should encourage youth to take up farming. **I salute all of you who dare to swim against the current."**

✦ Sh Manohar Lal Khattar, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Govt of Haryana

"I am happy to have people from all parts of the country here today. We have tried to create a few opportunities and have in the process also created a few challenges for ourselves. Of the issues that we have created for ourselves, one is the suffocation of the very soil. Organic farming is a solution to this problem. We need to ensure that organic farming is being promoted in Haryana. **We want to get at least 10% of all our land under organic farming each year.** Perhaps, it will be possible for us to do it in phases.

Till now, our testing labs have only been testing the soil. **I have asked for the produce to also be tested** and for us to have the capacity to do so. This will ensure that the organic food is labeled and through this we would be able to provide better returns to our farmers.

We know that certain bacteria are good for the soil and the use of pesticides destroy these bacteria in the soil. Hence, we need to adopt organic farming practices. **We are creating facilities to produce good compost and also tying them up with our solid waste management programmes. We will ensure that we make a *Jaivik Kheti* policy in this state.**

We will ensure that we foster and facilitate the local varieties of the cattle. We are looking at traditional breeds of cattle to provide better returns to the farmers."

The opening speeches were followed by the release of several publications and video documentaries.

Video Documentaries:

- *Jahan Chah, Wahan Raah (Gujarat Vidya Peeth, Ahmedabad)*
- *6 Success Stories from Maharashtra (Vasudha Nirmitee & OFAI)*

Publications:

- *Ecological Agriculture in India: Scientific Evidence on Positive Impacts (ASHA)*
- *A Source Book on Seeds and Seed Catalogue (OFAI)*
- *The Myth of Safe Pesticides (Sh Andre Leu, IFOAM)*
- *Soil Recipes in English, Hindi & Punjabi (OFAI)*
- *Balihari Kudrat (Special Edition) and other KVM Publications*

The inaugural session concluded with a vote of thanks. It was then followed by the inauguration of the biodiversity festival in the CCET campus, followed by a series of parallel sessions on diverse themes relevant in the context of organic food and farming systems.

Photo 8: Release of Publications



Release of Video Documentaries



Opening Speech by Sh Manohar Lal Khattar, Chief Minister, Haryana

Parallel Session I: Organic Farming Policies & Implementation

Special Guest	Jth. Tota Singh (Minister for Agriculture, Govt of Punjab)
Facilitators	Sh Afsar Jafri
Lead Discussants	Sh Claude Alvares, Smt Kavitha Kuruganti



Parallel Session on 'Organic Farming Policies and Implementation

The parallel session on 'Organic Farming Policies & Implementation' began with a song that portrayed what had been gained and lost with the introduction of Green Revolution and how the farmers could regain the lost prosperity. **Sh Jathedar Tota Singh**, the Agriculture Minister of Punjab, was the chief guest of this session. **He shared that he is an organic farmer himself and pointed out that the need for organic farming is being felt on all fronts.**

Sh Claude Alvares stated that the "*In view of the ever increasing cost of synthetic inputs and poor input-output ratio, farmers have been looking for alternatives. Organic is an important alternative option. This is also a sustainable option for maintaining the productivity. Hence, it is necessary for the respective governments to partner with diverse stakeholders and farmer groups such as Kheti Virasat Mission to draft and implement an organic farming policy in the states of Haryana and Punjab.*"

Sh Alvares invited all the farmers to present their perspectives and provide inputs for the policy design and implementation. In the lively session that followed, several organic farmers present in the session shared their opinion as detailed below:

- **Sh Maniram, Rajasthan: "**Agriculture is our lifeline and chemical farming has proven unsuccessful in our country. Many farmers have lost their lives making ends meet. Marketing is an important element for the survival of organic farming. There is no separate market for organic produce. **We need to set up such cooperatives which market only the organic products.** Marketing of organic products is so inadequate that farmers are losing money rather than making any money out of it. **The government should provide market facility for the farmer's organic produce.** Doing organic farming is closely interlinked to our culture as it is in our culture to keep our surroundings clean and organic farming ensures good environment. We, the organic farmers are fragmented and divided in different states and regions. So, we do not feel like one. It's time we need to unite and fight for our cause."

- **Sh Vikram, Hissar, Haryana: "**The government gives subsidy for chemical farming and **for every acre the subsidy received by the farmer is INR 4500 (spent on Urea and DAP). As a farmer practicing organic farming, I have not received any subsidy, though I have saved the Government INR 4500 every year.** This amount should be deposited in my account. Certification is an important factor in organic farming. **The Government should take up the certification process.** This will help the farmers who are not able to manage the amount spent towards certification and handle the whole process. In order to earn a quick buck, many players have entered the organic market and spurious organic food has made inroads into the market. **The government should bring in a system that monitors the organic produce.** This will put a check on such non-organic food which is being sold at the price of organic food. Also, the authenticity of organic farmers should be enhanced. **There should be simple tests to identify whether something is organic."**

- **Sh Rajveer Singh, Haryana: "**I recommend two points: first, the **government should set up a traditional seed company and** second, the **universities should provide a degree course in organic farming**."

- **Sh Kamal Singh, Rajasthan**: "**Every Member of Parliament in Modi government should adopt a village**. Providing support for making a complete shift to organic has to be the government's responsibility. **The government policy for organic should be land to lab not lab to land. The research in universities and agricultural institutions should be done only on local crops.** The institutions and universities should stop imposing alien technologies and concepts and should start relating to the traditional knowledge, the variation of local conditions and needs of the people. They should spearhead the organic movement."

- **Sh Madan Lal, Punjab:** "I am against the use of word 'Organic' as ours is a natural farming system. We fell into the trap of chemical producing companies by readily

accepting hybrids. We should not repeat history by falling into the trap of international certifying companies. **By calling it organic, we are creating a market for international companies that insist on certifying the produce with a price. Promoting participatory guarantee systems and local certification is the need of hour. So, the organic policy should include the local certification system.** Natural farming is laborious and throughout the country, labour is proving to be a big problem. Everyone in our country should know agriculture and should have an experience of working on fields. Schools should have field demonstration sessions included in their curriculum. **We need to produce what our people consume. Why are we producing American soya and corn which not even 1% of our people eat.** Farmers should be aware of the consumer needs and market demand. This will help farmers produce good harvest that fetches a market. **The production plan is essential. As we don't have one, we always have a glut in the market. Our policy needs to include a production plan. The PDS (Public Distribution System) should be strengthened and include only the traditional nutritional organic produce**."

- **Smt Janak Palta, Madhya Pradesh:** "We are working with the tribals in Madhya Pradesh, and have been promoting Solar Energy and Organic Farming since last few years. This has helped many tribals create products that enhance the value of raw materials. **The tribals are making products from amla and millets. They are making simple bakery products processed by solar cookers and dryers**. Value addition and processing are important since they add to the income of farmers. This also creates employment in rural areas. **Every state in the country needs an Organic Policy and the government, both at the Centre and State levels, should allocate a separate fund for the same and be accountable for it.** Also, a road map for organic farming has to be drawn to understand where we will be in five years including the status of land, diversity, pollution etc and to plan accordingly."

- **Sh Dasharathi, Orissa:** "To promote organic farming we need to pay special attention to animal husbandry, without which organic farming is not possible. **Every consumer has a right to know the quality of food and the government should monitor the chemical usage.** Let us promote the indigenous seeds by reviving our traditional seeds and our agriculture practices. The government should patronise the organic farming and not chemical farming. Organic food is not only for the rich and elite but should be made accessible to every citizen. **A Monitoring Committee has to be formed to monitor the organic policy**."

- **Sh Mahendra Singh, Punjab**: "The dependence on external inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides and weedicides has created an imbalance in the ecosystems. Also, the dependency of the farmers on purchasing from markets has increased. If we need to revive harmony and balance, it can be done only by shifting to organic. We need to do this by building our soils and reducing the dependency on external inputs, thereby reducing the overall cost of cultivation. Organic farming involves employing locally adaptable cropping practices such as mixed cropping and crop rotations, thereby

enriching the soil nutrients. Organic farming has evolved effective ways to protect soil organisms and bacteria with use of varied organic manures, such as vermicompost, panchagavaya, jeevamrita, compost and green manures. Organic farming is in crisis in Punjab and the farmers doing so in this state are sacrificing their children's lifestyle but these farmers are alive. Organic farming in Punjab is not more than 10%, so how can it survive? **The government says that it promotes organic farming but it has also allowed the field trials for genetically modified crops.** So, how can organic farming survive in such a scenario? **The Government needs to be clear as to what they encourage.** The government policies should focus on encouraging organic farming."

- **Sh Selvam, Erode, Tamilnadu:** "We have created an organic movement in every taluk and district of Tamilnadu. The agriculture universities condemned us for promoting organic farming but now, they are selling Panchgavya, a bio-liquid growth promoter. **Every political party in Tamil Nadu is promoting organic farming.** Today, two Ministers spoke of organic farming and committed that they will promote it. This is an encouraging sign for the farmers in Punjab. This is a time for you to make demands for a policy that works to our benefit. We need to work together in drafting such a policy for the whole country. It could be region specific but the farmers need an organic farming policy across the country, with inclusion of markets and soil building related aspects. This is an opportunity we cannot afford to miss."
- **Sh Ramji Rathan Singh, Rajasthan:** "The organically produced fruits and vegetables do not look good and have less takers. The chemically produced fruits and vegetables are uniform and sprayed with chemicals. This increases their shelf life and makes the products look very attractive but such products contain poison. Though the vegetables produced organically are healthier, the consumers prefer the poisoned vegetables, since the consumers tend to compare them in appearance but not in terms of the taste or health. **The government needs to provide a separate yard or a market facility for the organic items just like the APMC yards are provided to the non-organic produce.** Such a separate market will create a brand for organic vegetables and increase the interest of the consumers."
- **Sh Lal Chand Arya, Punjab:** "The farmers need to be educated on the use of cow products. Cow urine is the most effective pesticide that can be used on plants. The extensive use of pesticides has killed the friendly pests in our ecosystem. The crops that have survived without the use of pesticides need to be sprayed often. Extensive use of pesticides has poisoned our entire food chain. Even our milk is poisoned, which has resulted in increased rate of chronic diseases like cancer, especially in Punjab. We need to increase the awareness of farmers on the importance of cow urine and cow by-products and save our country's resources. Integrated farming of livestock and crops is vital for organic farming. Insurance is very critical for the farmer. **The insurance companies should consider the expenses and income right from the stage of sowing to harvesting and not limit the insurance to scenarios where the crop is lost due to the natural calamities. Even the family members are to be**

considered and included. Sowing and saving of the seeds are the rights of the farmers. Seeds are their own resource that they save and reproduce year after year. So they need to conserve seeds. This is the first step to organic farming."

- **Sh Karthik, Tamil Nadu**: "Our villages are in a deep crises and the low income in rural areas is leading to a large-scale migration to cities. This migration is becoming unsustainable, both for rural areas as well as urban areas. Migration from villages to urban areas is a major problem that the country faces. To address this, the rural areas need to generate employment. The NREGA scheme has been successful in some of the villages, but this cannot be considered as a sustainable option to reduce migration. The farmers need to look into alternatives that can generate income and strengthen the village economy. The Mahatma Gandhi's vision of a sustainable village should not remain merely a dream but we all need to work hard to put it into reality. So, **the farmers should not only remain as the producers of raw materials but also turn processors.** They should be able to add value to their products and market them. **The organic marketing at the local level needs to be explored and developed.** This is the best alternative that every farmer should work towards."

- **Sh Mohan Sharma, Ladva:** "The states of Haryana & Punjab with their fertile lands have outperformed others, and have produced the maximum quantity of grains for thirty odd years for the entire nation. Punjab was a model for agriculture which the entire country looked up to. But now, with depleted lands, the level production, even with the maximal use of chemicals, has fallen to as low as 40%. In this scenario, could we recommend organic farming to the farmers, as shifting to organic farming would definitely mean a loss to the farmers in Punjab? With governmental support and allocation of funds for the promotion of organic farming, states like Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are emerging as the models of organic farming. The acceptability of organic farming in these states is very high and not comparable with the states of Haryana and Punjab. **The introduction of organic farming in these states should be done in a step by step manner and not all at once**. A sustainable production system has to be introduced that can reclaim soil fertility, enhance agro-biodiversity and restore the integration between livestock and crops. The agro-ecosystems need to be made more productive and resilient, which implies protecting, conserving and enhancing biodiversity in farm lands."

- **Sh Sukhdev Singh, Punjab**: "The convention has seen the presence of high profile people including the Chief Minister of Haryana gracing the occasion during the inaugural ceremony and now the Agriculture Minister of Punjab. This means that the convention is showing a road to implement organic farming in the country. So, at this stage the government cannot say that it is not viable to do organic farming in Punjab. If organic farming is not viable, then the chemical farming and genetically modified technology are also not viable. With the support of our Government and by having the policies and budget allocations which encouraged use of chemicals for the hybrid crops, the Rockefeller Foundation and Ford foundation could introduce Green

Revolution in India. The support was also provided in the form of subsidies so that the big companies could sell chemicals to farmers. Subsidies were given to make sure our farmers use chemicals. It is high time for our farmers to receive institutional support for doing organic farming and both Central and State Governments should make an equal contribution in this regard. **The organic farmers should be given subsidies for input costs. The government should also provide support for the marketing of organic produce.** The farmers are not good marketers. Hence, the Government has to lend support to the farmers, as this would encourage organic farming. **The Government of Punjab is encouraging GM as well as Organic produce. This is not acceptable to any of the organic farmers.** The farmers need to agitate and ensure a complete ban of GM food entering our country. The promotion of organic produce is Government's responsibility along with correcting the wrong that the Government did by ushering in the Green Revolution without any research. **The government should also consider providing a Minimum Support Price for organic products**."

- **Sh Sajjan Kumar, Rajasthan:** "With no water I had to turn to organic farming. My slogan is 'No water, No chemical farming'. Water resources are drying up, soils are being degraded, thereby reducing the integrity of natural ecosystems. Common resources are also being threatened. Changes in the climate have reduced water resources. This is threatening agricultural production and livelihoods. Extreme climatic events, such as extended droughts and floods, are threatening our life itself. Organic farming is definitely an answer to all these adverse developments. This is the only livelihood option which the farmers now have. **Organic farmers and their supporters have to together fight the MNCs and also our Ministers, who are working against the farmers. Why doesn't the Government abolish chemical farming?** If we need to live, we need to change our farming practices and move from chemical based farming to organic farming methods."

- **Sh Lal, Rajasthan:** "India should be GM Free. Do not divide the farmers with regions or state level boundaries. Farmers have no religion and no caste. They are of one caste and nothing should divide them. A common policy for the entire country is needed. The subsidies being given directly to the companies should be stopped and the Government should make provisions for giving subsidies to the farmers. This would help the farmer decide the inputs he needs to buy. This will enable the farmers to make a change and practice organic farming because they would get to decide what external inputs they need to buy. **Since the subsidies are provided to the companies, the farmers continue to remain in the clutches of the companies which dictate what fertilisers or pesticides the farmers should use.** Organic farming is the traditional farming that our forefathers practiced, so it is the same as 'Javik Farming' or 'Natural Farming'. Natural farming encourages pollination. Bees play a key role in plant reproduction and consequently in food production. The loss of natural pollinators is due to the spread of chemicals in agriculture. The introduction of genetically engineered crops, such as the Bt crops, in our agro-ecosystems is a threat

to pollinators. The bees are increasingly getting wiped out and this has reduced the diversity of our crops. **The midday meals provided in the schools should be totally organic.** This will encourage the consumption of diverse food and also promote the diverse cropping systems that can revive our biodiversity. The marketing of organic produce should be the government's responsibility, just the way it is supporting the marketing of the chemical produce. The farmers are the owners of seeds and they should not depend on the market for their seed inputs."

- **Sh Ratan Lal Yadav, Rajasthan:** "Making a transition to the organic food systems is the only way forward to sustain agriculture in our country. The conversion should be done in a step by step manner and the Government needs to support the farmers in this venture. Changing to organic is an experiment for the farmer. Hence, the government support is necessary so that the farmers can have the inputs that are needed to convert to organic. Soil building is an exercise every farmer should take up as an initial step since using fungicides has killed the microorganisms in the soil."
- **Sh Virendra, Maharashtra: "**Our soils were fertile and our country was named after the son of Dushyanta and Shakuntala. 'Bharat' was a country rich in traditional knowledge and culture. The traditional agriculture followed in our country was by default organic. In essence, organic farming can contribute to social-cultural cohesion. However, with the advent of chemical farming, the farmer is no more respected for his profession. Farmers in our country are looked down upon and this is the reason that many of them have left farming. Organic farming can revive the farmers' life by bringing prosperity to rural areas and improving environmental health and well-being of society at large. Organic farming keeps both the farmers and the consumers fit and healthy."

Smt Kavitha Kuruganti made a plea to the Punjab Agriculture Minister to bring in a comprehensive organic farming policy for the state, which will address the issue of agro-diversity by promotion of farmer-controlled seed varieties, by increasing crop diversity, by ensuring adequate farmer-to-farmer extension support, by supporting organic farming marketing and by giving primacy to women farmers in this effort.

The facilitator, **Sh Afsar Jafri** concluded the session with the following words:

"The rural economy, which supports multiple livelihoods based on agriculture, is shrinking rapidly and facing deep and multiple crises. The farmer has become only a producer and purchaser of inputs. Large-scale migration from rural areas to cities is threatening agriculture production and livelihoods. Water resources are drying up, soils are degrading and biodiversity is fast eroding. Food and nutrition has emerged as a major challenge. The multiple challenges being faced by the farming community need a policy that can help restore our ecological integrity and our agro-ecosystems. In this session, we have identified the need to promote organic farming and

recommended an enabling policy framework that encourages agriculture and health of our society. The key points discussed in this session are:

- There is a **need for a policy which can help restore the traditional crops** that have high nutritional value.
- We need **campaigns to create awareness** on organic farming, organic products and conservation of traditional seeds, which are the first step for transitioning to organic farming.
- **Government support is needed to convert to fully organic systems.** Institutional support should be provided for the crop improvement of local varieties. **Certification process for the organic products should be the responsibility of the Government**. The organic produce should be part of the **Public Distribution System and Public Feeding programs**, such as Mid-day Meals and Integrated Child Development Scheme.
- The capacities of farmers should be strengthened so that **farmers can also be the processors of organic products**. The entire supply chain management including packaging and branding should be facilitated to increase incomes of rural producers. The value addition of the organic produce using solar energy be introduced.
- As is the case with the operation of a conventional market, there is a need to set up **decentralised procurement, storage and distribution systems** in organic markets as it will reduce the burden of marketing on the organic producer. The farmer need to exercise his right to produce the crop of his choice, which is connected to food sovereignty. Corporates should not decide what the farmers wants to grow."

Parallel Session II: Agro-Toxins and Environmental Health

The adverse impacts of chemical farming and pesticide residues on biodiversity, human and environmental health are well-recognised. Experts from the medical field and social activists who were present in the session on 'Agro Toxins and Environmental Health' cited various scientific studies which have confirmed the existence of toxins found in the blood samples of the population exposed to chemical fertilizers and pesticides. The session participants unanimously advocated for strong laws against environmental toxicity.

Special Guest	Sh Surjit Jyani (Health Minister, Govt of Punjab)
Facilitators	Dr. Amar Singh Azad

Lead Discussants	Dr. GPI Singh, Sh Sridhar Radhakrishnan, Sh Hemant Goswami, Dr. Geeta Arora, Sh Amit Khurana

The key discussions points included:

- The special guest **Sh Surjit Jyani, Health Minister, Punjab** linked the increasing incidence of various diseases with the change in farming practices. In his words "**Farmers became dependent on chemicals due to government subsidies. The use of chemicals has resulted in a decline in the population of natural pest controllers like sparrows. This has led to further promotion of chemical methods"**.
- In particular, Punjab has suffered heavily but still doesn't have a comprehensive policy to eliminate pesticides. **Dr G P I Singh**, Vice-Chancellor of Adesh University, talked about the rising rate of abortion and cancer cases in Punjab. **Dr Geeta Arora** of Punjab Engineering College informed the audience about pesticide residues in various food items. **Sh Amit Khurana** from Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) shared the details of a 2004 study done by CSE in Punjab. "A cocktail of pesticides ranging from 6-13 was found in the blood samples with one of them having 600 times the concentration level found in US. Many of the pesticides being used in India are not even registered and don't have the maximum residue limits (MRLs) set for the crops they are used for. Shouldn't we have a chemical trespass law which debars the entry of chemicals in our food chain and which punishes the manufacturers?" he asked.
- When requested by the audience to introduce a policy for banning cancer-causing agents, Sh Jyani **expressed concerns on issues related to food security**.
- **Sh Sridhar Radhakrishnan** of Thanal, Kerala, opined that the **policy makers tend to raise a food security bogey every time they are asked to act against chemical farming. "In fact, it's a non-issue as India produces enough food grains to feed double the size of current population.** The problem is with the management as most of the food we produce rots in godowns. In fact, the data shows that **only 43 per cent of the food produced by India in 1951 was enough to feed the country and that was before the green revolution,**" he asserted. Sh Radhakrishnan also shared his experience of working with communities and state government to ban the use of endosulfan in Kerala. "**The state government has now declared that Kerala would be free of chemical farming by 2016**," he informed the gathering.
- **Sh Hemant Goswami**, a social activist, gave the details of a writ petition filed by him in the High Court of Punjab and Haryana to ban all cancer-causing agents. "**While the Central and Haryana Government have formed expert committees to look into the issue, Punjab has formed a committee with no expert as its member**," he said while requesting the Health Minister of Punjab to rectify this anomaly. Sh Goswami also stressed on the need to do a thorough research on cancer-causing agents in

India, especially in the states of Punjab and Haryana, where farmers are involved in intensive chemical farming.

Parallel Session III: Adivasi Agriculture

Facilitators	Sh Debjeet Sarangi, Sh Bharat Mansata, Sh Saroj Mohanty, Sh Soumik Banerjee
Lead Discussants	Sh Ludru Ram Nag, Sh Bishwa Roop

About 40 participants, from the tribal belt of Telangana, Odisha, Chattisgarh and from Uttarakhand, Kerala in addition to delegates from Gurgaon attended the session on 'Adivasi Agriculture' and discussed measures to protect the whole 'Adivasi' way of life in addition to their method of doing agriculture**.** A diaspora of adivasis, government extension officers, activists and aspiring new farmers discussed issues ranging from the attack on the Adivasi traditional knowledge, challenges facing organic farming, market pressures on organic farmers and the success stories. It was concluded that Adivasi Agriculture is not merely about the issue of chemical versus organic farming. It involves issues related to land ownership, rights, displacement politics and others.



Parallel Session in Progress

- **Sh Bishwa Roop**, working with **Adivasis in Malkangiri** explained: “For six months in a year, **Adivasis depend on forest for food and when they grow food, it is mixed farming, never monoculture, so that they keep yielding something round the year. We could count 50-55 crops in their field and even after that, the Adivasi women could cite more. It’s all in their system - they know how to grow, when to grow, why to grow and how to manage weeds etc**”. Adivasi agriculture by its very nature has conserved biodiversity and created traditional knowledge of usage and application of the local flora. For Adivasis, forests are not separate from agriculture.
- **Sh Debjeet Sarangi,** of the NGO ‘Living Farms’ that works with forest dwelling communities in Odisha, shared that **when some forest-dwelling communities were asked to cite parameters to map their fields, they listed 26 parameters with yield being only one of them.** One field gives them food for the entire year: some pulses, some oilseeds, spices, yam and vegetables, so much so that they don’t have to source much from outside. Modern agricultural graduates don’t even know how to measure this yield from a mixed farm, and end up defining this mixed system as ‘backward’.

- In the words of **Sh Debjeet Sarangi** “**Unlike a simple substitution of chemical fertilizers and hybrid seeds with organic ones and indigenous varieties, Adivasi agriculture is quite complex. For them, natural farming, which they have practiced for ages, is a struggle for the ownership of their resources, about a political scenario that seeks to displace them and make them unconfident of their traditional ways**”.
- **Sh Saroj Mohanty** from **Paschim Odisha Kisaan Sangharsh Samiti** concurred and stated that the “**Fight against hybrid seeds and chemical agriculture is a fight for their traditional value system, their control over their land and resources. The entire hybrid cotton belt of Rayagada, Balangir and Koraput were earlier the Adivasi mixed farming regions. Now, if a little bit of Adivasi agriculture does exist there, it is under the control of seed dealers. So chemical agriculture has not just changed the way of farming but also the ownership pattern of land.”**
- **Sh Saroj Mohanty** said “**An Adivasi way of life is based on a non-accumulative value system.** They do not like saving for the future. However, when the outsiders started asking them questions on profit and loss, they found them confusing and their confidence in the traditional skills went down. Ironically, we call it mainstreaming”. It has been observed that whenever the modern agriculture has made an entry in an Adivasi area, it has been accompanied by the transfer of ownership of land from Adivasis to the traders and contractors.
- **Sh PR Tarma** from Gutoli village in Chattisgarh’s Dantewada shared “When my grandfather settled in Dantewada, only three millets ‘Kutki’, ‘China’ and ‘Sawa’ were grown. Our agriculture has traditionally been without chemicals. Most people in my community still don’t know what is ‘modern agriculture’. Even paddy was introduced

only recently. The organic high yielding ideas like 'Jeevamrut' have alone contributed to the increase of yields in our area". He also explained the origin of the name of his village 'Gutoli' which comes from 'Gut'- the leftover stump after cutting trees.

Curious new farmers from other areas, who had come to the session mainly to understand the traditional forms of agriculture, were inspired to learn more about the Adivasi culture. The session made them more conscious of the intrusion and negative influence that outsiders may create in the well-knit lives of Adivasis.

Parallel Session IV: Plant Protection

Facilitator	Dr. Zakir Hussain
Lead Discussants	Dr. Ramoo, Dr. Chandrasekhar, Smt Sumitra Thacker, Smt Vidya Rudraksha, Sh Shashi Bhushan Singh, Sh Dolagobinda Panda

In this parallel session, several farmers shared their experiences and presented different natural/organic ways of plant protection.

- **Dr. Ramoo** shared several useful case-studies and tips for effective pest management:
  - Out of the entire living population on the planet, 75% are insects. Insects are at least 10 lakh years older than human beings. **To understand pest management, the farmers must educate themselves with the basic knowledge of insects. Insects lay approximately 500 eggs each cycle. They can easily adapt themselves to the ecological changes such as temperature, humidity etc.**
  - **There are two types of insects: veg and non-veg. Non-veg pests are not harmful to crops.** For ex., Lady Bird Beetles can eat 50 aphids in a single day.
  - Insect Pest Management is important even in case of organic farming. To draw a parallel, one can be bitten by mosquitoes even if one is healthy.
  - The case-study of a pest named as 'Borer' (local name) is unique since when it attacks the brinjal, the vegetable does not develop any kind of a hole on its surface. The pest infests during the flowering stage itself. So, spraying any amount of a pesticide doesn't affect the pest. This pest infests only the brinjals. So, it is essential that the farmers do not sow brinjal at one particular time. **If there is intercropping, the life cycle of this pest will be disturbed.** Coriander is good companion crop for brinjal and helps in effective pest control. Moreover, this pest mates only once in its lifetime. **An effective method to manage this pest is to stop the male-female mating (reproduction). The farmers can attract the male pests by installing traps in their farms. The adult pests are attracted to light.** By applying these simple techniques, one can reduce the population of this pest by 60-70%.

- After the arrival of American cotton in India, **Sundhi (Local name) pest** was identified. To tackle the nuisance of Sundhi, pesticides were introduced. This pest eats all crops except paddy. While laying eggs, it is attracted by yellow flowers like Marigold. **Therefore it is recommended to plant marigold as intercrop/trap crop.**
- **Stemborer** pest eats paddy crops. They lay eggs on the tips of the plant. It is advised to cut the tip while transplanting. This pest can also stay alive in the water near the crops. **It is therefore advised to add 3% neem oil in water or mix the neem oil in sand and sprinkle it in the farm.**
- **Mealybug is causing big losses in Punjab. When farmers apply excess nitrogen to the farm soil, the crops becomes sweet and attract mealybugs.**
- **Weak pests die when chemical pesticides are sprayed in the farm. But, a few stronger pests survive and build resistance.** Gradually, as the farmers continue to spray pesticides, their resistance further increases. Therefore, **it is necessary for the farmers to maintain the balance of the ecological systems in their farms.**
- Farmers usually believe in prescriptions and depend on second hand information. It is not a good farm management practice. **It is important for the farmers to educate themselves with a basic understanding of pests rather than go by 'one size fits all' prescription.** For example, to prevent the spread of mosquitoes, the water is not allowed to become polluted and stagnant. Similar approaches should be adopted for effective pest management in the farms.

- **Dr. Baljit Bian (DHO, Hisar)** said that **the pests are symptoms of illness and not the reason thereof** and recommended the farmers to **learn how to identify and count the economic threshold level (ETL) of pests or insects in the farm**. He gave the example of late Dr. Surendra Dalal who had identified 216 insects.

- **Sh Manveer Singh,** a farmer from Haryana shared his views on pest management:
  - "The oft-heard classification of pests into friendly or beneficial and detrimental or bad categories, is not correct. **The correct classification is herbivore vs. carnivore insects. A balance of these types of insects is important for the management of farms.**
  - Corporations name poisons as "dawa" or medicines. **'Dawas' are supposed to help things get healthier whereas pesticides and poisons do not do this.** This mischievous nomenclature causes confusion regarding the nature of these chemicals.
  - We have a habit to interfere with nature. There used to be no fear of insects until the companies started manufacturing insecticides. The companies do not mention which insects these insecticides can kill. The farmers do not know the names of all insects that live on their farms. **Around 17% of the content in an insecticide**

contains the poison. The remaining 80% stuff makes the leaves shine and the plant 'glows'. The farmer thinks that by spraying insecticides, the crop has developed the healthy shine whereas, the chemical can only kill the insect and doesn't have the ability to improve the plant's own health."

- **Sh Dileep Singh**, a farmer from Haryana shared his experience of protecting the health of plants using readily available natural ingredients. **He gave a recipe for making simple preparations with any of the available leaves and herbs such as Neem, Datura, Lantana and Curry-leaves.** He suggested that one can protect plants, animals and human health by following a similar fundamental approach and by using the ingredients available on the farm.
- One important question that came up during the discussion was: "**The use of insecticides eradicates all insects including beneficial ones. If this practice is stopped, will a farm eventually be able to recover its beneficial insect population**?". Experienced participants informed that it would.
- The other useful information shared on pest management included:
  - Farmers would soon be able to get useful tips on '**Krishi TV'** and would also have access to the online trainings on **'eKrishi.in'.**
  - Monoculture cropping is generally responsible for the disturbance of ecological balance. It is imperative for the farmers to understand that any kind of a disturbance in nature would lead to a crisis situation. It is also important to understand the link between soil health and pest/disease incidence.

Parallel Session V: Water

Facilitator	Sh Biju Negi

The participants of the Parallel Session on 'Water' identified several reasons for the scarcity and contamination of water resources:

- Water, as a natural resource, was a common property for all the living species including human beings and other life forms. However, it is now being acquired and **privatised by large corporate bodies** (for example the soft drink bottling businesses), thereby limiting its availability to the common people. The **non-regulation of industry enterprises and the prioritization of their needs** is affecting the water availability in various parts of the country.
- The lack of easy and adequate availability of water can also be attributed to the **erratic, excessive or deficient rainfall; and the excessive extraction of the groundwater** for agricultural and non-agricultural purposes.

- The quality of water has degraded due to the high usage of chemicals in agriculture and industry. The **chemical run-off into water bodies is a major source of contamination** and thus, there is a strong need to build organic farming systems.
- **Commercial, intensive agriculture, along with deforestation** is also leading to the depletion of water resources.

Based on their individual experiences, several farmers recommended different ways to conserve and protect water resources:

- **Sh Murugesan, Ramnad, Tamil Nadu** suggested that water availability can be improved if certain storage and recharge methods are widely adopted by farmers. For example, **building of ponds and storages within the farmlands. He suggested that creation of small ponds covered by solar panels can reduce the loss of water due to evaporation and also assist in power generation for the use of farmers.**
- **Sh Nagarathinam Naidu, AP** suggested adopting water conservation technologies such as **drip irrigation & sprinklers**. He recommended the **wider adoption of permaculture or other traditional methods** for rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge. **Tree planting and enhanced biodiversity** on all farm lands would help enhance precipitation of rain and also the recharge of aquifers.
- **Sh Siby, Kerala** shared that the initiative taken by the Kerala Government to **recharge open wells** is yielding good results.
- **A farmer from Maharashtra** stated that the current practice of extracting water by digging deep borewells must be regulated and gradually reduced. The recharge rate of water level from rainfall is steadily declining while the depletion of groundwater level due to deep bore wells is happening at a faster rate. The extraction of surface water from open wells is a better practice. He suggested **introducing laws regulating the sinking of bore wells** to check the rampant increase of new bore wells all over India. He recommended that the **growing of crops such as millets and pulses which require minimal irrigation** should be encouraged, while the water guzzling crops like sugarcane should be strongly discouraged, especially in water scarce areas. He also suggested **rejuvenating the community water tanks** through community mobilisation and people's participation.
- **A farmer from Jaipur** recommended **introduction of strict laws to prevent water exploitation by the soft drink industry.** It was also recommended that the **industries using dyes and chemicals** should be properly regulated and the purification of effluents discharged from such units be mandatorily done so as to improve the quality of water.

Parallel Session VI: GMOs and Organic Farming

Facilitator	Smt Sreedevi Lakshmi Kutty

Lead Discussant	Smt Dilnavaz Variava, Sh Rajesh Krishnan

The session started with a brief presentation by Smt Dilnavaz followed by an open discussion covering following points:

- Just is the case with many other fields/sectors, the approach today in agriculture is mainly about using expensive chemical treatments and quick fixes, rather than focusing on building the nutrition in the soil or the body to resolve the underlying causes. This has led to the creation of extreme measures such as the use of pesticides and accumulation of toxins. It is natural for the target organisms to develop resistance towards chemicals leaving us with no other solution.
- First, the scientists came up with the dirty science of using chemicals on farm and now, have come up with an even dirtier and ineffective method (GMOs) to deal with the problems created by the use of toxins.
- **Co-existence of GM and non-GM crops is not possible since such contamination can occur from any source at any stage such as from the fields, due to farm implements, at storage level, during the transport or through any other means.** Therefore the release of GMOs is a major risk and threat to organic farming. With GMOs all around the organic fields, it is increasingly getting difficult to maintain the organic status of farms and prevent contamination.
- Big corporations are using their clout to stop independent research on GMOs and have been contaminating the farms and food chain by doing field trials. In some states, with the active involvement of some farmer leaders, **there have been attempts to do illegal field trials and deliberate contamination.**
- Many of the agriculture scientists, both retired and others, promote GMOs as a great scientific advancement with no side-effects. However, **when the same scientists are asked about the impacts on bees, butterflies or other life forms, they are dismissive, patronizing and unwilling for discussion.**
- In many cases, even the farmers do not understand the impact of GMOs; many believe that these solutions could be the panacea for their problems.
- The monopolistic attitude of companies like Monsanto and their intention to patent the natural resources is discomfiting and unacceptable to the farmer communities.
- Citizens are labelled unscientific and made to feel defensive talking about their concerns regarding GMOs.

The gathering came up with following suggestions and recommendations:

- The government should make it possible for the consumers to test their food for the presence of GM residues and other sources of contamination. **Cheap, reliable and accessible testing facilities should be created.**

- Broad-based and open stakeholder consultations should be carried out at every stage of introducing GM crops. Such **discussions should precede the conduct of open air field trials and only with adequate public consent and acceptance, should GM crops be allowed for testing.**
- Labeling, if genuine and meticulous, may protect the consumers' interest. **All GM foods or the food containing GM ingredients should be strictly labeled.** Until the same is made possible, no approval should be granted to GM crops.
- In case field trials happen, **stringent testing procedures should** be followed**.** If any contamination is found, **heavy penalties**, including the blacklisting of concerned companies and their promoters, be imposed. Regulators should also be held liable.
- **Every one of us should demand organic food**, thereby creating a market for organic foods, and enabling more and more farmers grow organic food.
- **All individuals should raise their voice on the GMO issue** since it concerns every one of us. The concerted forces of biotech industry lobbies and governments that support them should be opposed unanimously. The tipping point on GMO issue can come if we are consistent in our efforts and work with all segments of the society.
- **The government should support setting up of seed banks conserving the indigenous varieties of seeds** so that farmers' choice for alternatives is not destroyed forever. These seed banks should be accessible to all farmers.
- **The majority report of the Technical Expert Committee** should form the basis of decision regarding open air trials and the government should adopt its recommendations.
- **Sacred groves should be created** which are kept pesticide- and GMO- free.
- NGOs and others working on these issues should collaborate with each other to sensitize more and more individuals on the GM issue.
- The session participants declared '**Our food is our right**' and recommended **an immediate ban on all open air field trials** happening in the country.

Parallel Session VII: Biodiversity and Crop Planning

Facilitator	Sh Biju Negi
Lead Discussants	Sh Raghava, Sh Lumlang Khongthothrem

In the parallel session on 'Biodiversity and Crop Planning', farmers identified **forceful acquisition of land by the industry along with the alienation of land** as a key factor leading to loss in biodiversity.

- **Sh Lumlang Khongthothrem**, from Meghalaya, shared that the **destruction of Meghalaya's rich biodiversity** can be attributed to three major factors:
  - **Setting up of cement industries** which have wantonly extracted limestone
  - **Deforestation of the pristine hills** to grow commercially lucrative broom grass which has caused the loss of green cover, and severely affected the rainfall and climate patterns
  - **Large scale cultivation** of Broomstick grass which has led to the depletion of the water table and drying of the streams
- **Sh Raghava,** a farmer from Karnataka, presented a creative and informative powerpoint on **'Aikanthika', his 21-acre natural farm inspired by the principles of Sh Masanobu Fukuoka**. Sh Raghava has been following a biodiversity-based agricultural approach since 1996. He shared that he has consciously adopted practices like **zero tillage and nil usage of fertilisers and pesticides.** He shared that the **plant diversity on his farm has resulted in much healthier crops and trees resilient to pests and droughts. It has also increased diversity of animal and insect life in a balanced manner. Initial infestation of snakes has been stemmed by peacocks and other predators which help maintain the ecological balance. Consequently, harvesting of the produce is the only labour-intensive activity in his farm.**
- The **farmers from Maharashtra, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh** concurred with Sh Raghava and shared that **living on biodiverse farms, and collecting what is naturally grown, has provided them with a produce sufficient to live a comfortable life.** They recommended that farmers should not destroy the diverse vegetation which grows naturally on the farms.

Parallel Session VIII: Soil

Facilitators	Sh Ashok Bang, Dr. Sultan Ismail, Dr. OP Rupela

There is an enormous amount of knowledge available with organic farmers regarding the ways of strengthening and rejuvenating soil. In particular, in states such as Andhra Pradesh, where there is adequate government support, there are several farmers with extensive knowledge on soil conservation. The parallel session on 'Soil' provided participants with an opportunity to exchange a part of this knowledge with each other.

- The participants agreed that when both the chemical inputs and organic inputs are used for the same purpose in soil, the chemical inputs act as alien and invasive while the organic inputs work in a way as it 'happens in nature'.
- **Dr. Sultan Ismail, Chennai,** known as the **earthworm man of India,** spoke of **soil as a living system and the presence of local earthworm in the soil as an indicator of the soil's health**. He said that the soil gets its rich aroma because of the microbes

living within it. He provided the audience with simple recipes to test and enhance soil health. **He shared a simple thumb rule to identify the broad spectrum of bio-repellants with the help of a goat as a guru. Distillation of such plant leaves and herbs which a goat doesn't eat, can work as an excellent broad spectrum bio repellant.**

- Good practices that are being promoted by state governments were highlighted, and the same demanded to be adopted elsewhere.

Day Two | Sunday | March 1, 2015

Plenary Session

The Morning Plenary Session on Day 2 started on an inspiring note with a few farmers singing songs in celebration of farming and farm-based livelihoods. Thereafter, **Smt Kavitha Kuruganti** from ASHA briefed the gathering about the plan for the day and introduced **Sh Subash Sharma,** a long time and eminent natural farmer and invited him to share his story and experiences with the gathering.

- **Sh Subash Sharma** shared with the audience his journey, learnings and experiences in the field of organic farming. He provided the audience with a deep insight into the working of his farm and recommended several useful techniques for effective and sustainable farm management. The key points of his speech are presented below:

"Since 1994, I have been doing natural farming. Prior to that (1975-1993), I used to practise farming with chemicals. During that period, I learnt that farming cannot happen with dead soil. Any science or technology that causes harm cannot be the right one. Thus, I made a transition to the natural farming. When I began natural farming, nature became my guru and the multitude of creatures my professors.

The applied sciences came in vogue after 1960s and no respect was accorded to the fundamental science. We adopted a prescriptive attitude and began using chemicals instead of examining the needs of the plants and their nature. We systematically destroyed the bio-diversity in the farms and the much needed microbes were wiped out from our soils.

We have also lost our right on our seeds; along with the perspective about who owns the seeds. We lost both our native seeds and our fundamental right to own them. We have failed to understand the water cycles. Despite having sufficient rains, 80% of the area has gone into the grey zone. When the water situation has become dangerous, can that be a good situation?

In short, we have destroyed soil, water and seed for merely increasing the yields. But the truth is that even the yields are not increasing. Why has there been no increase in the yields over the period 2007 to 2011? Why have our applied sciences not worked? The applied sciences have ruined the farmers. The farmers became indebted to buy fertilizers, pesticides and seeds. This is a dangerous trend.

Now, let us look at solutions.

Farming should be done with the judicious use of natural resources. Agriculture is food, water and air and it is a necessity to produce positive things through your farm. Our soil is our mother and if we murder our soil, we cannot produce results.

The soil fertility is built and strengthened with the help of cattle, trees, birds and biomass.

Every natural farmer needs cattle and we have to facilitate the rearing of cattle. The urine and dung can be used to make various crop supplements, to the extent that natural farming is almost impossible without cattle rearing. If our farmers prepare natural fertilizers and continuously use them in their soil, then the soil fertility is built up. The farmers should also grow 4 to 5 trees per acre. Ever since I had planted the trees, I have not experienced any pest problems in the farm. The trees also help manage the micro climate, improve microbial activity and increase the bird population.

The farmers should also create biomass using the plant matter and over a period of 3 years the soil quality will improve considerably. The farmers should manage water through various techniques; that way all the water is stored in the farm. When our farmers conserve water and plant trees, our GDP will automatically increase.

There are countless bees in our farm throughout the year. Good quality seeds cannot be produced without bees. Farmers should undertake crop rotation to improve productivity and also understand the impact of seasons on various crops. If grown in the right season, the crops will grow well and the yields will be high.

Every farmer should allocate 2% of his farm holding for soil fertility building, 3% for water conservation and 10% for trees and micro climate. The farmer should be appropriately compensated for his efforts. The farmers should understand his labor needs and plan accordingly. For example, if weeding is done in the early stages, then the effort is reduced. We have to understand the science behind plants and soil."

Interview of Panel of 5 Young Farmers

The opening speech from Sh Subhash Sharma was followed by the introduction and the interview of the panel of 5 young farmers, to understand why they got into (organic) farming and why they continue (organic) farming.

- **Smt Anuradha Sarang:** Based in Attapady, Smt Anuradha developed a budding interest in growing safe food after getting married into a farming family. Currently, she undertakes sustainable rain-fed farming.
- **Sh Chinmay Futane**: Sh Futane took up organic farming from his father Sh Vasant Futane 10 years ago on his 35 acre plot. He travels extensively to create awareness on organic farming.
- **Sh V. M. Parthasarthy**: Based out of Chennai, Sh Parthasarthy decided to explore options other than his job in a software company, since he was not happy with what he was doing. In his search, he met Sh. Nammalwar who suggested him to explore

farming. Currently, he grows traditional rice and pulses in his farm located outside Chennai.

- **Sh Ravdeep Singh**: Sh Singh has been an organic farmer for over 10 years. Currently, he grows basmati rice, wheat, mustard and flax seeds. Also, he has plans to undertake organic dairy farming.
- **Sh Rajesh Krishnan**: Sh Krishnan started farming to better understand agriculture, a subject he has been campaigning about, including specifically against genetically modified crops for around 12 years now. He is a first generation farmer with a formal training in biotechnology and a strong inclination towards ecology. He farms in Wayanad, a district located in northern Kerala. Over the years, he has developed a sharp acumen to correctly identify the several problems faced while doing agriculture. Growing rice, pulses and spices is the main source of his livelihood. Sh Krishnan strongly believes that organic farming is not only an alternative but the only way to ensure food security.

Interview of Panel of 5 Young Farmers	
Question	*Why have you chosen organic farming? How viable is it economically?*
Sh Ravdeep	Initially, I started with chemical farming. In 2009, my mother contracted cancer; which led to discussions around how our environment and food are completely toxic. Subsequently, we got motivated enough to switch to organic farming. There isn't much difference in income between chemical and organic farming. There is some saving as water usage is 40% lower in organic farming. My dependency on the heavy machinery and the electricity usage has reduced considerably. Though some of the crop yields have come down marginally, it has not affected the income.
Sh Parthasarathy	During my travels, I met many farmers. I found every organic farmer to be happy, contented and having considerable pride in his lifestyle choices. In stark contrast, every inorganic farmer called me a fool for exploring farming as an option and unequivocally expressed their inability to make any money. We also had our son 5 years back and I wanted to feed him poison free food. Hence, organic farming was the only option.
Question	*Weeds are a big problem in organic farming. The weedicide usage has become rampant in MP and farmers who do not use weedicide are considered backward. So is there any solution for weeds? How about fungus?*

Interview of Panel of 5 Young Farmers	
Sh Chinmay	If you deal with weeds when they are small, they are less of a problem. Weeds are an important component of organic farming. But, we have to ensure that the weeds do not suppress and shadow the plants. Small hand tools and power tools can be used to do so. We use brush cutter for orchards as well as cotton and tuvar/pigeonpea. We have been cutting grass with brush cutter, wherever possible and use human labor to remove weeds close to plants. The removed weeds are used as biomass. Weeds also reduce over a period of time, if dealt through organic practices.
Sh Ravdeep	Weeds are controlled through mulching in vegetables
Sh Rajesh	While most farms focus on decreasing labor on the farm to reduce cost, I prefer labor intensive farming since I want to involve more people.
Question	*We see madness in your choosing this line of work. Is that so?*
Collectively	Yes, it is madness. But, this is the only way ahead. Look at your children and then decide. I farm because I get a good deep sleep. I farm since I believe that it is my responsibility to be a good citizen. For me it is a political statement – farming is about freedom. I believe that each one of us has to farm.
Question	*Have any of you taken loans? Are you indebted for farming-related reasons?*
Collectively	Yes, for some capital investments. But not for routine operations.
Question	*Is the labor intensive farming viable in Kerala?*
Sh Rajesh	The women laborers I employ for harvesting cost me Rs. 150 more than my neighbor who uses mechanized harvesting. If we move into mechanized farming, then we may end up having no labor in the village.
Smt Anuradha	Use NREGA schemes in your village and leverage the available labor.
Sh Subash Sharma	I look at the labor scenario differently. Since the compensation for family members and wages depend on the work done, they end up earning more. When I benefitted, I started sharing the profits with them. So now, I share 25% of my profits with my labor. I even take them around for a trip every year. The labor on the farm are mostly adivasis; our bonds have only grown stronger with time.
Question	*Do your families support your initiatives?*
Collectively	Yes!

Parallel Session I: Organic Certification and Marketing

The parallel session on 'Organic Certification and Marketing' started with the exciting fervor of a completely packed room. The facilitators and the lead discussants of the session included:

Facilitators	Sh Ashish Gupta, Sh Sridhar Radhakrishnan
Lead Discussants	Sh P B Murali, Sh Rohit Jain, Sh Akhil Kapoor

- **Sh Akhil Kapoor**: Sh Kapoor introduced to the participants the concept of 'Delhi Organic Farmers Market' launched 2 years back. As per Sh Kapoor, the Farmers' market has matured well with the growing middle class serving as its main customer base. Several government servants, bureaucrats, and expats are the regular customers of this market. The market mechanism is totally transparent and efforts are being made to align it to the global slow food movement.
- **Sh Rohit Jain**: Sh Jain presented the success story of 'Vat Vriksh', also known as the 'Banyan Roots' initiative in Rajasthan. This network comprises 148 farmers and reported INR 40 Lakhs annual turnover in the previous year. **As per Sh Jain, keeping the supply chain short and enabling farmers with Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) certification were the key success factors.** Banyan Roots has also established backward and forward linkages across the value chain and has opened a restaurant. It has also been undertaking value addition activities of the produce near the source. Sh Jain believes that while certification has its value, **building trust and transparency to connect the farmers with their consumers in the local markets is crucial to ensure the success of organic farming initiatives.**
- **Sh PB Murali:** Sh Murali who is one of the pioneers in the organic circles in Chennai is also the founder of 'Sunday Shandy', a market that brings organic produce directly to the customers. Sh Murali opined that producing without marketing is akin to committing suicide. **He recommended the new-age farmers to organize themselves and tap the opportunities in the wholesale segment - a missing link in the organic landscape today.** He also recommended the farmers to produce quality products so as to ensure getting a fair price in markets. **Sh Murali emphasized the importance of organizing, networking, production and selling diverse crops to manage the risks and rewards.**
- **Sh Sridhar Radhakrishnan**: Sh Radhakrishnan explained the origin of Thanal's Organic Bazaar - a privately run company in Thiruvanthapuram, Kerala which started with a group of 3 farmers and 6 consumers. Scheduled every second Saturday, the bazaar slowly grew in transactions from Rs. 2000 to 8 Lakh rupees a month. Sh

Radhakrishnan illustrated the idea behind the initiative, which was to create a nation-wide (OFAI accredited) enterprise that can establish networks and enable fair marketing of organic surpluses across the country. He continually stressed on the importance of farmers to organise themselves well and adopt a professional approach. **Sh Radhakrishnan proposed the formation of a marketing grid which can connect all the small and marginal farmers across the country. This grid can enable the transaction and sharing of information of the stock and produce, enabling certification and aggregation at a lower level. Sh Radhakrishnan is already spearheading such an initiative in Kerala.**

Followed by the speeches from facilitators and lead discussants, the rest of the session was mainly interactive wherein the participants expressed their key concerns and queries as captured below:

- Issue of certification being a big impediment for organic food marketing especially for the small and marginal farmers due to its high costs, bureaucracy and inaccessibility
- Need of government support for Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS)
- Suspicious nature of the claims related to traceability and validity made by the several new organic marketeers which can cause a serious damage to the entire movement
- Need for a large scale marketing effort in the country while ensuring the rights and benefits of small farmers
- Query regarding the number of small marketing efforts across the country
- Questions were also asked on how farmers can get fair pricing and better market connections.

The facilitators, lead discussants and other participants addressed several of the above concerns and elucidated the benefits and drawbacks of various kinds of certifications e.g. third party, PGS, voluntary. **Sh Ashmeet Kapoor** and **Sh Anish Joel** were called in to provide participants with more information on the market linkages.

Parallel Session II: Seed Sovereignty

The parallel session on 'Seed Sovereignty' had following key participants:

Facilitators	Sh Jacob Nellithanam and Smt Sabarmatee
Lead Discussants	Sh Sanjay Patil, Sh Shibaprasad Sahu, Smt Padma Behre, Sh Krishna Prasad

The session began with the facilitators giving the opening speeches and setting the context for discussion:

Sh Jacob Nellithanam: Sh Nellithanam started the session describing the current state of affairs and several challenges faced in conservation of indigenous seed varieties. He said:

"*A Seed Savers Network is being formed, as the seeds that are being preserved are under threat. India being an agriculture based economy is viewed as a huge market for the corporate giants producing agriculture products like seeds and chemicals. International trade regime has opened up windows wherein efforts are targeted towards formulating various kinds acts, bills, laws and patents. The various acts and laws like the 'Plant Varieties Protection & Farmers' Rights Act, Patents, Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) which are meant to protect farmer's seeds and rights, are actually focused on promoting industry owned seeds and seed companies. There are a lot of rules and regulations that may not allow farmers to freely exchange or share seeds. Laws are being implemented without us being aware of them. Just like in the case of Aadhar or the Unique Identification Number (UID), which according to law is not needed but is being enforced everywhere. Similarly, such laws that will harness our rights and seeds are sought to be implemented. The very basis of our existence and culture is going to be regulated. Seed is the basic input and is the lifeline of agriculture. The farming communities over generations have preserved and reused their diverse indigenous seed varieties. It is with this art of preserving and reusing that the agricultural biodiversity and our heritage had been maintained and developed. We now have to decide on how to protect our diversity. Diversity comes with a wealth of knowledge that needs to be protected. Our breeders have to be provided with their rights so that they are able to safeguard their innovations. The government is inconsiderate and will not help breeder, farmers and tribals, since they see a business motive in everything. Sharing knowledge and seeds that farmers have been doing for a long time will be regulated.*"



Seeds varieties at display in the Biodiversity Festival

- **Smt Sabatmatee** praised farmers' efforts and highlighted the need to share innovative methods of conservation. She said: "*Farmers and breeders have painstakingly developed crops that are well suited to the peculiarities of their local climate and*

environment. Each domesticated seed or breed was an answer to some very specific problem—such as drought or disease. The crop diversity of our country is invaluable; each variety has a different trait. Crop diversity is therefore the raw material for improving and adapting crops to meet all the future challenges. Even in the Biodiversity Mela, the seed diversity which has been projected is unbelievable. We have varieties that are of all sizes and colors. But when we visit any of the Government fairs, one will find that the same variety is being displayed for years and everything which is on display is big in size. We are being taught that whatever is big is good and whatever is small is bad. In this session we need to discuss the different ways of conservation. Conservation is the important element for revival of genetic diversity and we need a systematic approach for the conservation and promotion of biological diversity through and extensive training of the organization representatives and also the community members. Several innovative practices in different areas should be highlighted and shared among all. Now, I invite the presenters to share their innovative methods of conservation."

Followed by the introduction from the facilitators, the lead discussants of the session described in detail their experiences of seed conservation with following presentations.

- **Sh Sanjay Patil,** BAIF Development Research Foundation, Pune, Maharashtra

" Genetic diversity is a key element in farmer's livelihood strategies. Seed which was a 'community resource', which has been carefully bred, conserved and evolved over thousands of years, has transformed into a 'commercial proprietary resource'. India has a number of food crops that are resistant to pests, can grow on poor soils and can sustain under the changed climatic conditions with high nutritive values.

Thus, we started to conserve seeds by involving the farmers in **five blocks** i.e.

- Thane – Rice, Finger Millet, Proso Millet, Cow pea
- Nandurbar – Sorghum, Maize, Branyard and Foxtail Millet
- Pune – Rice
- Ahmednagar – Rice and Beans and
- Gadchiroli – Rice, Beans and Wild Food resources.

Indigenous seeds have been preserved in these regions since generations but now the hybrids have been introduced. So, we are implementing a programme with following objectives:

- **Conservation of crop diversity and the knowledge associated with it**
- **Characterization and evaluation of crop landraces, trials for revival and productivity enhancement of worthy landraces**
- **Establishment of community managed seed banks and village level seed production**

In this programme, we have undertaken following activities:

- We implemented the purification of seeds by doing on-farm experimentation and scientific characterization. An evaluation and potential yield study of the worthy landraces was done and packages of practices for each crop were developed.
- For the production of pure seeds, rice, sorghum and maize were selected. Rice crop being a self-pollinated plant does not require bagging. But, sorghum and maize are cross pollinating crops. So tribal folks were provided with technical training on the selection of pure and true to type seeds.
- For the registration, around 35 varieties were selected, their samples developed and given to two Government Research Centers including the one in Mandya, Karnataka and the other in Maharashtra. The samples contained two packs, which weighing ~ 200 gms, of each of the 35 varieties.
- For all the varieties submitted for registration, we documented a complete scientific analysis including the germination percentage, growth parameters at every stage and the other characteristics.
- **The process of registration is very long and is not plausible for the farmers.** It starts at Panchayat level where one needs to get a certification for the varieties being sourced. The next is the Taluk level followed by the District level and finally the State Head.
- **Even after two months of the final submission; we are yet to receive the reports from the centers.** This makes us question if the Government is indeed serious in its intent to help the farmers. "

Sh Shivaprasad Sahu, Orissa

"Our organization is working on the conservation of traditional rice varieties. In the initial phase of our conservation, we had only three varieties but down the lane, our network has expanded to include around 5000 farmers conserving more than 100 varieties.

In the beginning when we visited the fields, farmers used to recollect the old varieties and name each variety as per its unique trait. So, we sourced the seeds from different regions, designed the demo plots and studied each variety individually for its different traits. Eventually these varieties were multiplied and redistributed among the farmers.

Many of our well-wishers suggested that we need to register our varieties, otherwise we would not be able to grow, exchange and distribute our seeds. So, we approached the Government of Orissa and gave them the samples as per the specifications of the respective departments. But the **department officials**

completely lacked the knowledge of seeds. For the red variety of rice seed we had given, we received the black rice.

The price of seeds has also gone up drastically. Earlier 500 gms of tomato used to cost only Rs. 20 but now just 5 gms is for Rs. 20. Thus, the Government needs to stabilize the agri-product prices."

- **Smt Padma Behre**, Orissa

"Saving seed is our duty, sharing seed is our culture'. This is what was taught to me by my mother who was also a seed saver. Farmers everywhere have been saving seeds for centuries, preserving the most durable ones to be replanted every season. This is a method that has led to a plethora of seeds that we are still preserving.

With this custom of sharing, **we celebrate Women's Day on 8th March of every year, by inviting all the women from our and surrounding villages to exchange seeds.** The women from far off regions also come to our village, exchange seeds with each other and we together vow to conserve at least one variety of indigenous seed every year. Though many of us save more than 2 or 3 varieties but on this day of every year, we vow to save at least one variety each.."

Thereafter, the floor was opened for queries and an open discussion:

Question	How long in advance are the women informed of the quantity of seed to be distributed, as seeds are not viable after a few years?
Smt Padma	As we have been doing the festival for some years now, the women are aware of the quantity that is required for sharing and bring the same accordingly. Also, we take care that only the best seeds are shared for viability purposes.
Question	What is the process of maintaining seed purity?
Sh Sanjay	It is a technical question and a practical demonstration is important to understand this process. But in nutshell, always **select the seeds from the middle portion of the field, the seeds with good ear heads and the seeds which are free from pests and diseases of any kind.**
Question	Do we need to register the seeds ? Can we have our own centralized seed bank ?

Sh Sanjay	**Seeds are not a property of one person or one area.** Seeds belong to all the farmers in the whole country. **The seeds in our country are region specific and should be conserved in that particular area. Having a single centralized seed bank or gene bank should not be done. We should have a decentralized seed bank.** Also, the communities around the country need to save and preserve their own seeds.
Question	How do we increase the viability of seeds and maintain the purity, when there are too many varieties?
Sh Sanjay	Maintaining purity in rice is possible as the crop is self-pollinating but with other varieties it is difficult, for example sorghum or maize. **We try to not sow too many varieties on the same plot. Or if we sow, we sow each variety at a different time.**

The session also provided a platform to the farmers to share their experiences at the grassroots level.

- **Sh George Antony, Kerala:** Sh Antony is a farmer who has been conserving traditional food crops all his life. He received all the seeds from his father and since then has been maintaining their purity. He focuses on the traditional varieties which have special traits like the elephant tusk bhendi with one meter long beans. His beans have a special trait of growing long without the fibre.
- **Sh Nagesh Mahalingswamy, Maharashtra:** Sh Mahalingswamy practises natural farming which he does in a very scientific manner. He first takes up the building of the soil and uses '**Amrut Mitti**'. This helps the soil structure and texture. He conserves ~500 varieties of food crops which include sugarcane, paddy and vegetables. In his opinion, seeds have life and they are like infants. They can read the cycle of life and so have the ability to adapt and grow.
- **Sh Babulal Shide, MP: Sh Shide is a folk literate whose books and work are being taught in several of the agricultural universities.** While learning the folk art, he realized that the art has a lot of linkages with the indigenous varieties. He realized that each variety has a story to narrate and that these varieties, especially rice is becoming fast extinct. This concern made him began collecting and saving desi varieties of paddy which he has been doing since 2007. He is conserving 110 paddy varieties, along with certain varieties of millets and sorghum too.
- **Sh Shivanath Yadav, Basthar, MP:** Sh Yadav is involved in conserving the paddy varieties. He does both the selection and breeding of rice varieties. **In his opinion, though rice is predominantly a self-pollinated crop but its natural cross pollination can also take place depending upon the type of variety, season and**

environmental conditions. Breeding of rice varieties is done with the objective of achieving high yielding and non-shattering varieties which are resistant to lodging, pest and diseases.

- **Smt Ammajji, Vishakapatam:** Working with the tribals in the mountainous regions of Vishakapatnam, Smt Ammaji found the marketing of organic produce to be the major challenge. The villages had no transportation and reaching the city was a herculean task. With the help of government, her organisation was able to get a yard space in the city where the tribals can bring in their produce for further sales. The idea has been a success and the city people tend to flock for the vegetables and the produce available in this space. A Community Seed Bank managed by women has also been set up with over 120 varieties of seeds. The seeds are not sold but instead, distributed to the farmers and for every 1 kg seeds distributed, double the amount is collected back. In her opinion, women have been seed savers for generations. Their skill of seed selection and preservation is unmatched. So the women should be recognized for their efforts in seed saving. She also brought to light another concern regarding the compensation of farmers in situations of natural disaster and stress. She gave an example from her village when during a cyclone, the entire village lost its crop. In such a scenario, the government compensation was restricted to cash crops like pepper and coffee but not for poor farmer's crops like rice, millets and vegetables. She recommended making appropriate changes in such discriminatory government policies.
- **Sh Virendra Kumar:** Sh Kumar has been conserving traditional varieties of rice seeds since last 10 years. He introduced the System of Rice Intensification (SRI), a methodology to increase the yield of rice in case of water scarcity. In his village, every farmer grows about 3 to 5 varieties of rice for self consumption and nutritional value.
- **Sh Sharveer Singh,** Punjab: Sh Singh collects and conserves rice varieties. He uses various techniques to recognise each variety's unique trait and preserve them during the selection stage. He mentioned that the unique traits of each variety have to be retained intact so as to further enhance the ability for that particular trait.
- **Sh Jai Prakash,** Varanasi: Sh Prakash has developed indigenous, high-yielding and disease resistant varieties of plants. He has purified and introduced crop improvement methods to enhance the yields of several varieties. So far, he has perfected more than 203 varieties of paddy, 120 varieties of wheat, 40 varieties of Arhar dal and 3 varieties of mustard. Further, he has distributed his seeds for cultivation in over 7000 hectares of land. As a result, farmers in over 9 Indian states are cultivating his varieties. **As per his experiments, his crops outperform the GM varieties in terms of yield.** In his opinion, traditional seeds have a lot of interesting traits not only in terms of color or shape but also the pest and drought resistance. He believes that the registration of traditional seed varieties should not be allowed as seeds do not belong to a single farmer or individual.

- **Sh Afsar Jafri,** Delhi: Sh Jafri recommended that while the commercial private seed supply system needs the backing of strong government regulations, the seed supply systems of farmers should function on the principles of community ownership and public participation, independent of the state interference. In his opinion, strong biosafety regulations with public participation are both a democratic and an ecological imperative. As per Sh Jafri, since the seed industry in our country is rapidly moving into a phase of corporate control, every traditional seed conserver should have awareness on how to protect his seeds.
- **Sh Shankar Langte,** Karnataka: Sh Langte shared that about 40 farmers in his village have formed a group and have set up a community seed bank that conserves pulses and millets. The collective in his village is working on both the conservation of seeds and also the marketing of organic vegetables and grains through an organic farmers market initiative started at Dharwad, Karnataka. The farmers in his group produce desi sugarcane and organic jaggery. The group has taken a loan from a bank and set up a jaggery making unit which produces powder jaggery, square jaggery and liquid jaggery. Also, Sh Langte informed the audience of a **special wild variety of green gram 'Kare hesaru'** which has been cultivated and conserved by him.
- **Sh Krishna Prasad,** Karnataka: Sh Prasad and the collective in his village have been working on seed preservation since last two decades. The farmers in his group are conserving more than 800 varieties of paddy and about 400 varieties of millets. **He informed of an incident where ICRISAT had written a letter to their organization requesting them to provide 20 varieties of paddy for research.** He with the help of many other farmers in his seed network drafted a suitable letter which according to Sh Prasad has put the organisation in a fix. He was keen to understand the appropriate response of farmers in such a situation. **To address such issues, he and other farmers have formed a seed network called 'Bharat Beej Swaraj Manch'.** This seed network has been formed with farmers from different states of India. The Manch is working actively to resolve the queries of the farmers w.r.t. protecting their seeds.

After the sharing of experiences by the farmers, Sh Jacob Nellithanam and Smt Sabarmatee concluded the session with following words:

Sh Jacob Nellithanam: "*With the new laws in effect, the multinational corporations, in particular Monsanto, patent seeds and sell them at high prices to small farmers. For these farmers, the cost of production soars and profit margins decrease, often leading to hunger. It is possible for the government to modify its policies in order to conserve the legacy of India's farmers. The government should invest in such farmers and recognize them as Breeders, Seed Conservers, Seed Savers & Multipliers. We do not need corporations to produce our seeds. The prevailing agricultural research ignores the fact that the kind of research we need today should be aimed at reversing the crisis in agriculture.*

The farmer and his crop varieties have to be suitably acknowledged. The rights of the farmers, the recognition of farmers' varieties including data verification, and appropriate

rules for access and benefit sharing so as to honor farmers' rights are of utmost importance. We have to find ways of protecting our diversity. Diversity comes with a wealth of knowledge that needs to be protected. Our breeders have to be provided with their rights so that they are able to safeguard their innovations. The government is inconsiderate and will not help breeders, farmers and tribals, as they do not exist for them."

Smt Sabarmatee: "*Women have been the seed experts, seed breeders, seed selectors, and biodiversity conservers of the world. And if today, we have seeds that we can save, if today we have communities that can tell us the unique properties of different crops and different seeds, it's because we've had generations of women preserving seeds and their knowledge. Seeds have been inseparable from farming. Seeds used to be exchanged with the community or with others according to the customs and practices. This simple practice is the basis of the informal seed system, also referred as the traditional seed system, which seamlessly merged with the growing of crops and the totality of work and life on a farm. It is now our responsibility to protect, share, use and reuse our seeds. Seeds are the right and property of the farmers.*''

Parallel Session III: Livestock especially Indigenous Breeds

Facilitators	Dr. Mahadev Pachegaonkar, Sh Sunil Mansingka, Dr. Ranbir Barhate, Dr. D K Sadana

- **DR. MAHADEV PACHEGAONKAR** shared his experience and best practices of working with the livestock.
  - He informed that he practices **homeopathic system of medicine for the treatment of livestock** and has never given any injection to the livestock. He also introduced **DR. RANBIR BARHATE** who has been working in the Mumbai National Park and has **successfully treated the lions, elephants and snakes with homeopathy medicines**. Dr Barhate has treated more than 1000 snakes and saved 90% of them by using homeopathy medicines.
  - Describing the features of Indian cattle, Dr Pachegaonkar informed that there are **more number of beneficial microbes in the Indian cattle** as compared to the HF and Gersy. As compared to the presence of 300 crore beneficial microbes in 1 gm of Indian cow dung, the cow dung of foreign cows like HF and Holstein has 50-60 crore beneficial microbes.
  - Also, **the count of harmful microbes in the milk of Indian cows is lesser** than the HF and Gersy which have 2 lakh microbial count.
  - **The efficiency of digesting grass is higher in Indian cattle** as compared to the HF and Gersy.
  - The Indian cows tend to sweat more and therefore, shiver on a touch.

- **Dr. D.K. Saldhana** from Karnal explained the scientific characteristics of Indian livestock and their products.
  - He said there are three special benefits derived from Indian cattle i.e. **A2 milk, soil health and human welfare.**
  - **Typically, a comparison of native and foreign cows in terms of milk production is done but other parameters like the cow dung, cow urine, medicinal values, climate change adaptation, overall utility are ignored**. In India, there are farmers who still rear the cattle for dung and cattle urine. Such cows are locally known as Gobari Gai (Cows for dung), for example 'Povaar'.
  - In India, **there are 100 native cows which adapt very well to the local environment. For e.g. 'Tharparkar' adapts well to a temperature as high as 46 degree while Raathi adapts well to the cold climate in Rajastan.** On the other hand, the foreign breed livestock do not adapt well to the local conditions.
  - Sh Saldhana went on to explain that in recent research, it has been found that there are two types of Milk i.e. A1 and A2. The milk protein is 80% casein. There are three types of caesin. The Beta casein has 209 bricks out of which there is a deficiency found in the 68th brick of A1 milk. Thus, the digestion of A1 milk creates a toxic effect on the body. This defective BCM 7 compound effects the pancreas and kills the cells which provide insulin to the body resulting in conditions like Diabetes. **Indian cows like Gir, Sahiwal, Rathi, Thaarparkar yield 100% A2 milk.** On the other hand, in the current scenario, 98.4% of cows in India have A1 milk. He referred a book on A1 and A2 milk written by Keith Woodford and published in New Zealand known as 'Devil in the milk' for further details.
  - **In the next generations of a hybrid or cross breed, there is a reduction in milk production.** So while the first few generation may give 25-30 litres of milk, that doesn't meet the farmer's need for sustainability. 'Tharparkar' has the capacity to give milk in the 21st Lactation (3 litre per day).
  - Sh Saldhana also informed that the **proportion of Conjugated Linoleic Acid, which has anti-oxidant properties, is higher in Indian cow's milk.** Therefore, the Indian cow's milk is considered as a medicine.
  - Further, the Indian cow's milk and Ghee also contain **higher percentage of Omega 3 fatty acids** which are also found in the mustard.

- **Sh Sunil Mansinga** of Gau-vigyan Sanstha, Devlaapar, Nagpur shared the several benefits of cow urine and Indian livestock.
  - The **high percentage of Phenolic** in an Indian cow's urine helps farmers get better yeilds.

- The **'Panchgavya'** made from a native cow's dung, urine, milk, ghee and curd has **anti-oxidant and anti-cancer** properties.
- He shared that in his experience, the medical bills of farmers who own an Indian native cow and practice ayurveda are nil.
- He informed the audience of the several patents on cow urine his institution has.

Followed by the presentations of the facilitators, the participants who have been rearing and conserving traditional livestock breeders shared enriching knowledge on the subject.

- The livestock has been an important aspect of ensuring food security and nutrition in India. In the economy of North-east states, Nagaland Pigs have a significant role. Every family in Nagaland rears a minimum of 2-3 pigs. Proper care is taken for their shelter and feed. Same is the case with Uttarakhand where every household has a livestock.
- In past, livestock were considered as an insurance for the draught period. Today, the aspects related to the care and protection of livestock are blatantly ignored.
- In 50s, selling milk was considered a sign of disobedience and nuisance in villages. In 60s, things starting changing and people gradually started selling milk. By 70s, milk selling became a business.
- In earlier days, sufficient milk was ensured for the calf but so is no longer the case.
- The nourishment value of pasteurised milk vs fresh milk remains yet to be tested.
- In the pre-independence period, the number of bulls exceeded the number of cows. Now, since the bulls have been replaced by the tractors, the population of bulls has gone down drastically.
- The different varieties of grasses which used to found in abundance in earlier days have been lost due to modern economics affairs.
- Out of 60-70 crore people engaged directly in the Indian agriculture sector, only 7 crore household are engaged in the livestock management.
- The contribution of Livestock management in GDP is merely 4.5%. This despite the fact that India is the largest producer of milk in the world.
- Around, 75% of livestock management is done by women in this country.
- There is a strong demand for various cow-based products all over the world and in India. Hence, its time for everyone to reverse the concepts and formulae of progress.

Parallel Session IV: Women in Organic Agriculture

Facilitators	Smt Kavitha Kuruganti, Smt Usha Jayakumar & Smt Rina Gill

Lead Discussants	Sh Suvarnamma, Smt Kamaljit Kaur, Jagori participants

The parallel session on 'Women in Organic Agriculture' discussed the several benefits and impacts of shifting to sustainable agriculture on women farmers. The several success stories of women farmers' cooperatives working in the field of organic farming were also shared and discussed.

- **Smt Usha Jayakumar** shared the success story of a women collective from Trivandrum, Kerala. Smt Jayakumar started her work in this region in 2000 after a huge tragedy caused due to high pesticide usage led to the mental retardation of many village children. **The women farmers in this region took the lead and resolved to change the situation. They organised themselves in 3 groups comprising 20-25 women each and started working on small pieces of land.** Initially, they focused on growing vegetables so as to feed their families with organic food. Within a year, they started producing surplus and started selling their produce in the local market. However, on realising their inability to differentiate their organic produce from the conventionally produced vegetables, they started an organic farmers market in the city (about 10-15 kms away). As of now, these women have been actively marketing their produce in the city. With the success of this initiative, **the Government of Kerala has introduced a programme to provide small plots of land to women for agricultural purposes.**
- **The women farmers from Timbaktu collective in Anantpur district of Andhra Pradesh shared their journey towards making a successful transition to organic agriculture.** The women farmers decided to take up organic agriculture so as to reduce the dependency on external inputs and the resulting debts. Subsequently, **they established four collectives and have being selling produce under the 'Dharani' brand name with annual turnover of INR 1.5 crore.** They strongly recommended that women must ensure that the food being grown in the field is first used for self consumption purpose and only the excess be sold in the market. It took Timbaktu women 3 years to find and establish a market for their produce. So, they also mentioned patience to be an important virtue of an organic farmer. Smt Jayakumar added that just like one doesn't lose interest in raising her children, the same way one should not lose heart in these initiatives. Apart from the economic success of the Timbaktu collective, the women also cited the improvement in health, recognition and ability to influence other people as their key achievements.
- **Smt Kavitha Kuruganti** shared her observation that the growth in organic farming has also led to an increased involvement of women in such initiatives. She sought the opinion of the participants on the contention that the **growth in organic farming may have also increased the workload of farm work on the women,** who have to take up additional responsibilities apart from the existing ones in their

homes and fields. **Smt Neelam** from Jhajhar district of Haryana agreed and said that the increase in women labor can be attributed to the increased requirement for weeding in an organic farm since a farmer doesn't have adequate herbicides to eliminate the weeds otherwise. Typically, the men do not undertake such tasks. She narrated her own experience of the time when the production in her farm had gone down during the conversion period. In her opinion, even though the yields in her farm have stabilized now, the ability to continue with organic farming is highly dependent on the availability of adequate markets and remunerative prices.

- In response to the above, Smt Kuruganti gave an example of how in Belgaum, the organic food club, which is a collective of 40 farmers, had arranged a system of selling to 400 people in the city. Smt Kuruganti explained that **due to the loss in crop diversity, the need for labour arises at the same time of the year for all farmers resulting in labour shortages and increased workload. She emphasised the importance of planning crops in a way so as to provide a variety of produce to the customers while effectively managing the workload.** Smt Jayakumar also stressed that careful planning is essential to produce variety of produce in the right quality and adequate quantity and ensure the success of a collective organic farming initiative.
- Smt Jayakumar shared her experience of working with a group called 'Thanal' comprising young girls in schools. The group has engaged with about 2000 girls in schools; first by setting up a vegetable garden in school and then taking these girls to work in farmers' fields during the crucial periods of sowing and harvesting. Other activities such as the cooking of the cultivated vegetables have also been undertaken.
- Smt Jayakumar also highlighted the role of media which helped create awareness among the public of Kerala regarding the harmful effects of pesticides. This has helped increase the demand and ease of marketing of the organic food in the state. She also gave the example of an individual farmer who decided to focus on Jackfruit production and is now successfully marketing various products of the Jackfruit.

Parallel Session V: Smallholders and Organic Farming

Facilitators	Sh Anshuman Das, Sh Kapil Shah, Sh Vinay Mahajan, Sh Claude Alvares Jain, Sh Prashant, Sh Akhil Kapoor, Dr. R S Minhas

In the parallel Kisan Panchayat session on 'Smallholders and Organic Farming', the small landholders from all over India debated the challenges and opportunities in organic farming. It was noted that the ecological agriculture can spread mainly with the help of smallholders and it is only through ecological agriculture that the smallholders can reduce the risks and improve their livelihoods. Thus, the government should formulate appropriate

policies for the promotion of small scale organic farming. The key points discussed during this session were:

- **Sh Suresh Desai** gave the example of a very innovative initiative by Karnataka government aimed at supporting the clusters of small landholders growing organic food. "**Around 200 farmers pool in to form one cluster of 250 acre and the state government provides practical training on chemical-free farming. The idea is how to make one family sustain on 1/4th of an acre of land. Similar initiative should be taken at the national level which will promote both small landholders and organic farming.**" he said.
- Building trust amongst consumers and developing personal relationships were recognised as critical elements for finding good marketing avenues. **The direct marketing experience of 'Belgaum Organic Food Club' was shared, where a group of smallholders constituted them as a collective and linked up directly with consumers.**
- The gathering also discussed the issue of farm debt and how that can that be dealt with through the constitution of a group of farmers who can extend small loans to each other to repay the debt.
- The farmers also recommended that organic farming should be adopted gradually instead of shifting at once since it takes at least 3 years for any land to give a good yield. Making a rapid shift may lead to a drop in production which can severe impact the economic viability of small farmers make them discard organic farming.
- Reduced dependence on the market through preparing indigenous biofertilizers and pesticides, using the non-food produce of a farm and mixing of the food crops with cash crops were some of the other important suggestions made during the discussion.

Parallel Session VI: Organic Farming in School Education

Lead Discussants	Smt Nyla Coelho, Sh Sachin Desai, Sh Claude Alvares, Sh Bharat Mansata, Sh Ramasubramaniam, Dr Rajendrabhai Khimani, Sh Balasaheb Sarode

- **Smt Nyla Coelho** said that the farming activity is an ideal connect for life education. It is unfortunate that in a country like India which has farming in its culture, the technique of farming is not taught in the mainstream education whereas in America, a 'developed' nation, ~40% of schools have gardening programs in their curriculum. As per Smt Coelho, children have natural instincts to learn through their five senses i.e. touch, feel, sight, sound, smell. Just like birds, they are attracted to bright colours and learn through observation and imitation. They constantly make an effort to enter the world of adults. Naturally, they tend to play with soil and adore animals. All these factors clearly indicate that how a natural

system like farming is an integral part of child learning. All the other topics, be they geometry, physics etc, can be integrated with learning on the farm. It is through farming that children learn that life is a cycle. The changing of the seasons, the growth of a plant from seed germination to fruit production, decay, compost formation and going back into the soil are the several cyclic processes that the children get to observe in farming.

- **Sh Sachin Desai** has started a 'University of life' in Sindudurg - on the border of Maharashtra and Goa. Started 8 years ago, it works primarily with school drop outs and orphans. Without following any syllabus, the children learn on the field by solving the problems they face while setting up their own learning farm. In one of the other activities, the farmers take students to their fields. Post such a practical experience, students undertake theory sessions. It has been seen that with this innovative pedagogy, the children are also able to excel in the mainstream open school exams. Sh Desai believes that through learning one understands and learns far beyond the teachings imparted by a regular school. The success of the model is reflected in the innovation of a few school students who have developed the 'bio culture compress blocks'. The 'bio-culture compress blocks' are tiny boxes of 20 brickets where each bricket is equivalent in power to 1 kg of vermicompost.
- **Dr Rajendrabhai Khimani,** a registrar in the Gujarat Vidyapeeth, provided the example of a successful model from his school in which children are involved in growing and cooking food such that the meals of a full day can be provided for as low a cost as Rs. 35-45. In Dr Khimani's opinion, education and the art of living are closely interlinked to each other and cannot be separated. Unfortunately, the mainstream education has inflated the egos and increased the level of competition to an extent that everyone is striving to reach the top. Learning in Gujarat Vidyapeeth involves learning how to live life, how to live life together and how to reduce the ego. Of how even if one disagrees and resist, there is a non-violent way to do so and there are ways to reconcile and work together. He expressed his disagreement with the centralization of education at school and university level and asserted that one cannot be taught the same kind of a content across the length and breadth of as diverse a country as India.
- Two families who chose to shift to organic farming and undertake home schooling for their children shared their experience. Initially, the couple faced a lot of opposition from their friends and families as well as their own inner fear. However, over the time, things changed. As per Sh Raghav, who is one of the organic farmers practising this approach, the children have developed a natural instinct to learn. He admitted that in fact it was him who needed to go through a process of unlearning that which he had acquired through years of his formal education. One of the other participant supported his approach and expressed concern that the mainstream system of education has reduced learning to producing money making machines out of children.

Parallel Session VII: Soil, Water, Crop Planning & Innovative Practices

Lead Discussants	Sh Subhash Sharma, Dr Janak McGillian, Sh Allauddin Ahmed

Soil, Water and Crop Planning:

Sh Subash Sharma from Maharashtra led the discussion in this session and made following recommendations:

- Every farmer must manage the precious water that nature showers on his land in the form of rain by preventing water runoffs through the setting up of grid locks and micro locks on his land.
- As the water used in natural farming is not more than 30% of what is needed in the chemical farming, the rain water a farmer receives should be good for all the cropping requirements.
- The farmer should make trenches all along the fence on his farm so as to store the rain water. Making a couple of 3 feet deep trenches at a distance of 10 feet, should be good enough to help recharge the ground water.
- Sh Sharma recommended the practice of crop rotation to ensure water availability throughout the year.
- He also suggested keeping the ground covered with ‘Dichots' to retain the moisture.
- One another useful tip to conserve the moisture in the soil could be of growing pumpkin at a distance of 18 feet between each pit and allowing the vines to cover the land during the summer season.
- He recommended mixed cropping practices such as growing Tomato & Methi together or a combination of Arahar, Turmeric and Bhendi so as to provide the year long produce and maintain the biodiversity on the soil. He shared that on his 17 acre farm, he practices 3 cropping seasons and thus, has a year long availability of crops.

Innovative Practices:

- **Dr Janak McGillian** gave a presentation on the activities of The Jimmy McGillian Centre for Social Development. She elaborated the work done by her Center in developing the **several models of solar cookers for various applications ranging from simple home cooking to processing agricultural produce such as fruit drying, baking, snack making and building power generators for electrifying the Adivasi villages around the training center in Sanawadiya, Mandhya Pradesh**. This Center has developed multiple product models suited for the large community kitchens and home cooking. The Centre conducts a Solar Food Festival to demonstrate the use of cookers and trains the local Adivasi women to maintain these

cookers, carry out repairs and support their long term use. She informed that these solar equipments have been supplied to many other NGOs and are very popular with the customers of the Maharastra Betul Haat. In addition, the Center has also produced a **fully organic solar processed Holi Powder** from fruits and flowers grown in the hills.

- **Sh Allauddin Ahmed** from West Bengal shared in detail his innovative farming model called '**NABA DIGANTA Farming Model' wherein a small farmer working in one Bigha (1/3rd acre) of land can raise paddy, fish, livestock, vegetables and fruits all round the year. By adopting this model, the farmer can potentially increase his net income by over 4 times of what he could earn from the conventional farming practices.** This model can be replicated in a larger holding as well with the same impact of quadrupling the profits. The model is highly recommended in highly populated regions like West Bengal where 90% of the farmers have small and marginal land holdings. In this model, the farmer is required to divide his farm plot to raise paddy, vegetables, livestock and fish. A small pond in one corner of the farm plot is dug and the excavated soil is used to setup a broad bund around the farm plot. The bund is recommended to be 1.5 feet wide and 1 feet high. Mixed cropping comprising different varieties of vegetables are grown on the bund while the paddy is grown in the plot. On the top of the pond, an elevated cattle shed is built in which ducks and goats are reared. The ducks help the farmer in pest control while their droppings nourish the paddy crop. The fish is cultured in the pond water which can then be released in the paddy field to fertilise the crop. When the water dries up in the summer season, the fish can be sold in the market. After the rice has been harvested, the mulch potatoes and brinjal are grown without tilling the paddy. Toor Daal and Mustard are grown. Weeding is not required since with weeds assist in the production of cauliflowers. Sh Ahmed informed that the farmers in over 400 villages are practising this model and have been growing the several traditional varieties of rice such as Kerala Sunduri, Dudheswar and Bahurupi.

EVENING PLENARY

The evening was spent in a plenary with well-known author and agriculture policy analyst **Dr Devinder Sharma** addressing the gathering in a hard-hitting public lecture. He emphasized the imperative to shift to organic farming especially for the farmers of the region. The key bullet points of his lecture are presented below:

- Research has revealed that many diseases like diabetes are caused by junk food. Punjab that traditionally boasted tough men who joined the armed services, is now severely affected by ill health, cancer, alcoholism, drug addiction – because of NPK fertilizers and pesticides. The population residing in Punjab does not like to consume the wheat grown in Punjab, but prefers to import it from MP. The

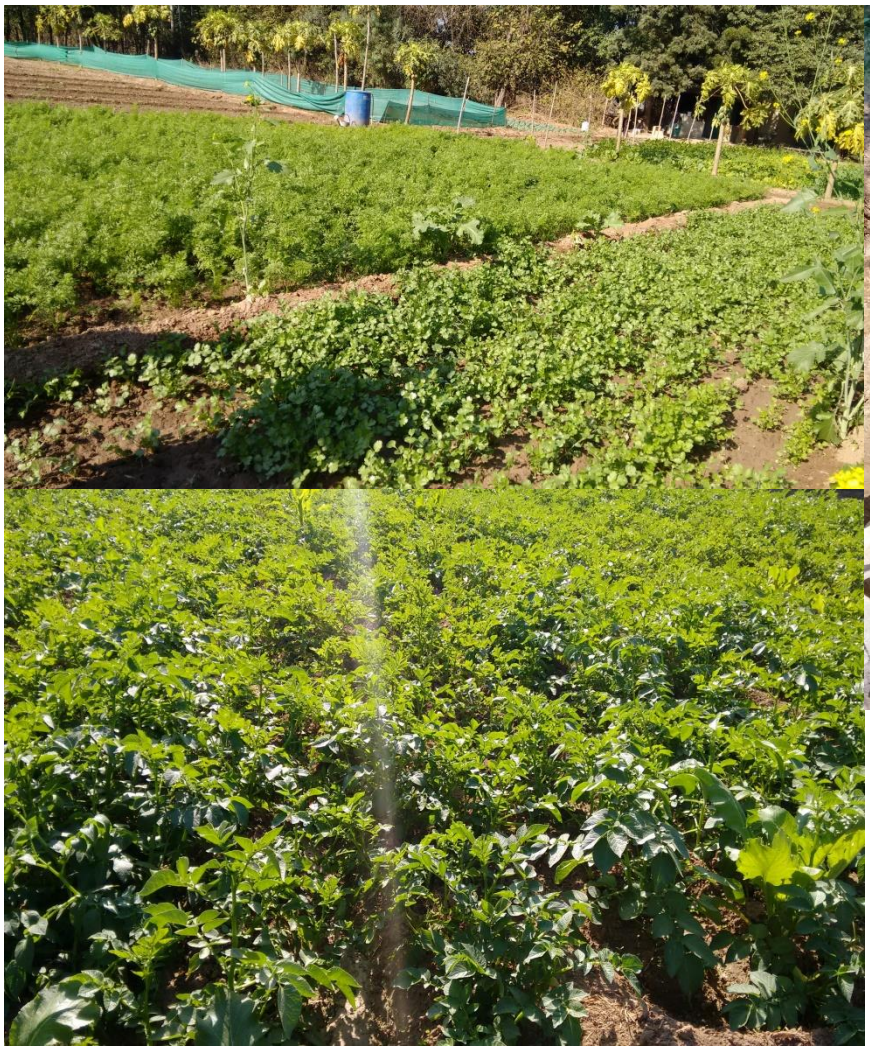
'Cancer Express' from Bhatinda to Bikaner, carrying cancer patients, has become notorious. But, **we still persist in aping the agriculture of USA, where it is estimated that one in every 2 females, and one in every 3 males, will be affected by cancer.**

- Only 40% of the urea used in modern industrial agriculture is absorbed by the crops. **60% of it leaches away and forms nitrous oxide, a potent greenhouse gas that aggravates global warming.** Organic farming is the only way to avert such global warming and climate change.
- We had a great wealth of crop diversity, but neglected it. The post green revolution grain varieties have 80% less copper than our traditional tall varieties. **We have varieties with specific nutritional and medicinal properties; and varieties that are drought, flood and salt tolerant.**
- **Even policy makers accept the superiority of organic foods, but question whether organic farming can feed the growing population.** This bogey they raise to justify hazardous GM crops. **The reality is that in 2014, the earth had a population of 7.2 billion, but grew enough food to feed a population of 14.5 billion, which is double of what was needed.**
- **Ironically, while talking about food security and justifying GM crops, the govt continues to divert fertile agricultural lands to urban-industrial/mining uses.** The govt is targeting 40 crore population to shift from villages to cities. **Farmers' income is artificially kept low.**
- **The government policies look upon the farmer as a burden, and seem bent on making farming an economically unviable occupation. Micro-finance loans to farmers charge an interest rate of 24%. But the Punjab Govt provided Rs 1,250 crore of loan to Sh Mittal at an interest rate of merely 0.5 %.** The Gujarat Govt provided a loan to the Nano car factory at an interest rate of 0.1% interest. Out of the national agricultural budgetary outlay, 40-50% goes to the agri industry. Today, just 60 people possess more wealth than 60 crore people in India.
- We call our cow as mata or mother, but neglect it. Instead, we imported and promoted exotic Holstein and Jersey cows. But on the other side of the earth, **Brazil has a large population of Gir cows from India. Many of these yield 48-72 liters of milk.**
- In Andhra Pradesh, over 40 lakh hectares have been converted to Non-Pesticidal Management (NPM). This can be upscaled to 400 lakh hectares.
- There are vegetarian insects and non-vegetarian insects. I came across a school kid, who could identify and distinguish 65 varieties of insects, including which

were vegetarian, and which were non-vegetarian, and therefore harmless to the farmer's crops.

Dr Devinder Sharma also released a book by Natraj Publishers authored by Dr R K Luna called "The Big Grain Drain".

A special film made by Joy Joshi on the live demonstration plots set up by Dr Sarvadaman Patel was screened thereafter.





Demonstration Plots created by Sh Sarvadaman Patel

Day Three | Monday | March 2, 2015

Grand Panel Discussion of Senior Organic Farmers

Day 3 began with several parallel session venues being washed out due to the incessant heavy rain all night. Some parallel sessions were therefore cancelled; this also meant that the field trip to the demonstration plots could not be organized.

Day 3 was mainly organised as a Plenary Session of the 'Grand Panel' comprising of twenty highly experienced organic farmers who tirelessly answered dozens of questions from the audience, followed by the Valedictory session. Questions from the audience were gathered by Sh Claude Alvares and posed to relevant farmers on the Grand Panel. More than 30-35 questions were posed by the delegates pertaining to specific farm management practices related to particular crops, particular organic practices, particular pests and diseases and so on. This session, given its great popularity with the audience was extended beyond its scheduled time and continued till lunch time. ***At the time of finalizing this proceedings report, the transcription of the Grand Panel session was not available. The session will be uploaded onto an online video link and shared widely later on.***



"Grand Panel" of pioneering organic farmers on Day 3

The "Grand Panel" consisted of Amarjeet Sharma, Gurpreet Singh, Mahadev Pachagaonkar, Nandish, Pandurang Shitole, Raghava, Sarvadaman Patel, Selvam Ramaswamy, Subhash Sharma, Suresh Desai, Syed Ghani Khan and Vijay Jardhari.

Valedictory Session

The 3-day conference concluded with a valedictory session chaired by the Chief Minister of Punjab, Sh Prakash Singh Badal. The venue had to be shifted to the Auditorium which unfortunately could not accommodate all the delegates, given the incessant rain throughout the day.



Valedictory Ceremony

The valedictory session had Smt Kavitha Kuruganti present a summary of the various technical and policy-related sessions. She drew the attention of the Punjab Chief Minister to the key features of this Convention, and reported on the commitments made by the Haryana Government through its proposal to shift 10% of farming in the state towards organic agriculture each year. She expressed the hope from all the participants that the state government of Punjab would get more ambitious in its targets, given the acute state of environmental health distress as well as degradation of natural resources here. She presented the summary of all the sessions in the following way:

- **SOIL**: This is the International Year of Soils and this Convention also paid great attention to this aspect of farming and natural resource management. The scientific and experiential experience of farmers were shared over four sessions related to soil health and participants felt that adoption of various techniques and recipes presented here would save the exchequer huge amounts of public funds. Good practices that are being promoted by state governments in particular were highlighted, and the same demanded to be adopted elsewhere.

- **PLANT PROTECTION**: The convention's proceedings reiterated time and again the need to phase out pesticides soonest, particularly in Punjab and Haryana which have suffered heavily due to agri-chemicals. Various ways of natural pest management were shared and discussed by the participants. The emphasis was on imparting knowledge about insects including identification of 'vegetarian' and 'non-vegetarian' insects. The success story of undivided Andhra Pradesh in promoting NPM on a large scale was heard to be discussed in various sessions of the convention.
- **SEEDS**: The convention spent a substantial part of its proceedings as well as set up a fantastic biodiversity festival, to emphasise the importance of agro-diversity in organic farming. Seed breeders and seed savers shared experiences of breeding and characterization of traditional germplasm. Policy sessions emphasized that seed conservation is indeed a political statement since it pertains to our national sovereignty as well as farmer-level sovereignty and livelihoods. It was felt that biopiracy needs to be stopped as well as any laws and policies that violate farmers' apriori rights to seeds. Good practices of farmer seed varieties being distributed by agriculture departments were emphasized. Participants also discussed a pragmatic proposal to adopt a traditional variety each, so that between all of us in the organic farming movement, thousands of varieties can be conserved.
- **GMOs**: GMOs was a matter of great concern to the participants, and in the parallel session that dwelled on this issue, a large crowd of participants presented their arguments around why they reject GMOs in our food, farming and environment. Experts shared scientific evidence on the subject and the current ongoing debate on open air field trials was discussed, and such trials were opposed. There was a consensus that the recommendations of various credible committees that recommended against open air field trials should be adopted, including the majority report of the Supreme Court Technical Expert Committee. Ms Maneka Gandhi, the Union Women and Child Development Minister pointed out the lies of the Bt cotton industry in saying that with this technology, pesticide use will come down, while one of the deadliest class of pesticides called neo-nicotinoid pesticides are needed for Bt cotton, and that has become the basis of continuing with this deadly chemical as well as Bt cotton seeds.
- **LIVESTOCK**: A lot of information was shared by participants who were rearing and conserving traditional livestock breeds. It was acknowledged that almost 75% of livestock management is done by women in this country. Deep concern was expressed about loss of traditional varieties and people acknowledged the various benefits of these breeds. The developing markets for various cow-based products all over the world and India were emphasized.
- **ADIVASI AGRICULTURE:** It was acknowledged that in the case of adivasis, the debate is not just about organic vs chemicals, but about ownership of natural resources and the large scale dispossession and alienation underway. It was noted that wherever there is a large scale entry of modern agriculture, it also meant

dispossession of adivasis, with control over resources moving into the hands of outsiders, whether it is local traders or corporations.

- **WOMEN & ORGANIC FARMING**: The positive experiences from different states of women farmers' cooperatives shifting to organic farming on a large scale and also exploring marketing avenues were shared in this session. While the social benefits related to better health and newfound recognition and role for women due to organic farming exist, the question of finding methods by which drudgery burden on women can be reduced was also highlighted.
- **SMALLHOLDERS & ORGANIC FARMING**: It was noted that smallholder livelihoods can improve only with ecological agriculture which is less risky and meets basic livelihood needs, while ecological agriculture can spread mainly with smallholders. The issue of credit was discussed, and innovative approaches for this were discussed. Building trust amongst consumers so that smallholder organic farmers can find good marketing avenues was emphasized. The experience of Belgaum Organic Food Club was shared, where direct marketing avenues were created by a group of smallholders who collectivized themselves and linked up directly with consumers. The techniques by which a family can survive even with just 25 cents of land were shared.
- **ORGANIC FARMING POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION**: Farmer speakers in this session emphasized upon government neglect of organic farming, and how chemical agriculture receives various kinds of support. Marketing support for organic farming as well as value addition, including easy certification mechanisms were discussed. The need for special incentives to organic agriculture, and support during transition were emphasized. The fact that south Indian states are moving ahead much more rapidly in scaling up organic farming was brought up. The need for quantitative and qualitative monitoring of the policies declared was also emphasized. Sh Jathedar Tota Singh, the Agriculture Minister of Punjab, shared that he also grows organic food and pointed out that the need for organic farming at this point of time was being felt on all fronts.
- **ORGANIC FOOD MARKETING**: The discussion on organic food marketing was one of the most active and well-attended one. The organic food marketing discussion centered on the issues of both certification and also on the issue of fair prices for organic farmers. One of the outcomes towards which people agreed on was to have a grid of organic food marketing agencies across the country.
- **BIODIVERSITY**: Industry's forceful acquisition of land is affecting biodiversity in addition to alienation of land. Commercial cultivation is also depleting water resources while deforestation is also a major factor. It was emphasized that the basis of organic farming is biodiversity and conserving this is of utmost priority.
- **WATER**: Chemical run-off into water resources is a major problem and the need for organic farming was emphasized in this context. Non-regulation of industry and prioritization of their needs is affecting water availability in various parts of the country, it was noted.

- **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**: Impact of pesticides and fertilizers, particularly on Punjab was discussed extensively here. The myth of the indispensability of chemicals for food security was discussed, while 40% of food gets wasted in the supply chain.

Following this summing up of the main discussions in the convention proceedings, the Declarations that emerged from the Convention as well as specifically from the Agro-Ecology Conferece were read out.

Joint Declarations

- **Joint Declaration by the Organic Farmers Community of India** as detailed in Annex I: Through this declaration, the organic farming community reiterated their conviction that agro-ecological farming practices are the only way forward for meeting the nutritional, livelihood, socio-cultural and spiritual needs of our people, including those of future generations.
- **Joint Declaration of the Scientific Conference** as detailed in Annex II resolved to engage with scientific community, policy makers, farmers and farm workers and improve the dialogue for an appropriate shift towards agro-ecological approaches.

Sh Prakash Singh Badal, in his speech, announced the setting up of an Organic Farming Board in the state of Punjab. He said that promotion of organic farming in the state was the need of the hour and the state government is committed to motivate the farmers for it. At the same time, it is obligatory on the part of national as well as regional organisations working for this cause to come forward to demonstrate the concept on the farms at village level. In his opinion, the Punjabi farmer is quiet resilient and has never hesitated to follow new practices of farming provided he is assured of the profitability, marketability and sustainability of his produce. Thus, the role of activists, scientists and progressive farmers committed to the cause of organic farming is crucial so as to prevail upon our farmers to shift from inorganic to organic farming. He mentioned that the state has been taking initiatives to popularise organic farming through a nodal agency called ‘Punjab Agro' and nearly 1,000 farmers have been registered as certified organic farmers. These farmers have been undertaking organic farming on 550 acres across the state. He also announced plans to register 1,000 new farmers every year to save people from the ill effects of pesticides, insecticides and chemical fertilisers. He exhorted the people associated with the organic farming movement in the country to pursue their cause, likening it to a second freedom fight.

On this note, the Convention was formally closed.

Biodiversity Festival | Feb 28 - Mar 2, 2015

Introduction

A Biodiversity Festival was organized as a parallel program to the main convention from February 28-2 March, 2015 in the Chandigarh College of Engineering and Technology (CCET) ground. United by and for seeds, more than 230 seed savers, organic farmers, farmer breeders, scientists, economists, researchers, policy-makers and other stakeholders gathered for one of the key milestone events amongst sustainable farming practitioners. The festival saw active support extended by **Chief Minister of Haryana, Sh. Manohar Lal Khattar, Chief Minister of Punjab, Sh. Parkash Singh Badal** and **Union Cabinet Minister for Women & Child Development, Sh. Maneka Gandhi.**



Inaugural Ceremony of the Biodiversity Festival by Sh Madan Mohan Mittal, Minister for Technical Education, Govt of Puniab

The inaugural ceremony was done in a traditional manner around a 'Seed Tree' or 'Beeja Vriksh' which displayed the seeds collected from various groups in small clay pots tied on to the branches, thereby serving as a reminder of the farm rituals done in the past.

Objectives

This festivity of seeds reaffirmed the significance of traditional farming practices, on-farm participatory plant breeding and heritage/heirloom seeds which are vital in supporting and strengthening the livelihoods of majority of the world's population. It recognised the hardships of small farmers/seed breeders who play a vital role in ensuring our survival. The festival had following specific objectives:

- **Contribute to preserving** India's incredible plant diversity which is at peril
- **Support the improvement of** community-led high quality seed supplies and participatory plant breeding
- **Facilitate sharing of** best practices to conserve biodiversity and related knowledge
- **Inspire** policy changes which address farmers needs and ensure environmental sustainability

Organizers

Apart from the key organisers of the Convention, Sahaja Samrudha played the key role in



Biodiversity Festival - Celebrating the richness of cultivated seed diversity

organizing the biodiversity festival. Within this, the segment on uncultivated foods was put together by Living Farms.

Highlights

- The event exhibited the richness of traditional agriculture and its contribution in strengthening the food security and livelihoods of small and marginal farmers of the country. A welcoming ambience with much more than just a feel of an event was ensured. The passage that led to the venue was decorated with sugarcane, paddy and wheat straws arched at the entrance. Adding to this, a beautiful and colorful cloth banner was perched on top of the entrance. The entire venue had displays of a spectacular diversity of crops seeds from different states to attract the visitors. Small earthen plates filled with seeds of different shapes, sizes and colours were placed neatly in the stalls, showcasing the rich biodiversity and farming traditions of India.
- More than **3000 seed varieties** of paddy, wheat, maize, pulses, vegetables, fruits, spices, medicinal herbs, uncultivated tubers, food crops and fruits were exhibited by ~42 teams which included farmers, seed saver groups, organizations, Self Help Groups (SHGs), plant breeders, researchers and other people from many states of India. Details of seed saver groups and their seed varieties are in **Annex IV**.



Traditional Maize, Millet and Pulse diversity displayed by NIRMAN, Odisha

- More than **230 of India's experienced seed saviours** including organic farmers, seed savers, plant breeders and producers from 20 states exhibited their crop diversity to create awareness and mobilise the public towards a self-reliant lifestyle. These were the farmers who are scientists in their own right and who have a deep understanding of the way nature works, and who have gone out of their way to conserve the germplasm that is valuable in so many ways.

- In one of the stalls, women from **Sanjeevani, Visakhapatnam,** proudly displayed their heirloom varieties of Jowar (sorghum) and millets. **These varieties have earned *Sanjeevani* an award from the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR)** for preservation of indigenous seed varieties.
- The farmers from **Sahaja Samruddha, from Kolar district** of Karnataka had put more than a few dozen varieties of rice on display.
- **Lok Chetna Manch** of West Bengal shared one of their **innovative farming practices which involves prematurely harvesting the maize while keeping the roots and the soil intact**. The harvest is kept in bunches in field corners when paddy is planted in June-July. This way the maize matures in August and the paddy matures by December, thus ensuring the maximum utilization of the land and higher income.
- The farmers from **Surguja district of Chhattisgarh** enthusiastically provided the details of the higher yields realised by adopting SRI (System of Rice Intensification) methodology within the organic framework.

As a token of encouragement, visitors bought goods directly from the farmers and showed



Farmers interact with visitors in the Kisan Haat/Biodiversity Festival

their support for the nutritional crop diversity which is rarely cultivated in present times.

Seed Savers and Farmer Breeders	
Anupam Paul, ATC, West Bengal	Pappamma, Karnataka
Deepika Kundaji, Pebble garden, Tamil Nadu	Pampa Kayal, West Bengal
Deepak Barde, Maharashtra	Prasannaiah, Karnataka
Ganpat Singh, Rajasthan	Rechanna Hosamalangi, Karnataka
Mitrajit Ramaji Kobragade, Maharashtra	Sanjay Patil, MITRAA-BAIF, Maharashtra
Jai Prakash Singh, HABITAT, Uttara Pradesh	Siba Prasad Sahu, Orrissa
Kallappa, Karnataka	Sriram, Tamil Nadu
Luamlang, Meghalaya	Shankara Langati, Karnataka
Nel Jayaraman, CREATE, Tamil Nadu	Vijay Jardari, Uttarakhand
Nel Krishnamurthy, Puducherry	

Organizations	
Annadana, Karnataka	Save Our Rice Campaign, Karnataka
Beej Bacho Andolan, Uttarkhand	Save Our Campaign, Kerala
Bhittibhumi, Odisha	Save Our Rice Campaign, Tamil Nadu
Cholamandalam Organic Producer Group, Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu	Save Our Campaign, West Bengal
DRCSC, West Bengal	Sahaja Samrudha, Karnataka
Desi Krushigara Balaga, Karnataka	Sahaja Seeds, Karnataka
Desi Bihan Surakshya Manch, Odisha	SAMBHAV, Odisha
DRCSC, West Bengal	SAMPARK, Madhya Pradesh
Epiphany, Meghalaya	Savayava Krushikara Balaga, Karnataka
Janapada Seva Trust, Karnataka	Sanjeevini, Andhra Pradesh
Jata Nagendrapur Society, West Bengal	SAMPARK, Madhya Pradesh
Kamina Social Welfare Society, West Bengal	SAMVAD, Maharashtra
Khetri Virasat Mission, Punjab	SIFOR (EH), West Bengal
MFAIR Group, West Bengal	Sundarpahari Adivasi Wabalambi Vikas Sahakarita Samity, Jharkhand
NIRMAN, Odisha	SWITCHON, West Bengal
Organic Small Tea Growers Association, Assam	SWALA, Jharkhand
ORRISSA, Odisha	Sarjan Samjik Samskruthik Sahythya Munch, MP
Panitar Pally Unnayan Samity, West Bengal	Tribal Health Initiative, Tamil Nadu
PRERAK, Chattisgarh	Vaagdhara, Rajasthan
Paschim Srijharkali Jarnakalyana Sangha, West Bengal	Vanashree, Karnataka
PSNFT, Tamil Nadu	Vidharbha, Maharashtra
Pebble Garden Auroville	YUVA RURAL, Maharashtra
Richharia Campaign, Chattisgarh	

- **Knowledge and Experience Sharing:** The festival also provided an opportunity to the several social workers and farmers working at the grassroots level to share their experiences:

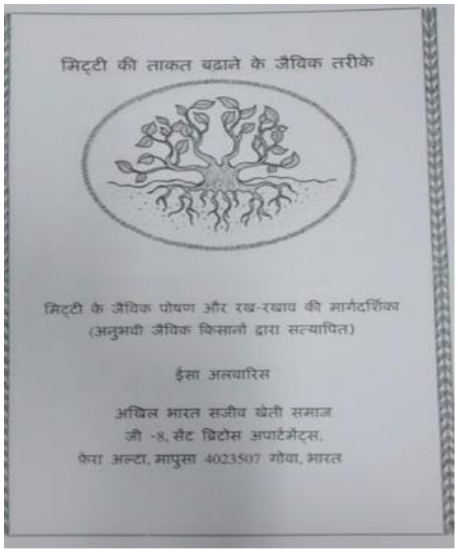


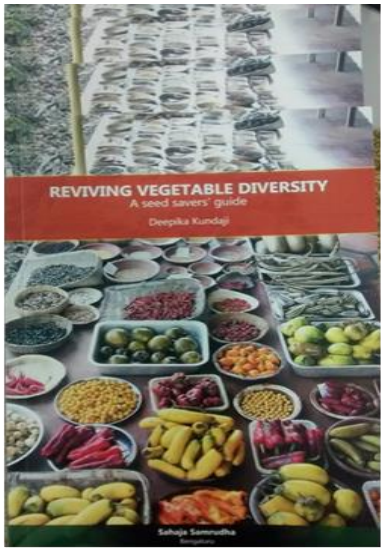
Exhibition Stalls: Knowledge sharing

- **Sh Jai Prakash** from Varanasi district spoke of his efforts since last 15 years to promote organic farming in Uttar Pradesh. Despite having a limited formal education, he has come to become a highly regarded plant breeder, especially well known for his **wheat varieties with yield up to 79 quintal per hectare and having the highest iron content in the world.**
- **Sh Upkar Singh Bakshi**, a farmer from Jalandhar, Punjab described the **method of growing oyster mushrooms** during the period November to March **without employing any artificial cooling technology** and using methods which are easily accessible to the small farmers in India.
- **Sh Goli** is volunteering with Deepika from Pebble Gardens, Auroville. He gave up his corporate job and has since been exploring his interest in organic farming. He found volunteering in the stall, displaying and selling traditional seeds to be a very enriching experience.
- **Sh R. Baskaran Thenampadgai** who stays near Kumbakonam, Tamilnadu is the member of a group engaged in doing organic farming over 700 acres of land. He was taking part in the convention for the first time and was happy to interact with several farmers. On Day 1 of the conference, he got the opportunity to

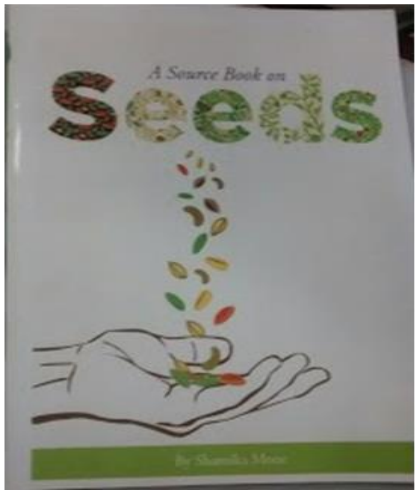
explain the value of the traditional paddy varieties to the agricultural minister of Punjab. In addition, he received several trade enquiries for organic produce by the large traders who visited his stalls.

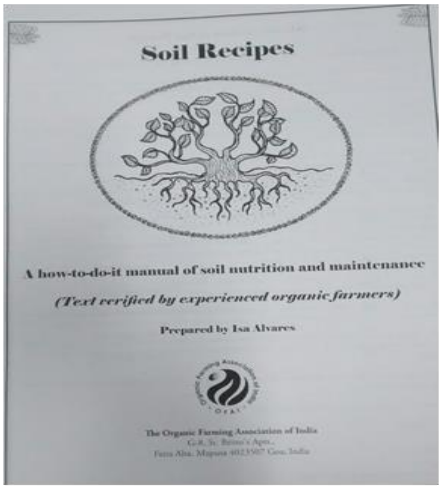
- **Smt Ritu**, an organic farmer from the district Sirma in Himachal Pradesh primarily grows and supplies fruits. She described the convention as a learning experience where she got to meet and interact with several farmers including **Sh Nayan Pradhan,** a farmer from Kalimpong, Darjeeling who gifted her some seeds for free as a goodwill gesture.
- **Smt Gangamma** from Kappa Grama, Tumkur Zilla, Dubbi Taluk, Karnataka is part of a group involved in conserving traditional variety of seeds and promoting organic farming in Karnataka under the Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Programme (MKSP) programme of the government. She is a Community Resource Person (CRP) and provides training to her fellow village women in organic farming techniques.











Books released during the Biodiversity Festival



Photo 19: Smt Maneka Gandhi at one of the stalls in Kisan Haat

- During the three day Biodiversity festival, the farmers, urban garden enthusiasts, students, entrepreneurs and others could be over-heard exchanging and sharing their experiences of growing food organically. Their stories might have differed. However, **what stood out as common was the conviction that working in tandem with nature is the only way forward for providing adequate, safe and nutritious food for our people.**



- A booklet '**Reviving Vegetable Diversity – a seed savers' guide**' was released on the occasion by the **Union Cabinet Minister for Women & Child Development Smt Maneka Gandhi** The book has been written in English by **Smt. Deepika Kundaji**, an organic gardener and seed saver, who has been working since 1994 with non-commercial vegetable varieties ideal for home gardens. This work is a part of the Pebble Garden initiative in Auroville, Tamilnadu, where she and Sh Bernard Declercq have regenerated 7 acres of severely eroded land into a vibrant forest. The book is meant for the organic farmers and gardeners who are

eager to work with traditional vegetable varieties. It presents the principles and practices needed for the production of pure s eeds of excellent quality.



Launch of the booklet 'Source Book on Seeds'

Kisan Haat

One of the key attractions of the Festival were the 22 farmers stalls from different states displaying and selling their produce in Kisan Haat. The farmers were carefully screened to ensure authentic organic produce in the Haat. While the organisers sought to give this direct marketing platform an ambience of a weekly village shandy by keeping it open and uncovered, rain played spoilsport on this effort.

Urban Gardening Workshops

'Organic Vegetable Kitchen Garden' workshops turned out to be one of the popular features of the convention. The training on the set up and management of an organic vegetable kitchen garden was conducted by **Smt Ritu Mathur,** Gurgaon on Day 1 and Day 2 of the festival. More than 50 people including several delegates registered on the first day for this programme. The feedback indicated that the participants found the sessions to be quite useful and informative.

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Cultural Programme:

The solo performance by the well-known Punjabi artist **Sh Rabbi Shergill** gave a taste of Punjabi music to the farmers from other parts of the country. Young volunteers from NITTTR and CCET were seen to enjoy their favorite singer's presence and performance on Day 1 evening, after a hard day's work.

Green Film Festival:

The Green Film Festival showcased several relevant films including:

- *'I Cannot Give You My Forest'* by **Smt Kavita Bahl** and **Sh Nandan Saxena**
- Satyameva Jayate's '*Poison on the Plate*'
- *'Punjab Vs Pesticides*', with Director **Simran Kler**
- '*Jahan Chaah Wahan Raah*', with **Dr. Rajendra Khimani**, Registrar, GVP
- '*Success Stories of Organic Farmers from Maharashtra*' by **Shubhada Pandhare**
- *'Thali Mein Zahar'*
- *'Vasundhara Ke Doot*', a film by ETV NITTTR on Vermicomposting

Live Streaming of Panel Discussions

Using its studio set up and live streaming facilities in NITTTR, experts in the Rural Development Department of NITTTR ensured that people who could not join the Convention in person also benefited from the presence of pioneering organic farmers as well as agro-ecology experts in Chandigarh during the Convention. Lively panel discussions were organised for distant viewers which were also kept interactive and interesting.

Organic Food Festival | Feb 28 - Mar 2, 2015



Photo 22: Organic Food Festival

The Organic Food Festival offered visitors an opportunity to experience the **traditional food** recipes served by organic farming groups from different states of India. It served as a reminder of the healthy food practices, aroma, taste and nutrition of diverse traditional food diets which are rapidly disappearing in the fast food, branded food age. The key highlights of the Organic Food Festival were:

- ✦ All the ingredients were procured from **organic sources** with full traceability. The name of products/produce and the associated farmer was announced as well.
- ✦ The food festival included **14 stalls from different states** including Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Chandigarh, Punjab, J&K, Uttarkhand and others.
- ✦ For the delegates, coupons were designed in such a way that they got to taste and eat food from all different states.

State	Traditional Dishes
Uttarakhand	Pahadi Rajma, Amaranth And Rice Bran Laddu, Multi Millet Roti, Barnyard Millet Kheer, Herbal Juices
Tamil Nadu	Traditional Soups From Medicinal Herbs, Millet Rices, Vegetable Salads, Sprouts Sundal, Variety Rices,Vegetable Idly, Upmas And Millet Dosas
Kerala	Bamboo Rice Payasam, Unni Appam, Ragi Puttu, Jack Fruit Kheer
Maharashtra	Pizza Without Ovens, Patties Sans Potatoes, Multi Grain Rotis, Herbal Tea, Natural Colors For Holi, Salafs
Karnataka	Ragi Pappad, Brown Top Millet Baath
Rajasthan	Red Rice Raab, Bajra Kichdi, Millets Roti, Multi Rain Sprouts
Odisha	Ragi Tea And Multi Grain Roti
Gujarat	Millet & Rice Rotla, Buttermilk, Halwa, Sapdi, Dal, Poha, Sweet Ball
Punjab	Daliya, Moth-Bajre ki Khichdi, Makki Di Roti-Sarson ka Saag, Butter milk

- The whole environment was designed to be eco-friendly. The food was served in arecanut plates. Refills and dispensers were used to place filtered water. The food kit distributed to the participants contained a khadi cotton bag which contained a steel glass and a spoon so as to avoid the use of plastic.
- As a result, inspite of a large crowd, not only the food area but the service area and the whole plenary were **litter and plastic free**! The whole arrangement was very much appreciated by all and was listed as one of the top 3 highlights of the event in the feedback forms.

Scientific Conference | Mar 1 - Mar 2, 2015

Introduction

Agro-ecological approaches are increasingly being recognised as the way forward for food, nutritional and livelihood security of small and marginal farmers across the world. In this approach, ecological practices to increase productivity, improve soil fertility and address climate change go hand in hand with the empowerment of small-scale family farmers, both men and women. While there are thousands of models across India with lakhs of farmers having adopted such practices, the mainstream agricultural research and extension systems continue to be skeptical about agro-ecological approaches. This scepticism is hindering the much needed investments in research and further scaling up of the existing models. To address this, a two-day conference on 'Mainstreaming Agro-Ecological approaches in farming' was organised on 1st and 2nd March, 2015 in Chandigarh as part of the 5th National Organic Farming Convention by Centre for Sustainable Agriculture and Indian Society for Agro-Ecology.



Inaugural Session of the Conference graced by Hon'ble Governor

Objectives

The main objectives of the conference were:

- Provide a forum to take stock of the current state of science, practices and initiatives in the field of agro-ecology
- Understand the contributions of agro-ecological approaches towards economic, social and environmental sustainability of small and marginal farmers
- Develop a policy framework for consideration of state and national governments

Organizers

The scientific conference was organized by the Centre for Sustainable Agriculture and the Indian Society for Agro-Ecology.

Highlights

The conference involved discussions and public lectures on several important themes concerning agro-ecology including the following:

- Agro-ecological approaches to Sustainable Food Systems
- Rebuilding India's Soils and Seeds
- Agro-ecology in the context of Climate Change
- Livestock in Agro-ecological approaches
- Policy Framework for Mainstreaming Agro-ecology
- Integrated & Resilient Farming Systems
- Emerging issues in Punjab & Haryana
- Ecological Pest & Disease Management
- Building Community Managed Seed Systems

The proceedings of the two day scientific conference concluded with a Joint Declaration as detailed in Annex II. The presentations (poster and oral) from the Conference would be published in the ISAE journal and this publication is awaited at the time of writing this proceedings report.

Annexures

I: Declaration of the Organic Farmers Community

The organic farming community of this country represented in strength by around 1865 participants at this 5th National Organic Farming Convention, pledge to carry forward with renewed strength our endeavour to mainstream agro-ecological farming practices across the country. The gathering, comprising practicing farmers including women, tribal and adivasi people, seed savers, ecologists, scientists, non-governmental and community organizations, is supported in this effort by the international organic farming community spread across 130 countries and represented by IFOAM.

We reiterate our conviction that agro-ecological farming practices are the only way forward for meeting the nutritional, livelihood, socio-cultural and spiritual needs of our people, including those of future generations. This conviction is strengthened by the experiences of our farmer friends in Punjab and Haryana who have paid a high price and sacrificed their environment and the health of their people. We pledge to stand by them in their journey to recovery and restoration.

We, the participants representing the organic farming community of India, declare:

1. Organic farming practices CAN meet all the food and nutritional needs of our nation, and it is the only sustainable way to safeguard the food security of present and future generations. The growing number of organic farmers and rising demand for organic produce is evidence of its rapid spread.
2. The IAASTD World Agriculture Report authored by 400 international experts, including UN representatives, and endorsed by 58 nations, including India, recommends agro-ecological practices and small family farms, suitably adapted to local needs and conditions. It adds that GM crops are no solution to hunger, poverty, climate change as well as ecological, energy and economic challenges.
3. We categorically reject Genetically Modified Organisms as an unnecessary technology with numerous potential hazards. It is also an example of bad science. We also object to open field trials of GM crops, since they pose a threat to our food, farming and environment while blatantly disregarding recommendations of several government-appointed committees.
4. We pledge to safeguard the integrity of our eco-systems and work towards the conservation, protection and re-generation of soil health, water resources, forests, biodiversity and seed sovereignty.
5. Land, water and other natural resources must be prioritized for sustainably meeting basic needs and nutritional security. Land under food cultivation must not be allowed to be diverted for other purposes through forced land acquisition. Similarly, water

resources for irrigation must be directed to essential food needs rather than water guzzling monocultures of sugarcane or other industrial non-priority uses.

6. Forest habitats and traditional access rights of forest dependent communities must not be undermined, as uncultivated forest foods and medicinal plants have played a critical role in the lives of those residing in the country's tribal forested regions.
7. The current form of chemical agriculture is completely dependent on steadily depleting resources and leaves farmers vulnerable to foreign/corporate dependence. This must not and cannot continue.
8. All agri-chemicals should be progressively phased out; and the money thus saved used to propagate and support ecologically safe food growing practices. Suitable budgetary allocations must be made for mainstreaming agro-ecological practices.
9. The educational curriculum and calendar in rural India needs to be sensitive to local agricultural practices, needs and rhythms. A land-based pedagogy must become an integral part of education in rural India, with suitable adaptations for urban India.
10. Agriculture departments and universities need to reorient their attention to agro-ecological systems and practices, including reviewing their curricula, evaluating hidden costs of technologies they recommend, and aligning research activity to the needs and challenges of the local community.
11. The role of women, the mainstay of a self-reliant agricultural system in India, needs to be recognized, acknowledged and supported, in terms of land rights as well as support from the government.
12. The Organic Farming Community appreciates the Haryana government's efforts to revive indigenous breeds of cattle. Since this is crucial in facilitating self-reliant agriculture, we seek such policy initiatives from other state governments as well as the central government.
13. The public distribution system must source food from the local/ bio-regional neighbourhood in which it is consumed. The convention suggests a grid of several localized markets as one of the ways forward.
14. We demand better marketing support from government agencies so that the organic producers have assured demand and fair prices for their produce.
15. Govt schemes such as MGNREGS, NRLM and SLRM should support agro-ecological practices as they supplement economic needs of farming families, landless labourers as well as people in distress.
16. India has a great wealth of crop diversity with unique features like nutritional/medicinal qualities, drought tolerance, salinity tolerance, pest resistance, and flood tolerance. This diversity has been conserved and shared by farmers as an open source collective heritage belonging to all. The concept of private property rights over such traditional heritage is alien and unethical in this land.

II: Declaration of the Scientific Conference

Recognising that positive and negative impacts on the state of health of soil and water, incidence of pests and diseases and biodiversity conservation are a direct outcome of the current agricultural paradigm, and

Realising the degradation of agro ecosystems and landscapes due to current models of agriculture, the melt down of natural ecosystem service provisions leading to ecological un-sustainability thereby causing a serious barrier to enhancement of agriculture productivity and farmers income, and

Considering that the solution for the agrarian crisis lies only in changing the production relations - relations between the resources used in the production shifting from high external input based model to low external input model, shifting from monocultures to integrated systems- reconfiguring the relations between people involved in the production operations - the producer, the labour, the trader, the consumer- and improving access to sustainable production resources for people involved in production supported by an appropriate policy environment, and

Accepting that the emerging challenges of food security, livelihood sustainability, public health, right of people to safe food, wider ecological health, regional economic development and social justice, restoring and salvaging the existing commons, and creation of new commons can be dealt better through adoption of agro-ecological approaches for agricultural development, we recommend that

Policy frame work

- A shift to diversified, biological resource integrated models of agriculture is required to correct inappropriate resource use. This calls for a shift to intercropping, multiple cropping systems, appropriate crop rotations and integration of crops and animals.
- Land use and farming systems need to be planned consciously by paying attention to the challenges of ecological intensification.
- Shift in the support systems (prices, subsidies, research, institutions) should be reconfigured from current subsidies on external inputs to support to ecosystem services
- Maintaining ecosystem specific agronomic diversity is essential. For example, the wetlands, rainfed areas, hill regions etc need support to practice appropriate farming systems
- Using ‘national food security’ as a crutch to promote the current unsustainable models of agriculture has to be stopped. Instead diverse and safe food like millets, pulses, oilseeds and various locally grown fruits and vegetables should be promoted.
- Restrictions should be imposed to regulate and control the use of inappropriate technologies like heavy machines, agro chemicals, GMOs and other technologies that have biosafety implications.

- The emerging crisis impacting pollinators and the consequent deleterious impact on the productivity and yields of several crops has to be recognised and dealt with utmost urgency
- An open access regime has to be created to stop private appropriation of knowledge and genetic resources
- Appropriate spaces for non-formal knowledge systems has to be provided

Scientific Research and Extension

- Agricultural research needs to adopt an agro ecological perspective while setting the research and training agenda
- Researchers should shift towards participatory approaches involving practicing farmers and farm workers and develop appropriate technologies to suit their needs
- Collective, location-specific approaches to extension have to be followed to restore the health of agro-eco systems
- Increased investments in agro ecological research needs to be made
- Agricultural research performance should be redefined to include the criteria of sustainability and ecosystem health

We resolve that

- The Society for Agro Ecology (SAEi) will continue to engage with scientific community, policy makers, farmers and farm workers to increase and improve dialogue for an appropriate shift towards agro ecological approaches
- Farmers and farm workers will be invited to share their knowledge and experiences to enrich the collective body of knowledge on agro ecology
- Local chapters of SAEi will support the formation of technical services groups to help farmers and farm workers to improve their livelihood sustainability
- SAEi will engage with various social movements (farmers and farm workers' organisations, science movements, community based organisations and civil society organisations) to involve them in meaningful dialogue with policy makers, researchers and the farming community.

III: Convention Schedule

Schedule Overview: Day 1[1]

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">SCHEDULE OVERVIEW</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">DAY 1</th></tr>
<tr><th>NITTTR</th><th>CCET</th></tr>
<tr><td>10.00 am to 11.45 am:
Morning Plenary (NITTTR Playground, Main Pandal)</td><td>11 am onwards:
Biodiversity Festival, Exhibition, Kisan Haat</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">12 noon to 2.00 pm: Facilitated tours across all the convention stalls and LUNCH in Organic Food Festival</td></tr>
<tr><td>2.00 pm to 5.30 pm:
Parallel Session on Soil
(Convention Room#1)</td><td rowspan="2">11.00 am to 1.00 pm &
2.00 pm to 4.30 pm:
Urban Gardening Workshop</td></tr>
<tr><td>2.00 pm to 5.30 pm:
Parallel Session on Water and Biodiversity
(Convention Room#2)</td></tr>
<tr><td>2.00 pm to 5.30 pm:
Parallel Session on Plant Protection
(Convention Room#3)</td><td rowspan="2">12 noon to 2.00 pm:
Kisan Panchayat on
ABCD of Organic Farming</td></tr>
<tr><td>2.00 pm to 5.30 pm:
Parallel Session on Agro Toxins & Environmental Health
(NITTTR Auditorium)</td></tr>
<tr><td>2.00 pm to 5.30 pm:
Parallel Session on GMOs & Organic Farming
(Convention Room #5)</td><td rowspan="2">3.00 pm to 4.30 pm:
Kisan Panchayat on
Transition to Organic Farming</td></tr>
<tr><td>2.00 pm to 5.30 pm:
Parallel Session on Adivasi Agriculture (Conference Hall)</td></tr>
<tr><td>2.00 pm to 5.30 pm:
Parallel Session on Organic Farming Policies & Implementation
(Main Plenary space, NITTTR Playground)</td><td>2.00 pm to 4.30 pm:
Film Screenings related to agri chemicals & organic farming</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>5.30 pm to 9.30 pm:
Evening Public Plenary
(Cultural Programmes, Public Lecture, Film Screening)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>7.00 pm to 7.45 pm:
Film Screening</td></tr>
</table>

[1] While the schedule listed here is the original Programme Schedule for Day 1, some of the planned activities like Kisan Panchayat in CCET could not take place due to continuous rain.

Day 1 Main Convention at NITTTR

DAY 1 (28/02/2015) EVENTS AT NITTTR

10am –11.45am	11.45am - 2pm	2pm – 4pm	4.30pm – 5.30pm		2pm –5.30pm	
PLENARY SESSION		**PRACTICES & INNOVATIONS SESSIONS**			**STUDIO SESSION**	**POLICY DISCUSSION**
venue: NITTTR playground		venue: CR#1	venue: CR#1	venue: NITTTR open space	venue: ETV studio, NITTTR	venue: NITTTR auditorium
Chief Guest – Sh.M.L.Khattar (CM Haryana) Song - Gurpreet singh Rattu Welcome by - Dilnavaz Variava ASHA **Speeches:** Ms Sabarmatee, Organic Farmer & Seed Conservator; Sh Andre Leu IFOAM; Sh. Sarvadaman Patel, OFAI; Dr K K Talwar, Chairperson, NITTTR; **Release of publications:-** 1. Ecological Agriculture in India: Scientific Evidence on Positive Impacts (ASHA) 2. A Source Book on Seeds and Seed Catalogue (OFAI) 3. THE Myth of Safe Pesticides (Andre Leu, IFOAM) 4. OFAI Soil Recipes (English, Hindi & Punjabi)" 5.Balihari Kudrat (Special Edition)" and other KVM Publications **Launch of Video Documentaries:-** 1. Jahan Chah, Wahan Raah (Gujarat Vidya Peeth) 2. 6 Success Stories from Maharashtra (Vasudha Nirmitee & OFAI) Dr MP Poonia, Director, NITTTR; Padma Bhushan Bibi Inderjeet Kaur, Chairperson, All India Pingalwara Society; Sh. Umendra Dutt KVM; Sh. OP Dhankar (Agriculture Minister, Haryana); Sh. Vijay Dev-IAS (Advisor, UT Admin.CHD); Sh.M.L.Khattar (CM Haryana); Sh Hartej Singh Mehta, KVM *Anchor – Sh.Kapil Shah (OFAI)*	Facilitated tour across all the convention stalls and festival spaces	**SOIL** **Facilitator:** Sh. Ashok Bang Sh. BN Nandish (K'ntk);Sh.Poongudi (TN); Dr. Sultan Ismail (Chennai); Dr. OP Rupela (Hyderabad) venue: CR#3 **PLANT PROTECTION** **Facilitator:** Ms.Usha S & Sh.Zakir Hussain Ms.Sumitra Thacker (Gujarat); Ms.Vidya Rudraksha (M'rashtra);Sh.Shashi Bhushan Singh (MP), Sh.Dolagobinda Panda (Odisha) venue: CR#2 **WATER** **Facilitator:** Sh.Biju Negi Sh.R Murugesan (TN); Sh.Avtar Singh (Punjab); Sh.Arun Kumar/ Sh.Siby (Kerala);Sh.Panduranga Shitole (Maharashtra)	**SOIL** **Facilitator:** Dr. OP Rupela Ms.Anuradha Sarang (Kerala); Sh.Dalip Singh (Haryana); Sh.G Nagaraj (K'ntk) venue: CR#3 **PLANT PROTECTION** **Facilitator:** Ms.Usha S & Sh.Zakir Hussain Dr. Ramoo, Dr. Zakir Hussain and Dr.Chandrasekhar of CSA, Hyderabad venue: CR#2 **BIODIVERSITY & CROP PLANNING** **Facilitator:** Sh.Biju Negi Dr Ashok Bang (M'rashtra); Sh.Raghava (K'ntk), Sh.Lumlang Khongthothrem (Meghalaya);Sh.Ignesious Jeevakumar (TN)	Live Demonstrations, facilitated by Gaurav Sahai	**Organic Farming for Sustainable Livelihood and Prosperity** **Facilitator:** Dr. UN Roy **Farmer-Scientists:** Sh.Subhash Sharma (Maharashtra), Sh.Sarvadaman Patel (Gujarat), Sh.Suresh Desai (Karnataka), Sh.Survir Singh (UP), Sh.Ramsharan Verma (UP), Sh.Jagat Singh Junglee (Uttarakhand) **Brief Sharing:** Sh.B N Nandish (Karnataka), Sh.Inderjit Saholi (Punjab)	**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH** **Facilitator:** Dr. Amarsingh Azad, **Lead Discussants:** Dr. GPI Singh, Sh.Sridhar Radhakrishnan, Dr.Rajinder Kumar, Sh.Hemant Goswami, Dr.Neelam Sodhi, Dr. J S Thakur,Dr.Geeta Arora. **Special Guest :** Sh Surjit Jyani,Health Minister, Pb venue: CR#5 **GMOs & ORGANIC FARMING** **Facilitators:** Sh.Rajesh Krishnan, Ms.Sreedevi **Discussant:** Rabbi Shergill venue: conference hall **ADIVASI AGRICULTURE** **Facilitators:** Sh.Debjeet Sarangi, Sh.Bharat Mansata, Sh.Saroj Mohanty, Sh.Soumik Banerjee **Discussants:**Sh.Ludru Ram Nag (Chattisgarh) venue: NITTTR playground **ORGANIC FARMING POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION** **Facilitators:** Sh.Afsar Jafri **Lead Discussants:** Sh.Claude Alvares, Ms.Kavitha Kuruganti **Special Guests:** I) Sh.Suresh Kumar, Addl CS Punjab, ii) CGM NABARD Haryana, iii) CGM NABARD Punjab **Chief Guest :** Jth. Tota Singh (Agriculture Minister, Punjab)

Day 1 Festival at Chandigarh College of Engineering and Technology (CCET)

DAY1 (28/02/2015) EVENTS AT CCET

12'o Clock	12'o clock – 4.30pm		2.30pm –5.00pm	5.30 pm – 9.15 pm	
INAUGURATION CEREMONY	**URBAN GARDENING WORKSHOPS**		**FILM SCREENING & DISCUSSION**	**PLENARY SESSION**	
	12 –1.30pm	2pm –4.30pm			
	venue: workshop #1	venue: workshop #1	venue: multipurpose hall	venue: main pandal	
To be inaugurated by: Sh. Madan Mohan Mittal, Minister for Technical Education (Punjab) Sh. Narbir Singh, Minister, PWD and Public Health Engineering (Haryana). **Guests of Honour:** Sh. Anurag Aggarwal (IAS), Home Secretary, Chandigarh; Ms Kavita Singh Chauhan (IAS), MD, CITCO; Sh. K S Pannu (IAS), CMD, Punjab Agro; Sh. Suresh Kumar (IAS), FCD & Deputy CS, Punjab, Sh. Naresh Sirohi, Adviser, Kisan Channel In the presence of Dr. R K Kapur, Principal, Chandigarh College of Engineering and Technology (CCET) and Dr. Manpreet Singh Gujral, Director CCET Degree college	**Facilitators:** Ms.Ritu Mathur & Sh.Hem Khosla. Supported By Sh.Gaurav Sahai	**Facilitators:** Ms.Ritu Mathur & Sh.Hem Khosla. Supported By Sh.Gaurav Sahai	1."Punjab Vs Pesticides", with Director Simran Kler 2."Jahan Chaah Wahan Raah", with Dr. Rajendra Khimani, Registrar, GVP	5.30 pm - 6.00 pm	**Cultural Programme :** NZCC and Convention participants
				6.00 pm - 6.15 pm	**OFAI slide presentation** on "Organic Farmers of India": Dr. Claude Alvares, OFAI
	KISAN PANCHAYAT			6.15 pm - 7.00 pm	**Public Lecture:** Sh. Sachhidananda Bharati (famous environmentalist). In the Chair: Sh. Gobind Thukral
	12.00pm - 2.00pm venue: workshop #2 **"ABCD of Organic Farming"** **Facilitators:** Sh.Gurpreet Singh Rattu, Sh.Sarvdaman Patel and Sh.Subhash Sharma	3.00pm - 4.30pm venue: workshop #2 **"Transition to Organic Farming"** **Facilitators:** Dr. Arun K Sharma, Sh.Kapil Shah, Dr. Rajinder Choudhary, Dr. Ramoo, Dr Manbir		7.00 pm - 7.45 pm	**Film Screening:** (Satyameva Jayate's Poison on the Plate)
				7.45 pm onwards	**Solo Performance** by Famous Singer Rabbi Shergill

Schedule Overview: Day 2[2]

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">SCHEDULE OVERVIEW</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">DAY 2</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">NITTTR</th><th rowspan="2">CCET</th></tr>
<tr><th>Main Convention</th><th>Scientific Conference</th></tr>
<tr><td>9.00 am to 10.30 am:
Morning Plenary (NITTTR Playground, Main Pandal)</td><td rowspan="2">10 am to 11.30 am:
Agro-ecological approaches to Sustainable Food Systems
(Auditorium)</td><td rowspan="5">10 am onwards:
Biodiversity Festival,
Exhibition,
Kisaan Haat</td></tr>
<tr><td>10.30 am to 1.00 pm:
Parallel Session on Soil, Water, Crop Planning & Innovative Practices (Convention Room#1)</td></tr>
<tr><td>10.30 am to 1.00 pm:
Parallel Session on Seeds in Organic Farming
(Convention Room#2)</td><td rowspan="3">11.45 am to 1.45 pm:
Rebuilding India's Soils and Seeds
(Auditorium)</td></tr>
<tr><td>10.30 am to 1.00 pm:
Parallel Session on Livestock, esp. indigenous breeds
(Convention Room#3)</td><td rowspan="3">11.00 am to 1.00 pm
& 2.30 pm to 4.30 pm:
Urban Gardening Workshop</td></tr>
<tr><td>10.30 am to 1.00 pm:
Parallel Session on Women in Organic Farming
(Convention Room#6)</td><td rowspan="3">1.45 pm to 2.30 pm:
LUNCH IN ORGANIC FOOD FESTIVAL</td></tr>
<tr><td>10.30 am to 1.00 pm:
Parallel Session on Smallholders & Organic Farming
(Convention Room#4)</td><td rowspan="3">2.30 pm to 4.30 pm:
Parallel Session on Ecological Pest & Disease Management
(Auditorium)</td><td rowspan="2">2.00 pm to 4.00 pm:
Punjab Haryana
Special Kisan Panchayat</td></tr>
<tr><td>10.30 am to 1.00 pm:
Parallel Session on Experience Sharing (NITTTR Playground, Main Pandal)</td><td rowspan="2">2.30 pm to 4.30 pm:
Screening of films</td></tr>
<tr><td>10.30 am to 1.00 pm:
Parallel Session on Organic Farming Certification & Marketing
(Convention Room#5)</td><td rowspan="3">2.30 pm to 4.30 pm:
Parallel Session on Building Community Managed Seed Systems
(Convention Room#6)</td><td rowspan="2">4.00 pm to 5.15 pm:
Interaction between consumers and farmers</td></tr>
<tr><td>1 pm to 3 pm: Organic Food Festival Lunch</td><td rowspan="5">5.15 pm onwards:
Evening Public Plenary
(Cultural Programme,
Book Releases,
Film Screening, Public Lecture,
Rabbi Shergill
Solo Performance)</td></tr>
<tr><td>3.00-5.30 pm: Parallel Session on Plant Protection
(Convention Room#6)</td><td rowspan="3">2.30 pm to 4.30 pm:
Parallel Session on Agroecology in the context of Climate Change
(Committee Room,
Homi Bhabha Block)</td></tr>
<tr><td>3.00-5.30 pm: Parallel Session
on Organic Farming in Educational Curriculum
(Convention Room#3)</td></tr>
<tr><td>3.00- 5.30 pm: Parallel Session
on Seed Sovereignty (NITTTR Playground, Main Pandal)</td><td rowspan="2">4.45 pm to 6.00 pm:
Emerging issues in Punjab & Haryana
(Auditorium)</td></tr>
<tr><td>3.00-5.30 pm: Parallel Session on Hill Agriculture
(Convention Room#4)</td></tr>
</table>

[2] On Day 2, some of the planned activities like Kisan Panchayat in CCET could not take place due to continuous rain.

Day 2 Main Convention at NITTTR

DAY 2 (01/03/2015) EVENTS AT NITTTR

9am – 10.30am	10.30am – 1pm						
PLENARY SESSION	**PRACTICES & INNOVATIONS SESSIONS**				**POLICY DISCUSSIONS**		
venue: NITTTR playground	venue: CR#1	venue: CR#2	venue: CR#3	venue: NITTTR playground	venue: CR#5	venue: CR#4	venue: CR#6
Special Guest of Honour: Ms. Maneka Gandhi (Minister, WCD, GOI), Punjabi song, Summing up of earlier day's proceedings; **Speeches by:** Sh. Subhash Sharma; Sh. OP Dhankar (Agriculture Minister, Haryana). Sh. Radhamohan Singh (Union Agriculture Minister, GOI.) **Interview of Panel of 5 Young Farmers:** Sh.Chinmay Futane, Sh.Anuradha Sarang, Sh.Abhijit Save, Sh.Ravdeep Singh, Sh.V M Parthasarthy, Sh.Rajesh Krishnan **Release of Book:** by Ms. Maneka Gandhi, Hon'ble Minister, WCD, GoI • "A Source Book on Seeds and Seed Catalogue" (OFAI) • "Reviving Vegetable Seed Diversity: A Seed Savers' Guide" by Ms.Deepika Kundaji/Sahaja Samrudha *Anchor: Ms.Kavitha Kuruganti, ASHA*	**SOIL, WATER, CROP PLANNING & INNOVATIVE PRACTICES** **Facilitator:** Sh.Niranjana Maru **WATER & CROP PLANNING:** Sh.Subhash Sharma (M'rashtra), Sh.N V Venugopal (AP), Sh.Indrakumar (K'ntk) **SOIL:** Sh.Amarjeet Sharma (Pb), Sh.Sudama Sahu (Odisha), Sh.Uday Bhan (Hr), Com. Sh.Jagtar Singh (Pb),Sh.Gurmail Gunike (Pb), Sh.Ravdeep Singh(Pb) **INNOVATIVE PRACTICES:** Dr. Janak Palta McGillan (MP), Sh.Allauddin Ahmed (W.Bengal); Dr. U N Roy (NITTTR) (Integrated and Mixed Organic Farming Approach of Development)	**SEED** **Facilitator:** Jacob Nellithanam & Sabarmatee *Special Recognition for Cotton Seed Breeding & Conservation:* Sh.Samat bhai Jhada & Sh.Nagappa Nimbegondi Sh.Sanjay Patil (M'rashtra), Sh.Shibaprasad Sahu (Odisha), Sh.Ilias KP (Kerala),Sh.Jagannath Majhi (Odisha), Sh.Manaram Angari (R'sthan), Sh.Padma Behre (Odisha), Sh.Nekram Sharma (HP), Sh.Ekadashi Nandi (Odisha), Sh.Samatbhai(Gujarat), Sh.Bina Chetia (Assam), Ms.Neelam Datta (Assam), George Anthony (Kerala), Bhaskar Mahanta (Assam)	**LIVESTOCK, ESP. INDIGENOUS BREEDS** **Facilitator:** Dr. J S Saini, NITTTR Dr. D K Sadana, Swami Chinmayanand, Sunil Mansinghka, Dr. Pachegaonkar, Dr. Ranjit Singh (Jodhpur)	**EXPERIENCE SHARING** **Facilitator:** Dr Rajendra Khimani, R'gstr Gujarat VidyaPeeth Sh.Shivkumar (Krtk) Sh. Bagappa(AP); Sh.Dhanpati Sapkota(Sikkim) ;Chetana Vikas farmer,Kamala Karman(Assam) Ilias KP(Kerala), Sh.Bhupendra Singh(Ch'sgrh) Mahoba women farmer(UP)Sh. Arun Dike(MP); Sh.Vinod Jyani Sh.Manjunath ,SVAD (TN); Sh. Shivnath Yadav (Ch'sgarh)	**Certification & Marketing** **Facilitators:** Sh.Ashish Gupta, Sh.Ananthoo, Sh.Sridhar Radhakrishnan **Lead Discussants:** Timbaktu Organic Suvarnamma, Sh.Rohit Jain, Sh.Prashant, Sh.Akhil Kapoor, Dr. R S Minhas (HP)	**Smallholders & Organic Farming** **Facilitators:** Anshuman Das, Kapil Shah, Vinay Mahajan, Sh.Claude Alvares Jain, Sh.Prashant, Sh.Akhil Kapoor, Dr. R S Minhas (HP)	**Women in Organic Farming** **Facilitators:** Kavitha Kuruganti, Usha Jayakumar & Rina Gill **Lead Discussant:** Sh.Suvarnamma, Ms.Kamaljit Kaur, Jagori participants

1.30 – 3.00 pm

Demo Plot visits in the farm of Shivraj Singh of Kishangarh, facilitated by Sarvdaman Patel and Ramabhadran Gopalan

3.00-5.30 pm

EXPERIENCE SHARING AND POLICY DISCUSSIONS

venue: CR#6	**Plant Protection Facilitator:** Dr. G Chandrasekhar. Ms.Shobha Jagtap (M'rashtra), Sh.Ramkishan (Haryana), Sh.Rajkumar Arya (Haryana), Sh.Suresh Bhaurao Parab (M'rashtra) on fungi, Jind Keet Paathshaala (Haryana)
venue: CR#3	**Organic Farming in School Education Lead discussants:** Nyla Coelho, Sh.Sachin Desai, Sh.Claude Alvares, Sh.Bharat Mansata, Sh.Ramasubramaniam, Dr. Rajendrabhai Khimani, Sh.Balasaheb Sarode
venue: NITTR playground	**Seed Sovereignty Lead Discussants:** Sh.Debal Deb, Sh.Krishna Prasad, Sh.Jacob Nellithanam, Sh.Shalini Bhutani, Sh.Vijay Jardhari, Sh.Sabarmatee
venue: CR#4	**Hill Agriculture Facilitators:** Sh.Ashish Gupta, Sh.Biju Negi, Sh.Vijay Jardhari, Jagori farmers
venue: ETV studio, NITTTR	**NITTTR studio session: "Prospects & Challenges of Organic Farming" with scientists (Live streaming) Facilitators:** Dr UN Roy. Dr O P Rupela, Dr Sultan Ismail, Dr Ashok Bang, Dr Pawan Sharma, Dr Santosh Satya, Dr Rajesh Dubey, Dr MS Pal, Dr Arun K Sharma

4.00 pm - 6.00 pm

Visit to NITTTR plot, facilitated by Sh.Gaurav Sharma (in batches of 100 ppl every half hour) Live demonstrations: **Facilitator :** Niranjana Maru

Day 2: Scientific Conference at NITTTR

SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE at (NITTTR)			
10.00am - 12.00 noon	12.15pm - 1.45pm	2.30pm –4.30pm	4.45pm – 6.00pm
Agro-ecological approaches to Sustainable Food Systems	**Rebuilding India's Soils and Seeds**	**Ecological Pest & Disease Management**	**Emerging issues in Punjab & Haryana**
venue: Auditorium	venue: Auditorium	venue: Auditorium	venue: Auditorium
Chief Guest: Prof Kaptan Singh Solanki, Hon'ble Governor of Punjab & Haryana. **Guest of Honour:** Dr B S Dhillon, V.C, (Punjab Agriculture University) **Chair/Lead:** Dr Parthib Basu & Dr Ramanjaneyulu **Speakers:** Dr Dinesh Abrol, Dr Andre Leu, Dr Sucha Singh Gill, Dr Sarvadaman Patel.	**Chair/Lead:** Dr K Ramasamy **Speakers:** Dr O P Rupela, Dr Sultan Ismail, Dr Debal Deb, Shri Subhash Sharma	**Chair/Lead:** Dr N Devakumar **Speakers:** Dr Usha Chauhan, Dr H B Singh, Dr Sunita Chandel, Dr D V Raidu, Dr Zakir Hussain, Dr Barbara Smith **Building Community Managed Seed Systems** venue: CR#6 **Chair/Lead:** Sh. Sujit Chakravorty **Speakers:** Ms Shalini Bhutani, Dr G V Ramanjaneyulu, Shri Krishna Prasad **Agro-ecology in the context of Climate Change** venue: committe room, Homi Bhadha block **Chair/Lead:** Dr R P Singh **Speakers:** Dr Alfred Gathorne-Hardy, Dr Joan Mencher, Dr Yudhvir Singh	**Chair/Lead:** Dr M P Poonia **Speakers:** Dr Kesar Bhangoo, Dr Lakhwinder Singh, Dr Amarsingh Kashyap, Dr Mahavir Narwal, Dr Rajinder Singh

Day 2 Festival at CCET

DAY 2 (01/03/2015) EVENTS AT CCET			
11.00am - 5.15pm		5.30 pm – 9.15 pm	
11am - 1pm & 2.30 - 4.30pm venue: workshop #1	Urban Gardening Workshops	**PLENARY SESSION**	
2pm - 4pm venue: main pandal	**Punjab Haryana Special Kisan Panchayat** **Facilitator:** Sh.Gurpreet Singh **Lead Discussants:** Sh.Amarjit Sharma, Sh.Awtar Singh, Sh.Ravdeep Singh, Sh.Vinod Jyani, Sh.Hem Khosla, Sh.Jagtar Singh Dhaliwal, Sh.Gurmail Singh, Sh.Harmail Singh Panjgrain, Sh.Hartej Singh Mehta, Ms.Raj Bala, Sh.Swarn Singh, Sh.Sukhchain Singh Gill.	venue: main pandal	
2.30 - 4.30pm venue: multipurpose hall	**Screening of films:** Success Stories of Organic Farmers from Maharashtra, by Shubhada Pandhare; "Thali Mein Zahar"; "Vasundhara Ke Doot", a film by ETV NITTTR on Vermicomposting	5.15-5.50pm	Cultural Programme
4pm -5.15pm venue: main pandal	"Building Organic Farming & Food Movement"- Interaction between consumers and farmers. **Chief Guest:** Sh.Santosh Kumar (IFS), Director Environment Department, Chandigarh.	5.50-6pm	Book Release "The Big Grain Drain" by Dr RK Luna; "The Myth of Green Revolution" by Bharat Dogra
		6-6.20pm	Screening of Special Film on Convention made by Joy Joshi
		6.20-7.45pm	**Public Lecture:** Dr Devinder Sharma. **Special Guests:** Dr D V Gandhi, MP. Ms Kirron Kher, MP. and Ms Poonam Sharma, Mayor, Chandigarh*
		7.45pm onwards	**Cultural program** **Special Guests:** Prof R S Gill, Director, NZCC and Sh. Sanjay Tandon (BJP). Coordinator: Ms Poonam Singh

Schedule Overview: Day 3[3]

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW		
DAY 3		
NITTTR		CCET
Main Convention	Scientific Conference	
8.15 am to 11.15 am: Visit to Demo Plot as well as all convention & festival stalls	9 am to 11.30 am: Integrated & Resilient Farming Systems (Auditorium)	Biodiversity Seed Festival, Exhibition, Kisaan Haat, Organic Food Festival
11.30 am to 1.00 pm: State wise discussions in breakout groups (in all Convention Rooms & other open spaces)	9 am to 11.30 am: Livestock in agro-ecological approaches (Convention Room#6)	6.30 to 7.30 pm: Film Screening & Discussion
1 pm to 2.15 pm: LUNCH IN ORGANIC FOOD FESTIVAL	9 am to 11.30 am: Organic Farming Across States (Committee Room, Homi Bhabha Block)	
2.15 pm to 4.00 pm: Grand panel of senior organic farmers (NITTTR Playground, main pandal)	11.45 am to 2.00 pm: Policy framework for mainstreaming agroecology (Auditorium)	7.30 pm onwards: Cultural Program and Closing of Festival

[3] Day 3 was mainly organised as a Plenary Session of the 'Grand Panel' of experienced organic farmers who tirelessly answered dozens of questions from the audience, followed by the Valedictory session given that there was heavy rain throughout the day.

Day 3 Main Convention at NITTTR

DAY 3 (02/03/2015) EVENTS AT NITTTR				
8.15am - 11.15am	11.15am - 11.30am	11.30am - 1.00pm	2.15pm - 4.00pm	4.00pm - 5.15pm
EDUCATIONAL VISIT		venue: all CR# & open spaces	venue: NITTTR playground	**VALEDICTORY SESSION** venue: NITTTR playground
Visit to Demo Plot in NITTTR, Facilitator: Sh.Sarvadaman Patel in batches of 100 each. Facilitated tour of all exhibition stalls and biodiversity festival in turns.	Plenary summing up of earlier day's proceedings (Sh. Bharat Mansata & Ms. Niranjana Maru)	**State-wise discussions on Way Forward** (strengthening the organic farming movement and advocacy for scaling up of organic farming)	**GRAND PANEL OF SENIOR ORGANIC FARMERS:-** Sh.Subhash Sharma, Sh.Suresh Desai, Sh.Sarvadaman Patel, Sh.Mahadev Pachegaonkar, Sh.Suvarnamma, Sh.Pandurang Shitole, Sh.Raghava, Sh.Nandish, Sh.Selvam Ramaswamy, Sh.Amarjeet Sharma, Sh.Syed Ghani Khan and Sh.Vijay Jardhari	S. Prakash Singh Badal, CM (Punjab) Sh Avinash Rai Khanna, MP Rajya Sabha, Punjab. Sh Vijay Dev (IAS) Advisor, Chandigarh. **Summing up of various discussions of the Convention**: Dr K K Talwar, Chairman, NITTTR, Dr M P Poonia, Director, NITTTR, Vote of Thanks. *Anchor: Sh.Umendra Dutt, KVM*

Day 3 Scientific Conference at NITTTR

SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE at (NITTTR)	
DAY 3 (02/03/2015) EVENTS AT CCET	
EVENING PROGRAMME	
venue: main pandal	
6.30pm - 7.30pm	**Film Screening & Discussion**: "I Cannot Give You My Forest", by Ms.Kavita Bahl and Sh.Nandan Saxena
7.30pm onwards	**Cultural Program and Closing of Festival:** Dr Daljeet Singh Cheema, Minister for Education, Punjab

Chair/Lead: Dr D K Sadan **Speakers:** Dr Pachegaonkar, Dr Sunil Mansinghka, Swami Chinmayananda	Dr Anna Marie Nicolayesen, Dr Rajeshwari Raini, Dr Ramanjaneyulu, Dr Tej Pratap
Organic Farming Across States	
venue: committe room, Homi Bhadha block	
Chair/Lead: Dr Tarak Kate **Speakers:** Dr J P Saini, Dr D R Sharma, Dr Zargar, Dr Dhananjay Singh, Dr Shilpanjali Deshpande Sharma	

IV: Details of the Seed Savers who participated in the Biodiversity Festival

Sl. No.	Name of the seed saver/ Group	Group/ State	Background	Display during Seed Festival	Total
1	**Deepika Kundaji**	Pebble garden Auroville	Deepika Kundaji conserving Fifty Varieties of traditionally bred vegetables, part of a larger collection of 90 hardy plants for Home Gardens, conserved at Pebble Garden, Auroville, TN	Rare and unique vegetable seeds for display and sale	36
2	**Vijay Jardhari**	Beej Bachao Andolan Uttarkand	Vijay Jardari is a internationally renowned seed saver of Himalayan hill region.	Millets, Rice, colorful beans, Pulses and vegetables	350
3	**Babulal Dahiya**	Sarjan Samjik Samskruthik sahythya Munch ,Madhya Pradesh	Grassroots group actively involved in Biodiversity Conservation	60 millets, 20 rice, 26 pulses and vegetables	106
4	**Prasannaiah**	Chamrajnagar, Karnataka	Renowned seed saver conserving 40 millets and 20 vegetables	20 finger Millet, 20 other minor millets and 14 rare vegetables	53
5	**Mitrajit Kobhragade**	Maharashtra	Framer breeder and HMT popular rice developer	25 rice varities	25
6	**"Sanjeevini"**	Araku Valley, AP	Gene savior award winners actively involved in conservation and promotion of tribal seed culture and seed diversity	30 rice, 36 millets, millets, 32 pulses 40 and vegetables. Demonstration of Seed ritual	138
7	**"Bhittibhumi"**	Sambalpur, Odisha	Farmers network conserving 150 rice varities.	Display of 92 rice samples	92
8	**"Sundarpahari Adivasi Swabalambi Vikas Sahakarita Samity"**	Jharkhand	Tribal group actively involved in conservation of seed diversity	80 varities of Desi maize, millets, rice and pulses	80

9	**Anupam Paul**	West Bengal	Rice scientist conserving 300 rice varities. 'Jugal' two rice in a single grain in is his pride collection.	Display of 'Jugal' two rice in a single paddy grain and rice panicles	40
10	**"Save our Rice" Tamilnadu**	CREATE Tamilnadu	Revival of traditional rice varities of Tamil nadu	Display of 71 rice samples, including 'Mapille samba' Bridegroom rice	71
11	**Jai Prakash Singh**	Varanasi,Uttar pradesh	Farmer breeder from Tadiya Village, Varanasi Dt, UP.	Farmer bred varieties- Paddy, Wheat and Toor	24
12	**Sanjay Patil**	BAIF-MITTRA Maharashtra	Plant genome savior community award recipient Conserving 250 rice and 37 millets.	Paddy – 80 , Finger Millet – 10 , Proso Millet- 5, Maize-4, Sorgum- 5, Cow pea- 15, Barnyard Millet-1, Tubers- 5	125
13	**Deepak Barde**	Vidarbha, Maharashtra	Renowned seed saver and sarvodaya activist	Mung 2, cowpea-2,jowar-1,beans-5,Wheat-6 Vegetables-16	32
14	**Paschim Srijharkali Jarnakalyana Sangha**	Sunderban West Bengal	Conserving 40 salt tolerant and 80 desi rice varities	105 paddy, Vegetables-20, Pulses-5	140
15	**Anjeneya**	Sharana Muddanna Savayava Krushikara Sangha, Karnataka	Pioneer in rice conservation and Marketing traditional rice	150 rice varities	150
16	**Syed Ghani Khan**	Save Our Rice Karnataka	Conserving more than 700 varities of Indian rice varities	200 rice varities	200
17	**Siba Prasad Sahu**	Seed Saver, odhisha	Farmer Breeder and Rice saver	65 Rice varities and 6 pulses	72
18	**Jothi Prakash**	Save Our rice Karnataka	Conserving Traditional rice varities	150 rice varities	150
19	**Kallappa**	Bellary, Karnataka	Conserving 22 varieties of cotton, minor millets and pulses	22 wheat, 22 Desi cotton, Green gram- 2, Togare- 4, sunflower- 3, foxtail millet- 4, Jowar- 2, Ground nut- 2m safflower-2,Niger-1	64

20	**Sriram**	Cholamandalam Organic Producer Group, Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu	Conserving 150 rice varieties	Rice album and rice samples	150
21	**Shankara Langati**	Khanapur, Karnataka	Gene savior award winner	Paddy- 20, Medicinal rice- 11, Vegetables- 30	61
22	**S.Yoganathan**	PSNFT,Tamilnadu	Traditional vegetable seed producer	60 varieties of Vegetables	60
23	**Rechanna**	Sahaja Samrudha Karnataka		200 varieties of paddy and 32 varieties in the form of Torana	200
24	**Narayana Bachhar**	DRCSC Kolkota	Organization involved in promoting Biointensive Garden and community seed banks	Paddy 25 Vegetables- 28	53
25	**VAAGDHARA**	Rajasthan	Conservation of Millets, Castor and other rain fed crop varieties	Millets, Maize, Vegetables	40
26	**Vanishree Bhat**	VANASHREE, Karnataka	Conservation of Forest Varities	15 varieties of rice	15
27	**Pappamma**	Kolar, Karnataka	Recipient of Rashtriya Seed Saver Award	35 varieties of traditional greens, pulses and vegetables	35
28	**Epiphany**	Meghalaya	Conserving varieties of mandarin orange, velvet beans, medicinal herbs and vegetables	15 varieties of vegetables and 3 varieties of orange	18
29	**Desi Bihan Surakhsya Manch**	Odisha	Conserving varieties of paddy, millets, pulses and vegetables	290 varieties of paddy and 100 varieties of pulses and vegetables	390
30	**Tribal Health Initiative**	Tamilnadu	Conserving varieties of minor millets, turmeric and brinjal	25 varieties of millets, 5 brinjal and 4 varieties of turmeric	34
31	**NIRMAN**	Odisha	Conserving varieties of pulses and millets	40 varieties of millets and pulses	40
32	**Ganpat Singh**	Rajasthan	Organic Farmer conserving traditional crop varieties	Millets and Oil seeds	5
				Total	**3049**

V: State-wise Attendance of Registered Participants[4]

State	Participants
Punjab	391
Haryana	203
Maharashtra	154
Gujarat	149
Karnataka	123
Tamil Nadu	106
Madhya Pradesh	81
Rajasthan	80
Chattisgarh	80
Odisha	71
Telangana	58
Delhi	32
Kerala	43
Himachal Pradesh	36
Uttar Pradesh	39
Uttarakhand	30
Andhra Pradesh	28
West Bengal	25
Pondicherry	24
Jammu and Kashmir	21
Goa	16
Chandigarh	9
Bihar	9
Assam	2
Jharkhand	4
Sikkim	2
Meghalaya	1
International	14
Special Invitees	34
Total	**1865**

[4] NITTTR Participants, Scientific Conference participants, Volunteers, Pre-booked Day registrations and on the spot day registrations are not included in this list.

VI: Media Coverage

- **The Hindu**
  - http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/organic-farming-convention-at-chandigarh-fromfeb-28/article6916932.ece
  - http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/punjabto-set-up-organic-farming-board-badal/article6959169.ece
- **The Indian Express**
  - http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/city-to-host-national-organic-farming-convention-from-feb-28-mar-1/
  - http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/the-stalwarts-of-organic-farming/
  - http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/mango-seed-from-tipus-era-rice-variety-that-controls-blood-pressure/
- **The Pioneer**
  - http://www.dailypioneer.com/state-editions/chandigarh/fifth-organic-farming-convention-from-today.html
- **PTC News**
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S8kCWSf9UXc
- **ABP Sanjha**
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=caQa3mArMBM
- **News18**
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mlAA7bji3ek
- **Punjab News**
  - http://punjabnews.indiareckoner.net/2015/03/5th-national-organic-farming-convention-2015/
- **Haryanaabtak**
  - http://haryanaabtak.com/haryana-cm-at-5th-national-organic-farming-convention-at-chandigarh/
- **Swadesh News**
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVG_EWUbxQs
- **Vasudha Nirmitee**
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJFTE_FPh2A
- **ETV 1 NITTTRCHD**
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C5bRemcjJII
- **NewXNew**
  - http://newznew.com/chandigarh-host-5th-national-organic-farming-convention-feb-28-mar-2-2015/
- **Face2News**
  - http://face2news.com/news/13247-chandigarh-to-host-5th-national-organic-farming-convention-the-largest-congregation-of-organic-farming-experts-in-india.aspx
- **nyoooz.com**
  - http://www.nyoooz.com/chandigarh/62491/fifth-organic-farming-convention-from-today

VII. FINANCIAL INFORMATION RELATED TO THE CONVENTION

KHETI VIRASAT MISSION TRUST,
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

	Particulars	Amount		Particulars	Amount
	Accommodation	7,47,171=00		Registration Fees[5]	15,26,200=00
	Organic Meals[6]	20,16,461=00		Donations (list given below)[7]	41,77,490=00
	Registration Kit Expenses[8]	4,32,935=00		Food Coupons	37,700=00
	Publicity & Promotion[9]	4,84,192=00		Materials on sale	1,03,630=00
	Tenthouse arrangements/ Decoration/Sound[10]	8,65,028=00		Interest Income	31,646=37
	Travel/Transportation/ Vehicles[11]	4,27,229=00		Contributions from Stallholders[12]	81,000=00
	Office Expenses[13]	6,07,930=17		Discount received	6,850=00
	Documentation[14]	1,49,450=00		Miscellaneous Income	5,185=00
	Other food expenses[15]	2,18,650=00			
	Excess of Receipts over Expenses	20,655=20			
	TOTAL	**59,69,701=37**		**TOTAL**	**59,69,701=37**

[5] A slab rate was used for registration fees to incentivize participation of organic women farmers and others
[6] This includes food stall charges, gas cylinders, groceries/vegetables/milk/other ingredients, water expenses for providing organic meals thrice a day, for 3 days to around 2300 persons in all
[7] This includes institutional donors as well as individual donors
[8] This includes cost of printed organic cotton, khadi, handwoven sling bags for all delegates, and glass and spoon
[9] This includes printing charges of brochures, big posters, advertisement and promotion, billboards, head bands and designing charges
[10] This includes tenthouse charges with generator, pandals, special erections for parallel sessions, exhibition stalls, security and housekeeping charges, firefighting arrangements, labour charges, sound systems and decoration including entrance archways in several locations
[11] This is for bus hire as well as cabs, and vehicle maintenance and fuel charges for the entire convention including preparatory phase from August 2014
[12] Stallholders contributed to the infrastructure costs of putting up the exhibitions
[13] This covers salaries and honorarium for dedicated full time personnel in the convention office, accounting charges, audit fees, computer expenses, courier and postage, office expenses, electricity, mobile and internet expenses, stationery, Photostat expenses etc. from September 2014
[14] A special film commissioned for the Convention, professional charges for the same and costs of tapes, educational materials etc., are covered under this
[15] This is mainly for the NITTTR canteen caterer in the run up to the convention, to cover several preparatory meetings and for the personnel engaged for the preparatory phase

Donor Wise Donation List

	Institutional Donors	Amount (Rs.)
1	Punjab MarkFed	150,000.00
2	Punjab National Bank	100,000.00
3	Punjab Warehousing Corp	100,000.00
4	Punjab State Pollution Control Board	50,000.00
5	Punjab Mandi Board	100,000.00
6	Punjab Agro Export Corp	200,000.00
7	Director, Agriculture, Govt of Haryana	400,000.00
8	Chief Minister, Govt of Haryana	1,000,000.00
9	Deptt of Sci & Tech, Chandigarh	100,000.00
10	Deptt of Environment, Chandigarh	100,000.00
11	National Centre for Org Farming, GoI	600,000.00
		2,900,000.00

	Individual Donors	Amount in Rupees
1	Anonymous Donor 1	250,000.00
2	Anonymous Donor 2	300,000.00
3	Anonymous Donor 3	250,000.00
4	Buddies Infotech Pvt Ltd	50,000.00
5	Goniana Mandi Punjab	50,000.00
6	Saroj Chaudhary	45,000.00
7	Saroj Chaudhary	45,000.00
8	Usha Hariharan	20,000.00
9	M/s Tagruk Sabji Utpadak Sangh	20,000.00
10	Kavitha Kuruganti	15,000.00
11	Vikas Garg	11,000.00
12	Balaji Shankar	10,000.00
13	John Packianathan	10,000.00
14	Sridharan DV	11,000.00
15	R. Satyabhama	10,000.00
16	Deepak Bajaj	11,000.00
17	Gaurav Mehra	11,000.00
18	Avni Garg	10,000.00
19	Several Donors Less than 10,000/-	148,490.00

Expenses Directly Borne by Other Organisations

Sl	Entity	Particulars	Amount (Rs.)
1	Living Farms	Tent Charges	400,000.00
2	Jatan Trust	Tent Charges	450,000.00
3	Sahaja Samrudha	Tent Charges	350,000.00
4	OFAI/ICRA	Salary	68,500.00
		Printing	281,500.00
		Preparatory Meetings & Printing costs	350,000.00
5	Chandigarh Administration	Cultural Programme	12,000.00
		Sound system	101,124.00
			2,013,124.00

- The entire costs of the Live Demonstration Plots were met by Shri Sarvadaman Patel
- Key organisers like Kapil Shah, Kavitha Kuruganti, Rina Gill, Ananthoo and others bore their own travel/conveyance expenses throughout the preparatory phase and during the convention
- The hosting of the event in their campuses by lending infrastructure, grounds and volunteers was done by NITTTR and CCET; NITTTR also allocated human resources for maintenance of demonstration plot in the campus.

VIII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Convention would not have been possible without the tireless and invaluable work put in by:

Aarti Sahaya
Amanjot Kaur
Ananthoo
Anoop Kapur
Aritra Bhattacharya
Arun Bansal
Ashish Vasisht
Ashok Malik
Gaurav Sahai
Gaurav Sharma
Gautam Singh
Gita Arora
Hemant Goswami
Jasbir
Jaspreet Thakkar
Joy Joshi
ML Garg
Naresh Balhara
Nyla Coelho
Poonam Singh
Prateek Patel
Rachna Arora
Raghava
Rajdeep Kaur
Rajinder Chaudhary
Rakesh Juneja
Raman Mann
Ravindra Aggarwal
Renu Vera
Rina Gill
Ritu Barara
Ritu Mathur
Robin Arora
Sangram Patel
Sarvadaman Patel
Shamika Mone
Srinivas Borra
Students of CCET
Students of NITTTR
Students of Punjab University Communication Department (Darsprab Kaur, Diveeja Sharma, Ravneet Singh, Shilpa Ambardar, Yadwinder)
Sudhir Khullar
Sunderlal
Tanbir
Vibha Taluja and her volunteers
Vineet Joshi

Special Thanks to:
Rabbi Shergill

MORE PHOTOS:








2015
International
Year of Soils
INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SOIL 2015















Celebrating International Year of Soils
for Sustaining Food and Farming



5th NATIONAL
ORGANIC FARMING
CONVENTION

"Mainstreaming Organic Farming"

Chandigarh-28th February to 2nd March, 2015

OFAI | NITTTR | ASHA | KVM

PROCEEDINGS REPORT
October 2015