

## FESTIVAL FEATURES

Besides the display of seeds, posters, leaflets, there will be sale of books, organic products and organic food. Parallel talks, presentations, film shows and discussions will be held at the same venue; also a cultural programme of song and music.

## YOUR SUPPORT IS PRECIOUS

- 1) Visit the Festival with friends and family and inform others!
- 2) Meet the participant groups and support their work
- 3) Sign the 'Seed Declaration, India for conserving our priceless heritage

## PROGRAMME

**Friday, 27 April** (10.30 am to 3.30 pm)

**Seminar** on 'Agro-biodiversity and Ecological/Organic Agriculture'

**Venue:** WBVHATOWER, 580 Anandapur, Kolkata 700 017,  
near Monovikas Kendra (5-minute walk from Ruby Hospital)

**5 pm onward:** open slot for media interviews

**Saturday, 28 April:** Seed Festival

**Venue:** 10 Middleton Street, Kolkata 700 071, outside the Earthcare Bookstore (a two-minute walk from 'Jeevan Deep' and the 'Maidan' station of the Metro Rail)

**11 am:** Inauguration of the Kolkata Seed Festival/Beej Utsav

**12 to 6 pm:** talks/presentations/film shows/discussions  
alongside exhibition

**6 to 7.30 pm:** cultural programme of song and music

**Sunday, 29 April:** (same venue)

**11 am:** Continuation of Kolkata Seed Festival

**4.30 pm:** Open Meeting

**6.30 to 7.30 pm:** Concluding ceremony

## CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

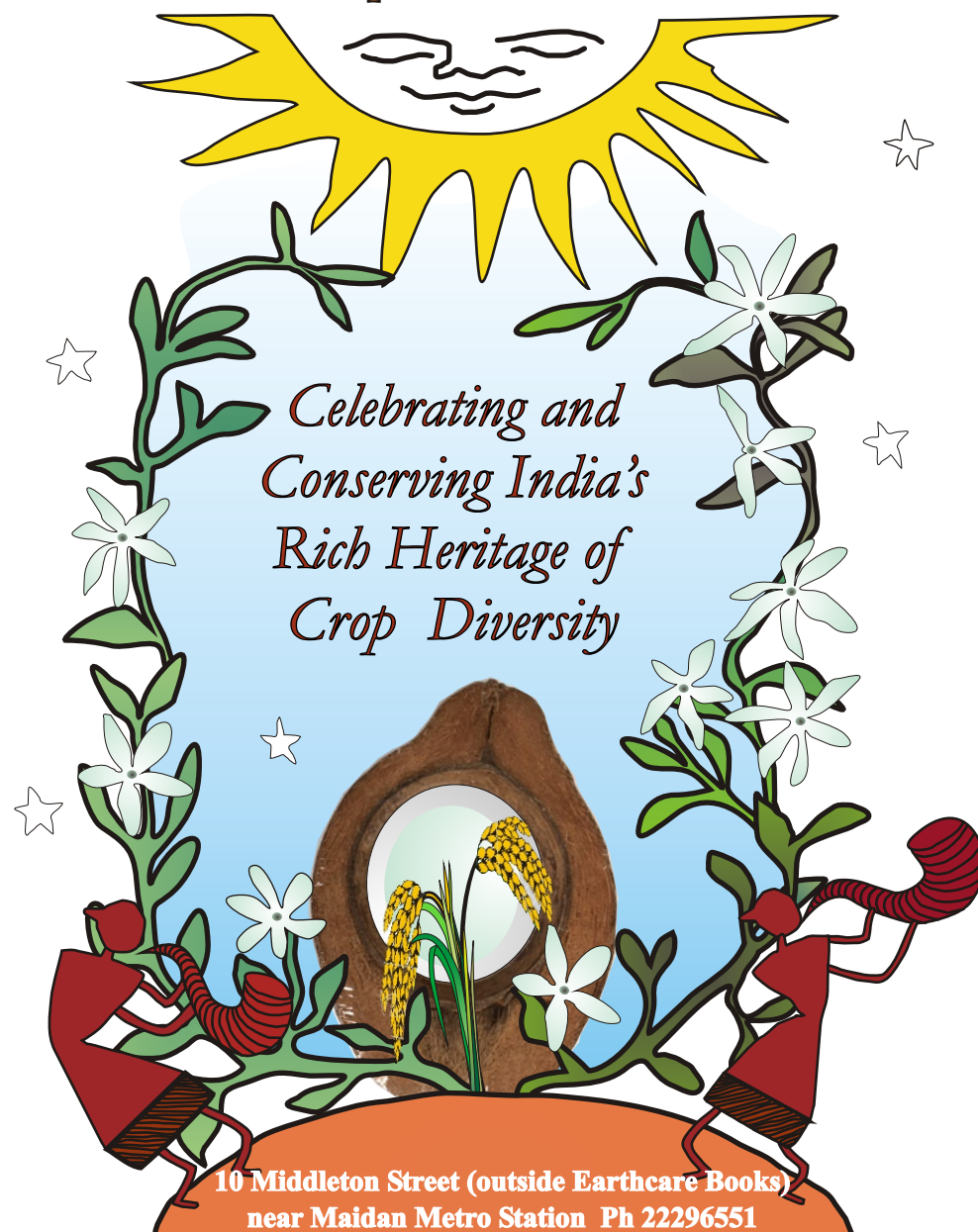
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# Kolkata Seed Festival

April 27-29 2012



**10 Middleton Street (outside Earthcare Books)  
near Maidan Metro Station Ph 22296551**

Exhibition of over 1000 seed varieties, posters, literature; sale of books, seeds, organic products, organic food; talks, discussions, film shows & cultural programme

## WHY SEED DIVERSITY IS IMPORTANT FOR ALL

India has a rich bio-cultural heritage with a ten millennia history of agriculture and an immense diversity of crops and crop varieties with distinct features and qualities, adapted to diverse local conditions. But in merely four or five decades, since the advent of the 'Green Revolution', much of our agro-biodiversity has eroded. It is now under growing threat of being lost forever, endangering our future food security, and the livelihoods of many millions of farmers.

The Seed Festival aims to raise public awareness and policy support to conserve, regenerate and share this priceless wealth of agro-biodiversity and related knowledge, skills and values. On this depends the survival and well-being of our people, particularly in an age of mounting scarcities of energy, fresh water and fertile soils, aggravated by increasingly erratic climatic conditions.

Following the Mumbai-Pune Seed Festivals, the Kolkata Seed Festival is the next in the series. Its broad theme is '**Agro-biodiversity and Ecological Agriculture**,' as the two are closely inter-related. While the threats to our agro-biodiversity need to be resisted, a broader holistic effort is necessary for its effective conservation and regeneration.

The participants at the Kolkata Seed Festival will include at least nine seed saving groups and farmer-breeders from different parts of India, and a dozen more from West Bengal. **Over 1200 seed varieties of various crops from all over India and West Bengal will be on display.** The Seed Festival provides too an opportunity for direct interaction with the seed-savers.

## PARTICIPANT SEED-SAVING GROUPS

**Sahaja Samruddha, Karnataka:** 'Sahaja Samrudha' means 'bountiful nature'. It is a people's movement for safeguarding agro-biodiversity, building sustainable villages, and ensuring food futures the organic way.

**Dharohar, Chattisgarh,** is a community-based organization initiated by adivasis in Kondagaon, Bastar. It is involved in rice diversity conservation and promotion of agro-biodiversity and organic farming methods among the adivasis of Bastar region.

**Sarjana, Satna, Madhya Pradesh,** is a registered NGO of local people, engaged in conserving agro-biodiversity, spreading environmental awareness and promoting organic farming in tribal regions.

**Pebble Garden, Auroville, Pondicherry,** has regenerated 6 acres of eroded wasteland into a vibrant forest. It has a fruit tree area and a small garden, with 90 hardy crop varieties for home gardening. It also runs a home-based seed exchange initiative.

**Sambhav, Nayagarh, Orissa,** has long experience in organic horticulture and vegetable production, following ecological methods, including bio-dynamic farming. It is actively engaged in in situ conservation and promotion of rice and vegetable diversity.

**SWALA** is an association of self-help groups engaged in seed conservation, particularly in Sunderpahari in north-eastern Jharkhand, home to the Paharias, who practise traditional bio-diverse organic farming. It runs community seed banks, particularly of pulses and millets.

**Jai Prakash Singh, Varanasi, UP,** is a well-known and acclaimed farmer-breeder of rice, wheat, pigeon pea and mustard varieties, whose seeds are popular among farmers of north India.

**Vasant Futane, Vidarbha, Maharashtra,** is a bio-diverse organic farmer and Sarvodaya activist since 25 years, who practises and campaigns for organic farming and seed-saving of several agricultural and horticultural crops for self-use and exchange.

**Biodiversity Conservation Farm, Government of West Bengal** (Agricultural Training Centre, Fulia), engaged in the conservation of crop varieties, particularly rice.

And at least 10 more seed-saving farmer groups from 7 districts of West Bengal, running community seed banks with numerous varieties of rice, vegetables, pulses and oilseeds.

## JOINTLY ORGANISED BY

- 1) Earthcare Books and Resources Centre
- 2) Development Research Communication and Services Centre (DRSC)
- 3) Development and Justice Initiative
- 4) Richharia Campaign
- 5) Greenpeace, Kolkata

With the support of many other individuals and groups