

Report of Project Launch Event

December 24, 2013



Pilot Project to Promote Organic Consumption in the State of Rajasthan (ProOrganic)

Supported by:



Consumer Unity & Trust Society
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Promoting Organic Consumption

India is mainly an agricultural country, where around 58 percent of nation's population is involved in agriculture for livelihood. There is huge untapped potential of organic farming in India. Organic farming emerged as a potential alternative for meeting food demand, maintaining soil fertility and increasing soil carbon pool.

The promotion of organic consumption is directly related to consumer's safety in many ways. Use of pesticides and chemicals in agriculture production is one of the major causes of environmental degradation also being unfit for human health. The chemical in food products adversely affects reproduction capabilities in women and girls.

Moreover, Indian societies being largely patriarchal, women need are not in first priority, so they are more prone to chemical contaminations in food. So the adoption of organic consumption will benefit women and girls the most.

CUTS with financial assistance from *Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), Sweden* is implementing this two-year project. The objective of the project is to promote organic consumption in the State of Rajasthan (India) covering six major agriculture potential districts by awareness generation, sensitisation, capacity-building and advocacy activities.

Increased awareness is expected to result in increased consumer demand which will further push demand for availability and affordability of organic products contributing towards decreasing health hazards of consumers.

The project is expected to result in better informed consumers and farmers about organic consumption and farming; better policies and enforcement thereof by sensitised policy makers in the State. This will boost organic farming and consumption in the State and in the long run will provide sustainable environment and lifestyle. The broader objectives of the whole project are:

- To generate awareness among consumers about organic products
- To build capacity of farmers to adopt organic farming
- To promote and increase consumer's demand for organic products
- To encourage consumers to shift towards organic products and sustainable consumption and
- To sensitise and advocate with concerned stakeholders, including government agencies to promote organic products in the State of Rajasthan

More details and updates of the project is available at project webpage:
www.cuts-international.org/cart/proorganic

Project Launch Meeting

The launch of the project was organised on 24th December, 2014 at Hotel Jaipur Place, Jaipur. The objective of the meeting was to inform all concerned stakeholders about the project activities, objectives and their possible role for its successful implementation. The day is also commemorated as National Consumers Day as on this very day, India's Consumer Protection Act came into existence in 1986.

Besides, in 1985, United Nations also recognised sustainable consumption as one of the consumer right under right to healthy environment in its guideline for consumer protection (UNGCP) and since organic consumption is key to healthy environment and sustainable consumption so given the importance of the day



and issue, this project was launched. This was actually a two days event with first day being used to organise orientation training for district partners involved in the project implementation and the second day for the launch of the project.

More than 80 participants including agriculture department, agriculture university officials from the State of Rajasthan, KVKS Professors, and researcher's representatives from civil society organisations working on agriculture field, farmers and development institutes, media persons participated in the meeting.

Deepak Saxena, Senior Programme Coordinator, CUTS-International welcomed all the esteemed guests and delegates to the meeting. He briefly introduced all the participants about the objectives of meeting and apprised them with the days' programme schedule. Saxena invited chief guest, special guest and Director CUTS on the dais for the inaugural session.

Need of Sustainable Consumption and Sustainable Agriculture

In the opening remarks, George Cherian, Director, CUTS International said sustainable consumption, being part of the consumers right to healthy environment is recognised by UN guidelines for consumer protection. Consumers have the right to safe food and also need sustainable agriculture to ensure food security. These are two important issues with which the whole project ProOrganic is woven around.

Speaking about sustainable agriculture, Cherian pointed out that India being basically an agrarian society. As a result of the green revolution is India is a food sufficient country. However, the interest in agriculture related activities in the country are reducing day by day, and the agriculture sector is declining simply because the income, it should generate is not as per the expectations. On other side, increase in number of households is resulting into decrease of landholdings, which again reduces the income from farming. Cherian also said that in past years, commercialisation of agriculture has taken place and thus increase in chemical and pesticides but now the time has come to shift back to earlier days.

On safety of food, Cherian highlighted the need of awareness on increase in organic culture among general mass by highlighting the ill-effects of non-organic food items. Mentioning a case of Kerala, George said that Kerala is 50 percent short of required food for consumption, as a result, rice and vegetables comes from nearby states. People are shifting from farming as a result very high wages in Kerala. He quoted a case of Kerala, where there was a severe ill-effect because of use of a chemical by the name 'endosulfan', which was later banned by the



State Government.

George highlighted the importance of the 'ProOrganic' project. He said it is an effort towards ensuing safe food for all by promoting sustainable agriculture. Educating consumers on adopting organic consumption will create a demand for organic food and to meet this demand more production is required and for this farmers need to be made aware. There is also a need to advocate for the change

in the policy of the government. Cherian mentioned about the ground reality survey to be conducted under the project, which will help to gauge the level of awareness among general consumers on organic farming.

Insight Into The Project

Amarjeet Singh, Project Coordinator, CUTS presented brief overview of the project, which is being implemented in six districts Kota, Jaipur, Udaipur, Pratapgarh, Chittorgarh and Dausa covering 102 *gram panchayats*. In a span of two years, research, advocacy and awareness related activities would be implemented involving all the stakeholders. This project is supported by Swedish Society for nature Conservation (SSNC). The overall objective of the project is to promote organic consumption and for this research, capacity building, awareness campaign and advocacy related activities would be conducted during 2 years of the project period.



Urge for Organic Farming

Jiji Mammen, Chief General Manager, Rajasthan Regional Office of National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) speaking on the occasion as Chief Guest said that modern farming, which is done with the usage of all types of harmful pesticides and chemicals have serious implications and health hazards and environment degradation. He emphasised the need to move towards sustainable agriculture and use natural resources by adopting organic farming.



Mammen said that at one time, country's GDP was almost half (50 percent) based on agriculture but with enormous increase in population, the agriculture production has come down. He also raised his concern on poor storing facilities in the country of food crops and much of the crops got damaged, as a result.

He said today's modern agriculture system and techniques have been continuously impairing and illeffcting human health and now the time has come to move backwards to adopt organic farming culture in the country.

Lastly, he assured CUTS to extend all possible support by NABARD during the implementation of this project.

Insight into Organic Farming

Dr. Sheetal Sharma, Additional Director, Agriculture Department of Government of Rajasthan presented an overview of organic farming covering all aspects. He started with the definition of organic farming as a system of farm design and management to create an ecosystem, which can achieve sustainable productivity without the use of artificial external inputs, such as chemical fertilizers and pesticides.



In his presentation, Sharma raised his concern over increasing use and promotion of urea in farming and mentioned the problems of modern agriculture like high use of fertilizers resulting in contaminated water, high pesticide use resulting in contaminated food products, soil health resulting in multi-nutrient deficiencies, heavy metal contamination, loss of bio-diversity and loss of natural checks and balances. Giving his technical inputs, he spoke on pesticide residue in food commodities and the alarming level of pesticide contamination.

Sharma said that the principles of organic agriculture are based on four aspects i.e. health, fairness, ecology and care standing on four pillars: organic standards, technology package, regulatory mechanism and market.

Later Sharma provided technical information on weed management, organic certification, organic standards, labeling guidelines and marketing etc. in addition to other issues.

Lastly, Dr. Sharma spoke that consumer has little faith on organic products and to upbring this, lot of work is required to be done.

In the inaugural session, Shyam Singh Rajpurohit, Director, Food and Consumer Affairs, Department of Government of Rajasthan, also made his presence and was the only speaker from this relevant department, which was celebrating National Consumers Day alongside.

Technical Session

Organic Culture Growth Picking Up

Verdhman Bapna, General Manager, Coordination in M. R. Morarka-GDC Rural Research Foundation, Jaipur started with an overwhelming remark organic culture lovers that since year 2004-05 to year 2009-10, the land under organic farming is seen to be growing continuously. In 2004, this was 42,000 hectares, whereas in 2009-10 it is said to be something around 12,00,000 hectares, which shows that now the scenario of organic culture is picking up in India at constant pace.

Bapna said that India has exported 135 organic products under 15 categories during 2011-12 worth valuing Rs1,000 Cr and average growth of organic market in India is 50%. He said that among the products exported, cotton is at top followed by Basmati rice and honey. The demand of Indian organic products is increasing globally and there are 294 organic exporters in India.



Bapna further added his inputs with production and trade statistics of organic products in 2011-12 with share of exports to total production going up to 3.5 percent.

Bapna later spoke on some facts on conventional farming with differences in chemical and organic farming. He spoke on the relevance on organic farming and its benefits to farmers. He said a farmer adopting organic method can earn an average of Rs. 25,000 from agriculture and Rs. 6,000 from animal husbandry per year in near normal monsoon conditions, which is only once in three years and agriculture and animal husbandry operations on the farm can easily generate an average of 400 man days of work per year. Inputs production & processing at farm level can add at least 300-400 man days of work. The net farm income can thus goes up by at least 70 percent to 100 percent in three years for all the farmers/producers, under this intervention. The ability to withstand drought goes up. Even at 50 percent to 60 percent of normal rainfall, there is a sufficient output.

Need of Vigilance on Organic Agriculture

A. K. Gupta, Prof. and Head, Department of Agronomy in Rajasthan Agriculture Research Institute admitted that now since everyone is comfortable and accepting organic culture and its benefits, so the need is to provide a strict vigilance on it. Gupta affirmed that there should be a mechanism developed to check organic production. He said that agriculture is the most important occupation of India. It provides livelihood for about 70 percent population of the country. Gupta said that the fertilizer consumption is very high. This high rate of consumption has affected the soil and ground water condition very badly. The ground water has been under continuous exploitation for all these years. With the improvement in the supply of electricity, tubewells have been on the increase.

Need of Proper Management in Organic Agriculture

Professor B. D. Yadav, Senior Scientist in Vegetable Department in Rajasthan Agriculture Research Institute and also the last speaker of the technical session stated importance of organic farming and ill effects of modern farming. Yadav



said that in all, introduction of organic agriculture has diversified farming operations to add few more sources of income e for the family. Organic agriculture management has increased total man-days of labour requirement by 15 percent. A substantial portion, being contributed by the family itself. The opportunities for value addition and processing of organic farm produce have generated many new agri-business opportunities at farm level.

Interaction Session with Recommendations

- Hari Mohan Gupta from Society of Culture Movement (SOAM), Jaipur reiterated for better coordination among the organisations working on organic issues and those not working as it would hinder the objectives of latter due to conflict of interest.
- Dr. Alok Vyas, Deputy Director, Support in CECOEDECON, Jaipur stressed the need of a policy from government on organic farming and Rajasthan should be declared an organic farming state.
- Prof. S N Sharma from Durgapura Krishi Farm pointed out that lot of technical researches have been done in the State of Rajasthan but majority of the outcome of these researches have not been implemented in the state, so government should impose these technical outcomes in organic farming, so as to get better output.
- Jagveer Singh from Gram Vikas Navyuvak Mandal, Lapodia (Jaipur) raised his concern over usage of pesticides in milk production. Government should take serious note of it.
- Dr. K C Kumawat from S K N College, Jobner (Jaipur) demanded a nee of constant trainings on nutritional management and maintaining of organic

manure, so that farmers involved in organic farming could get something out of it in a more systematic manner.



Vote of Thanks

Dharmendra Chaturvedi, Project Officer, CUTS finally thanked all the speakers for their valuable participation, speeches and presentations with their valuable inputs and information that gave a good insight into the issue and all the participants and media representatives from all the stakeholders for their valuable participation. Chaturvedi urged all the stakeholders to continue



supporting CUTS in making the project a great success, so that it can later be termed as a 'model project'.

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

10.00-10.30 10.30-11.00	Registration Tea/Coffee	
11.00-11.10	Welcome Address	Deepak Saxena Sr. Programme Coordinator, CUTS CART
11.10-11.20	Opening Remarks	George Cherian Director, CUTS International and Head CUTS CART
11.20-11.45	Project Overview	Amarjeet Singh, Project Coordinator, CUTS CART
11.45– 12.00	Key note Address	Shri Jiji Mammen, CGM, Rajasthan Regional Office, NABARD
12.00-12.15	Special Address	Dr Shital Sharma, Additional Director Agriculture, Govt of Rajasthan
12.15-12.25	Gram Gadar Award Distribution	By the Chief Guest
12.25-12.30	Special Address	S. S. Purohit, Additional Food Commissioner, Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Govt of Rajasthan
Tea Break		
12.45-13.00	Special Address	Verdhman Bapna, General Manager, Coordination, M.R. Morarka-GDC Rural Research Foundation, Jaipur
13.00-13.15	Special Address	A K Gupta, Prof. & Head, Division of Agronomy, Rajasthan Agriculture Research Institute, Govt. of Rajasthan
13.15-13.30	Special Address	B D Yadav, Senior Scientist, Vegetable Department, Rajasthan Agriculture Research Institute, Govt. of Rajasthan
13.30-14.00		Interaction Session
14.00-14.05	Vote of Thanks and Way Forward	Dharmendra Chaturvedi Sr. Programme Coordinator, CUTS CART
Lunch		

List of Participants

1. Chandramouli Pachrangia	Dainik Amber, HO. Man Nagar, Jhunjhunu
2. Anuj Sharma	Dainik Amber, HO. Man Nagar, Jhunjhunu
3. Chagan Lal	Shri Dev Gau Seva Samiti
4. Girdhari Gurjar	Shri Dev Gau Seva Samiti
5. Bhagwan Dadhich	Kisan Seva Samiti Mahasangh, Jaipur
6. Yash Damor	Krishak Vikas Sansthan
7. Yudhishtir Chansi	Ram Krishan Shikshan Sansthan, Bhadana, Bhimganj Mandi, Kota
8. Suva Lal Jat	CRDC Sansthan. Thali, Chaksu, Jaipur
9. Sukhpal Dhabhai	CRDC Sansthan. Thali, Chaksu, Jaipur
10. Ram Dayal Sain	Samajik Yuva Sangthan Sansthan, Bassi, Jaipur
11. A.R. Sharma	ATMA Sanstha, Jagmalpura, Jobner, Jaipur
12. Richhpal Meena	ATMA Sansthan, Jagmalpura, Jobner, Jaipur
13. Daya Ram Swami	Swajan Social Development & Health Education Samiti, Jaipur
14. Alok Vyas	Cecoedecon
15. Anita Sharma	Guru Kripa Lok Seva Sansthan, Hirapura, Jaipur
16. Geeta Yadav	Dainik Bhaskar, Aha Zindagi
17. M.M. Gupta	SOAM Society, Durgapura, Jaipur
18. Mangal Sen	SOAM, Vijay Path, Mansarovar, Jaipur
19. Madan Singh	SMS Colony, Maharani Farm, Durgapura, Jaipur
20. Abhimanyu Singh	E- 27, Brij Mandal Colony, Jhotwara, Jaipur
21. Deepali Srivastava	E- 27, Brij Mandal Colony, Jhotwara, Jaipur
22. Dr. Chandra Dev	RARI, Durgapura, Jaipur
23. Dr. S. Datta	UoR, Jaipur
24. Arun Vyas	Vision Youth Action Society, Jaipur
25. Sapana	Sapna Vikas Sansthan, Sankotra, Jamwa Ramgarh
26. Siya Ram Sain	Sahara Public Shikshan Samiti
27. Hari Narayan Sharma	Azad Foundation
28. Badri Narayan	Azad Foundation
29. Praveen	Shiv Shikshan Sansthan, Jaipur

30. Sunil	Manav Kalyan Vidyapeeth, Jaipur
31. Dr. P.K. Sharma	Vikas evam Prashikshan Sansthan, Jatwara, Sawai Madhopur
32. Amrit Lal Salvi	Unnati Sansthan, Vil.- Kharadi, P- Adiwali, Teh-Kherwara, Udaipur
33. Kuldeep Jain	Prayatna Samiti, 26-27, Mahaveer Colony, Bedla Road, Udaipur
34. Dharamveer Yadav	CUTS CHD, Chittorgarh
35. S.K.Narula	Gram Chetna Kendra, Khedi Milk
36. Majid Khan	CUTS CHD, Chittorgarh
37. Anwar Ahmad Khan	Behind Aroj Khatriyon ka Mandir, Hiran Bazar, Chandraghata, Kota
38. Manju Sharma	Gramin Arthik Samudaik Puna Nirman evam Vikas Sansthan, Vatika, Jaipur
39. Anoop Singh	SDHR
40. Sushma Sharma	Shradha Mahila Prashikshan Kendra and Shikshan Sansthan, A- 32, Sethi Colony, Jaipur
41. Ramesh Gupta	RARI, Durgapura, Jaipur
42. Kalpana Swami	Swajan Social Development & Health Education Samiti, Jaipur
43. Om Prakash Pareek	Hanuman Gram Vikas Sansthan, Dausa
44. Verdhman Bapna	Morarka Foundation, Jaipur
45. M.L. Sharma	Shri Shyam Sanskriti Seva Samiti, Chithwari, Jaipur
46. Manish Saxena	WORLD, 1-GA-12, Jawahar Nagar, Jaipur
47. Dr. K.C. Kumawat	SKNAU, Jobner, Jaipur
48. Syoji Ram Gurjar	Sanghrash Sansthan, Dhandholi, Jaipur
49. Dr. R.S. Sain	RARI, Durgapura, Jaipur
50. Babu Lal Meena	Sapna Vikas Sansthan, Sankotra, Jamwa Ramgarh
51. Mukesh Meena	Bhaskar TV News
52. Yaduvendra Sharma	Bhaskar TV News
53. Varun	ARAVALI
54. Rakesh Bhola	Rajasthan Bagwani and Shodh Sansthan, Jaipur
55. Madhu Jaimini	Nafa Nuksan Business Newspaper, Jaipur
56. Banwari Lal	Virat Nagar, Jaipur
57. Deepak Kumar Yogi	Shri Shyam Sanskriti Seva Samiti, Chithwari, Jaipur

58. Sanjay Gautam	Naya India
59. Ved Prakash	DD News
60. Suleman Sheikh	Gramin Manav Kalyan Shikshan Sansthan, Kachroda, Phulera, Jaipur
61. Mohan Dangi	Prayatna Samiti, 26-27, Mahaveer Colony, Bedla Road, Udaipur
62. Dr. A.K. Gupta	Prof. & Head, Division of Atronomy, Raj Agri. Research Inst., Durgapura, Jaipur
63. Abhimanyu Yaduvanshi	Helping Hands Group, Jaipur
64. Satya Narayan Sharma	Gramin Arthik Samudaik Puna Nirman evam Vikas Sansthan, Vatika, Jaipur
65. Ram Kumar Bairwa	Ugriyawas Jagrati Kendra, Ugriyawas, Via- Phulera, Jaipur
66. Prof. S.N. Sharma	RARI, Durgapura, Jaipur
67. Chandra Kanta Jain	Manav Kalyan Vidyapeeth Sansthan, 64/156, Pratap Nagar, Sanganer, Jaipur
68. M.L. Pareek	Hanuman Gram Vikas Sansthan, Dausa
69. Jagveer Singh	GVNML, Lapooriya, Dudu
70. Shyam Behari Sharma	Guru Kripa Lok Seva Sansthan, Hirapura, Jaipur
71. Drigpal Singh	Gramin Vigyan Seva Sansthan, Dausa
72. S.M. Srivastava	Manav Kalyan evam Paryavaran Sudhar Samiti, Jaipur
73. Dr. S.S. Yadav	Prof., Agonomy, SKN College of Agriculture, Jobner
74. Dr. B.D. Yadav	RARI, Durgapura, Jaipur (SKNAU, Jobner)
75. Banshi Bairwa	Prayas Kendra, Harsoli, Dudu, Jaipur
76. Arjun Kant Jha	CUTS, Jaipur
77. Dharmendra Chaturvedi	CUTS, Jaipur
78. Deepak Saxena	CUTS, Jaipur
79. A.K. Thalia	CUTS, Jaipur
80. B N Sharma	CUTS, Jaipur

Press Clippings:

