

## Stakeholders' Consultation Report

### Green Action Week Campaign-2015

Hotel Jaipur Palace, Jaipur  
September 30, 2015

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CUTS International in partnership with the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation has implemented a month long campaign entitled '**Green Action Week 2015: *Organic Food & Farming for All***'. The project activities were commenced in September 2015.

The Green Action Week Campaign-2015 aimed to facilitate awareness generation among consumers of Jaipur city of Rajasthan about organic food, specifically vegetables and fruits that would encourage them to shift towards sustainable pattern of consumption. The campaign was specifically targeted to women and youth amongst consumers.



With the rationale of influencing consumer behaviour in favour of organic food and to gauge their willingness to pay for it, various activities in the form of a survey, cottage meetings, street plays, signature campaign and stakeholder consultation were held in various parts of Jaipur city. CUTS collaborated with several civil society organisations, consumer and producer groups, policymakers and media to lead towards enhanced availability, affordability and consumption of organic food products.

To mark the conclusion of the Campaign, a State Level Stakeholder Consultation on the theme '*Organic Food and Farming for All*' was organised at Hotel Jaipur Palace, Jaipur on September 30, 2015. The aim of the consultation was to advocate for a shift in policy towards organic consumption and production. More than 70 representatives from civil society/consumer organisations, farmers' group, media and government departments participated.

## Proceedings

**Deepak Saxena**, Senior Programme Coordinator, CUTS while welcoming the guests and participants, briefed them about CUTS and its various interventions in the field of sustainable development.

This was followed by introductory remarks given by **George Cheriyan**, Director, CUTS. He stated that food safety and standards are key issues in India. He added that Indians are consuming 750 times more pesticides in vegetables and fruits than European. Sikkim is 100 percent organic farming state while Kerala is going



to become one in 2016 with the joint support of government and farmers. Even though Rajasthan is moving towards the adoption of organic farming cultivation; it needs integrated efforts from both government and farmers' side.

**Varidhi Singh**, Project Officer, CUTS through a presentation provided a brief overview of the campaign and the response generated during its course. She highlighted that the aim of the campaign was to bring out problems associated with the use of pesticides in farming and drive consumer awareness in favour of organic farming and food. She shared findings of the survey conducted under the campaign. 40 percent consumers in Jaipur city are unable to buy organic products due to non-availability in the market; 30 percent are unaware about the concept of organic food; 64 percent prefer buying organic product if not very expensive; and 28.6 percent stated that NGOs are playing important role in disseminating significance of organic products.

**A K Gupta**, Prof. & Head, Rajasthan Agriculture Research Institute, Jaipur applauded CUTS for organising the consultation on such a topical theme in the field of sustainable development. He opined that with the arrival of 'Green Revolution' India has achieved food security but the focus has been shifted towards the issue of food safety in the present context. He laid stress on healthy soil which gives healthy food, and be achieved with the help of integrated farming methods by adopting organic farming.



During the consultation, **S R Sharma**, SKN Agriculture University, Jobner opined that market, production system and availability are facing major constraints for organic production. He suggested that if farmers adopt natural farming then it will reduce the

cost of cultivation and increase the profit margin of farmers. He also discussed the technique of organic cultivation and various methods through which crops could be protected without the use of pesticides and other chemicals.

**S S Rathore**, Programme Coordinator, Krishi Vigyan Kendra Chomu echoed the sentiments of other speakers and said that organic farming, which is inclusive of scientific farming techniques, is need of the hour. He explained how the natural way of doing farming without the use of chemicals and pesticides is indigenous to Rajasthan and therefore farmers should shift towards organic pattern of cultivation.

### Open House Session

The panel discussion was followed by an open session where participants shared their views on consuming organic products. Almost all of them unanimously expressed that the major deterring fact against consumption of organic products is



their exceptionally high market rate. Thus, in view of this, government should enact major policy changes in order to make organic food easily available, accessible and affordable. Participants emphasised that there should be regular awareness generation regarding the accreditation and certification of organic products.

## Recommendations

- Enhanced role of the government in promoting organic farming and consumption
- Increased number of retail outlets of organic products
- More consumers should be engaged in organic production and consumption in the form of kitchen garden

## Vote of Thanks

**Ram Kumar Jha**, Policy Analyst, CUTS summarised the discussions held and delivered the vote of thanks to all participants. The consultation generated a good response from participants and was able to secure a good coverage in the electronic media as well.

## Media Clipping



# Sikkim is 100 percent organic farming state

September 30, 2015, Jaipur - George Cherian, Director CUTS International shared that food safety and standards are key issues in India. He added that Indian peoples are consuming 750 times more pesticides than European peoples with vegetable and fruits. Sikkim is 100 percent organic farming state while Kerala is going to become 100 percent Organic farming states in 2016 with the mutual support of government and framers. Though, this programme is considered as people's movement. Even though, Rajasthan is moving towards adopting organic farming cultivation. This needs integrated efforts from both government and farmers side.



40 percent consumers in Jaipur city are unable to buy organic products due to non-availability in the market. 30 percent consumers are not aware about the concept of organic food. 64 percent says that they can buy organic product if it is not very expensive. While, 28.6 percent of peoples shared that NGOs are playing

important role for disseminating importance of organic products. These were the key findings of a survey conducted by CUTS international shared in a state level stakeholders consultation on 'Organic Food and Farming for All' with support of Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, Sweden. Dr. A. K. Gupta, Prof. & Head, Rajasthan Agriculture Research Institute, Jaipur shared that from the date green revolution period to now India has received food security but the issue of food safety has become main concern on present time. He stressed on healthy soil which gives healthy food. Dr. S. S. Rathore, Programme Coordinator, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Chomu also shared his views. Dr. S. R. Sharma, SKN Agriculture University, Jaipur shared that market, production system and availability facing major constraints for organic products. If the framers adopt the cultivation methods close to nature then it will reduce the cost of cultivation and increase the profit margin of farmers.