

# Organic Farmers and Farms in Maharashtra

## ORGANIC FARM & SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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Jayant Barve's farm is 14 hectares. He has been practising sustainable agriculture since 1988. Barve has a post graduate degree in physics. After teaching in a city college for a few years, he returned to his hometown in the vicinity of which he has ancestral land. He started taking interest in farming and set up a chemical factory on a part of the land and a shop to market chemical fertilisers and pesticides. After following modern farming practices for twelve years he changed over to sustainable agriculture. He closed down the chemical factory and converted the factory building into a storeroom for vermi-casts released from vermiculture production. He also closed down the shop marketing chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Barve explains his conversion to sustainable agriculture as follows: 'Modern agriculture is based on increasing inputs, machinery and energy. All this brings about soil degradation. The farmer has to take more care for plant protection. He is consequently compelled to resort to costly and hazardous pesticides. These pesticides contaminate the water, soil and environment. The crop cultivated is thus highly poisoned. Tension free farming with good output, negligible input of money and energy, supported by enhancement in soil quality is only possible through organic farming and vermiculture practices.'

The soil on the Barve farm is mostly black cotton or stony laterite murrum, the pH condition being around 7.0. The average annual rainfall is 500 mm, the rainy season being June to September. There are six male and six female permanent full-time workers on his farm. There are three buffaloes, two cows, four bullocks and heifers and calves. Around two-thirds of the milk produced is sold in the local market, the rest being kept for home consumption. The bullocks are used for farm cultivation and bullock-cart transport. Barve does not use motorized implements or tractors on his farm.

Part of the land is for horticulture crops like grapes, banana, drumsticks, mango and amala, while the rest of the land is under seasonal crops like sorghum, millets, ground nut, chili, wheat, pulses like horse gram, pigeonpea etc. Some portion is for fodder for the cattle and forest trees like banyan, acacia. He also cultivates ginger every year. Almost all the plots are surrounded by biomass, live fence plantations like Giri Pushpa [*Glyricidia maculata*], Adulsa [*Adathoda vasaka*], bahava [*Casia javanica*] neem [*Azadirachta indica*], Karanj [*Pongamia glabra*] and Eranne [*Jatropha curcas*].

Farm waste and the dung from cattle are used for vermi-compost. Irrigation is through drip or sprinkler systems. Flood irrigation is avoided every where on the farm. The vermi-culture pits are also kept moist with the help of micro sprinklers. Herbal preparations mentioned in the literature like Virkshayurveda, Krishi Parashar etc. are prepared on the farm and used as and when necessary. Cow milk, buttermilk, cow urine and dung are also used for several preparations. Biodynamic practices are also followed and BD 500 is prepared every year on the farm.

For eight years Barve researched the manufacture of a concentrated organic manure. He has successfully established a factory unit for producing the organic manure which is now marketed by his son Jaydev. The manure is sold under the brand name 'Green Harvest'. It is a concentrated organic mix of oil and de-oiled cakes, herbals like vavading, vekhand and sea weeds and bacterial cultures. The product is also treated with vrukshayurvedic preparations and BD 500. The manure starts decomposing only after the soil in which it is applied is irrigated. Application of this product rejuvenates the soil structure and texture and improves its water holding capacity. The product is quite popular among organic farmers in the area.

The Barve farm is now totally organic, having good farm output with a steady market for the farm produce. Barve self markets the farm products without difficulty, as he has some fixed customers whose numbers keep increasing. He is happy that he has succeeded in improving the original soil capital which he received from his fore fathers.

Jayant Barve is a founder-member of the Organic Farming Association of India (OFAI) and also a member of its national steering committee.

(Source: communication with OIP)

## ANAND MUKUND SUBHEDAR

Village Tiwasa, Taluka Yavatmal, District Yavatmal, Maharashtra.

The Subhedar family has owned 104 hectares of land since 1850. One hundred years later, in 1950, they started using chemical inputs for the first time but they switched back to organic farming 40 years later, in 1990. The main reason why Subhedar changed over to organic farming was that the crop yield was going down after 1985 even while the amount of chemical fertilisers required and the cost of the same was steadily increasing. He read also some books about natural farming by Fukuoka and Dabholkar.

The farm is divided into four sub-farms, each being supervised by a manager. There are in addition 45 male full-time workers. They also hire on an average 120 female and 10 male labourers on a daily basis. The soil is black and medium black and the pH is between 7 and 8. The average rainfall is 1000 to 1200 mm.

A road divides the farm into two parts. On one part, they have nine wells with pumps which are connected together by an underground pipeline. On each plot there is an outlet from which they can irrigate the fields. Thirty hectares can be irrigated up to February and 10 hectares up to May. The second part of the farm can be irrigated by pumping water from the nearby river, but there is enough water only if there is a good monsoon. In this part, water is directed through an open canal.

They have 20 buffaloes, 80 cows and 60 bullocks. The cows and buffaloes are for producing milk and the bullocks are used as draught animals. The animals are also very important for the production of farmyard manure. The milk production is not high, because feeding is not optimised and the breed has not been selected from the milk output point of view. During the monsoons and in winter (upto the beginning of February) the animals can graze. For the rest of the year, they are stall-fed. The fodder is green sorghum, pigeon pea and groundnut straw, dry grass and lucerne.

The trees cultivated are oranges and sweet lime. The crops on the farm are cotton, sorghum, pigeon pea, green gram, black gram, bajra, banana, sugarcane, wheat and a variety of other grains. Before the sowing season, they plough the fields once or twice and harrow them once or twice again during the growing season. Farmyard manure is used one to three times in a year, the average being around 10 tonnes per hectare a year. Further, they enrich the soil by planting leguminous plants and by mulching organic matter.

They have two tractors, two trailers, an iron plough and traditional harrowing, ploughing and sowing implements. Since they switched over to organic farming, the tractors are used only for transport. They use the 30 pairs of bullocks for the work on the field. They have 15 electric pumps for pumping water from the wells.

Subhedar believes in attaining a natural balance between pest and predator and therefore practises mixed cropping. For example, he mixes 500 grams per hectare of sorghum with cotton to attract birds to hunt for insects in the cotton fields. Some combinations are sorghum and green gram or cotton, pigeon pea and black gram or a three crop mix of green gram, bajra and pigeon pea. The advantages of such combinations are the drawing of predators to the pests which live on one or the other plant as well as the nitrogen provided by the leguminous part of the combination. Weeds are controlled by harrowing with bullock-drawn implements and by handpicking. On an average, they have to harrow four or five times and handpick once for each crop. The cotton area has to be kept free from weeds. Women labourers handpick weeds in the cotton three to four times during the rainy season. Subhedar prefers not to resort to direct intervention even with an organic biocontroller like neem extract or cow urine but instead allows nature to make her own adjustments on the farm.

(Source: Prakruti, Mumbai)

## **SAMVAD**

Samvad, At Rawala, Taluka Warud, District Amravati 444 907 Maharashtra. Phone: 072143-2871 07229 238171, Cell: 9421815621, Email: chinmay\_futane@sancharnet.in

(Contact persons: Karuna and Vasant Futane)

The size of the farm is 5.5 hectares including 3.4 hectares wasteland. About 0.2 ha is used for the farm house, the cattle shed and path; the rest (2.5 ha) is the cultivable land, on which the husband-wife couple, Vasant and Karuna Futane, have been practising sustainable agriculture since the past eight years.

Besides Vasant and Karuna, there are 6 male full-time workers and women working around 150 days. The Futanes do not use machines. They use only some traditional implements for ploughing, harrowing, hoeing and seeding.

For irrigation, in winter (1.6 hectare) and summer (0.8 hectare), they use water from four wells, which are shared with Futane's three brothers. The water is lifted by electric pumps through pipes to the field's upper borders from where it flows downwards. In order to raise the ground water level and minimise soil erosion, they have contour bunding in the fields and nala bunding in the streams.

In their own words: 'We made a beginning by doing away with all the artificial inputs like chemical fertilisers, pesticides, hybrid seeds etc. We realised that hybrid seeds need chemical fertilisers which in turn reduce plants' resistance to the pests, thereby making the use of pesticides inevitable. Hybrid seeds also need a lot of water. All this leads to a vicious circle of dependence.

'We looked for local varieties of seeds. Most of them were almost on the way to extinction. We nursed the few seeds we could find and increased their quantity. We found that the local varieties of seeds can withstand adverse conditions to a large extent. Besides, the different varieties are adapted to the different types of soil and the different patterns of rainfall. Now the local villagers often approach us for these local seeds and we are in a position to meet their requirements.

'The cultivated food crops are castor bean, green gram, paddy, cowpea, pigeon pea, maize, sorghum, bengal gram, wheat and soyabean. Besides, timber, medicinal and ornamental trees, and fruit trees like mango, papaya, sweet lime, coconut, guava, karonda, bulls heart, custard apple and jujube are also cultivated.'

Farming practices: 'Pest management with biocontrollers is not followed as we believe a natural balance is to be maintained between predator and pests. To create the optimum and natural conditions, we extensively practice mixed farming and intercropping. Crop rotation is followed to control the pests in the soil. We have planted *Sesbania grandiflora* and allowed *Acacia nilotica* trees to grow in the orchard as a shelter for birds. Marigold is planted with

brinjal as a companion plantation.

‘In the cereal and pulse plots, weed control is done twice with a bullock-drawn implement. This kind of weeding is only necessary in the monsoons. In summer and winter, we control the weeds with handpicking only. All the weeds are used as mulch and nothing is taken out of the fields. Weeds and grass from the tree plantation are used as fodder.

‘We had cultivated chick pea for the first three years, but it was not very successful, being completely devoured by larvae. Our farm is now host to a variety of birds of other predators hence there is natural biological/control. So we sowed chick pea last year after a gap of five years. The result: 2.5 quintals in only half an acre, which is considered very good for this area. This year, an acre has yielded six quintals.

‘Tree-farming has been another major area of our experiments. To have a green fencing for our fields, we initially planted fast-growing species like eucalyptus and Subabool (*Leucaena leucocephala*). But we soon realised our mistake. Eucalyptus needs a lot of water and its leaves make the soil acidic, while the subabool seeds encroach the whole field and prove to be more troublesome than weeds. Besides, the subabool trees deprive other plants of manure and water.

‘Now we have planted different varieties of trees with different growth rates. However, tree-farming does not yield quick income, there is dearth of resources and experiments often involve mistakes leading to losses. (*Leucaena* is one such example).’

Livestock: ‘We are also interested in cattle-breeding. Our object is to have local breeds of cows with reasonably good milk yield. Cross-breeding with native breeds is done in this connection. Presently we have one Tharparkar bull.

‘Our main reason for breeding cattle is to have draught animals as well as to obtain farmyard manure. Connected to the cow shed is a biogas plant, from which we get gas for lighting and cooking. The milk is fed to the calves and to meet our own needs. We sell some quantity of buttermilk. Sometimes we sell a cow or a bullock. At present we have nine cows, five bullocks and nine small cattle. In the monsoon the animals are grazed on a common pasture. In winter we let them graze as long as there is enough fodder. The rest of the winter and in summer we feed them fresh maize, clover, elephant grass and sorghum straw as well as groundnut hay.’

Vasant and Karuna changed over to sustainable agriculture in order to:

- 1) Stop pollution of the environment, food and water by agro chemicals;
- 2) Stop exploitation of the farmers by the industrial lobby; and
- 3) Be self-sufficient by minimising external inputs.

(Source: Prakruti, Mumbai and Communication with OIP)

## **MANOHAR KHAKE**

020 25448903, 09423119427

Has used cow urine as a fertiliser, growth hormone and pesticide. He has carried out extensive research at Yusuf Meharalli Centre, Panvel, Raigad in Maharashtra. His experience has shown that, cow urine ferments when used on onion and sitaphal leads to two to three times increase in yield. (Source: OFAI Archives)

## **SHIV NARAYAN ADHAO**

Rishi Kheti Prakalpa Jagar Society, At & Post Shendurjana Ghat, Tehsil Warud, Dist. Amravati – 444907, Maharashtra.

Shiv Narayan Adhao is involved in all aspects of natural farming like compost making, integrated energy management, watershed management and natural pest control. Earlier, he worked at the Friends Rural Centre, Rasulia for two years.

In his own words: ‘I began to realise that trying to prove the viability of natural farming by making a living on 8 acres was not going to prove much. Like other families in our village, mine too made demands on me to fulfill all their material needs through farming. I was opposed to this approach. My concerns were separate from theirs. I was more worried about finding alternatives for those farmers who, like me, had no other income except that derived from the land. I made desperate attempts trying to grow cash crops like cabbage and cauliflower on a large scale – which proved a total disaster. I suffered heavy losses and faced more criticism leading to further depression. But I couldn’t stop myself. I lived with the tension, drowning myself deeper into work. I read, wrote and studied trees, soil health, water problems, insect control, weeds, mulching – the whole works. People around me were not very encouraging but they were curious nevertheless. I had done a course in Homeopathy and a number of people would come for medicines, so they would also talk about my experiments.

Finally in 1992 after much debating, I decided to go headlong into experimentation with a funded project. I had sold off one 4-acre plot and bought land in Ladegaon which is about 150 kms from here. Then I sold off another 2.5 acres of orchard land. This orchard had dried up while I was away in Rasulia. And I did not make any attempts to save it. That year there was a severe shortage of water in our area and farmers got desperate trying to share whatever little was available. Now I had just 2 acres left and this I decided to devote fully for experiment. Today this plot is so covered with tiny plots of various experiments, there is no space left to put in another tree.

( Source: Communication with OIP)

### **DOSTI FARM**

Dolar pada, Umargaon, Talasari Road, Post Girgaun, Talasri taluka, Thane district, Maharashtra. Phone: 0260 2576939

Dosti Farms was established by Shri Kishan Goradia, a Sarvodaya worker and founder of the Dosti Group of developers and builders. Dosti Farm produces organic vegetables.

Dosti also arranges school/college camps, or group camps on the farm. There is dormitory arrangement for 100 persons at a time.

(source: Brochure)

### **SUDHIR ARVIND CHIVATE**

Vil. & Post Talbid, Tal. Karad, Dist. Satara - 415 109, Maharashtra. Phone: 02164-258028(pp), Cell: 09822320983  
Sudhir Chivate is a farmer by birth and an electrician by training. Immediately after his training in 1991, he joined an electrical company in Pune and in spite of his employers being extremely happy with his performance packed up his bag and returned home to the land after a short stint of three months. Ever since, he has not looked at anything but organic farming. Chivate is an expert farmer cultivating sugarcane and ginger. The sugarcane is processed on his farm to make jaggery and cane syrup – known as 'kakvi' locally. His jaggery and kakvi are so popular that people from Maharashtra and around place orders in advance. He has also now developed soft jaggery powder that has extensive demand for Maharashtrian 'puran poli.' The product goes by the brand named 'Chivate's.' His ginger production he claims, is easily 1 ½ times the ordinary yield. He is able to harvest 300 kgs of ginger per gunta (1089 sq.ft). His record is a single ginger rhizome weighing 5 ½ kgs. The farm also has 150 mango trees of 6 different varieties. He got interested in organic farming because his grandfather was a traditional vaidhya who maintained extensive notes of his medical practices. There is a small workshop on his farm and he has invested close to Rs.3 lakhs on farm tool innovations. He grows seven varieties of sugarcane and gets a yield of 28-30 tonnes per acre. Chivate's farm in recent times has also turned into a tourist and study destination where students, farmer groups and families come for a study-cum-outing expedition. All visitors are served home cooked organic food on the farm, turning the visit into a wholesome experience to remember. He uses his own produce for sugarcane and ginger seed. The 12 cattle heads supply him with dung and urine to meet compost and manure requirements.

(Source: Communication with OIP)

### **SOPAN BHAURAO AWACHAR**

Gayatri' 66/A, Vikas Nagar, Koregaon Road, Parbhani 431401, Maharashtra.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

### **VISHWASRAO RAJARAM DEVARE**

Chairman, Matoshri Gitabai Rajaram, Devare Shaikshanik Mandal, A/p Masadi, Tal- Sakri, Dist- Dhule 424 302, Maharashtra. Ph. 02568 - 275788

Group leader of organic farmers. (Source: Jayant Barve)

### **SHRI. MADHAV DATTARAYA BARVE**

A/p. Kothure, Tal Niphad, Dist- Nasik - 422 302, Maharashtra. Ph. 02550 - 241318

Creating Nakshtra Van and work with wild plants.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

### **SHRI. JAYAPRAKASH SHALIGRAM PATIL**

202, R.B.C. Complex, 5, Vidyanagar, Tal & Dist- Akola, Maharashtra. Ph. 0724 - 2401026

All house hold requirements are produced on the farm except salt and flowers. His entire life style is based on the principals of Gandhian Philosophy.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

### **DR. PRASAD DEODHAR**

Bhagirath Gramvikas Pratishthan, A/p Zarap, Tal. Kudal, Dist- Sindhudurg, Maharashtra. Ph. 02362 - 232095, Hospital - 232259

Work on rural development and water management.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**RAMESH BABURAO DESHMUKH**

A/p Shirala(Nemane), Tal. Khamgaon, Dist- Buldhana, Maharashtra. Ph. 07263 – 267337  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**SMT. CHANDRAPRABHA BOKEY**

A/p Warkhed, Tal. Tiwasa, Dist- Amravati 444 602, Maharashtra. Ph. 07255 - 226011  
She is the inspiration and impetus to MOFF, Pune.  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**SHRI. SUDHAKAR MAHADORE**

Akshay Sewa Sanstha, A/p. Medaki, Tal. Bramhapuri, Dist- Chandrapur, Maharashtra.  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**VINAYAK MAHAJAN**

A/p. Kudavale, Tal. Dapoli, Educating farmers for Org., Dist - Ratnagiri 415 712, Maharashtra.  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**MRS. VARSHA CHANDRAKANT KOTKAR**

Vikas Sevabhavi Sanstha, Vidhyanagar, A/p. & Dist - Hingoli 431 513, Maharashtra. Ph. 02456 – 222082  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**KANTILAL NALGE**

A/p Narayangaon, Tal- Shirur, Dist- Pune, Maharashtra. Cell: 9890984066  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**UDDHAV KORE**

A/p. Wirli, Tal. Lakhandur, Dist - Bhandara 441 910, Maharashtra. Ph. 07181- 265764  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**DR. MAHADEV RUDRAPPA PACHEGAONKAR**

A/p. Poharegaon, Tal. Renapur, Dist – Latur, Maharashtra. Ph. 02382 - 232560  
Expert in homeopathic treatments for cattle. Expert in Animal Husbandary.  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**KALIDAS PAUL**

A/p. Khandali, Tal. Ahmedpur, Dist- Latur, Maharashtra. Cell: 9420214057  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**SHREENIVAS BAGAL**

A/p. Chikurde, Tal. Shirala, Dist- Sangli, Maharashtra. Cell: 9822493117  
Organic jaggery expert, group leader.  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**HARBANS SINGH WASARIKAR**

House No. 1/1/451, Nanded Housing Society, Mill Unit, A/p. & Dist- Nanded-431 602, Maharashtra. Ph. 02462 – 252630  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**DNYANESHWAR DHANGE (MAULI)**

Chairman, Gandhi Jaivik Sheti Sangh, A/p Amla, Tal. & Dist – Wardha, Maharashtra.  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**NAGESH SWAMI**

A/p Shivade Tal - Umbraj, Dist – Satara, Maharashtra. Cell: 9822848432  
Works with Dabholkar's Prayog Pariwar.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**JAYAWANT WADEKAR**

Sahjeevan Krishi Sadhana, near Parali Naka, Tal. Wada, Dist- Thane, Maharashtra. Ph. 02526 - 271444  
Organic Rice, Preservation of Rice varieties, Member of Mhalagi Prabhodhini, Bhaindar.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**PRASHANT KHANJHODE**

Baliraja Krushi Vikas Audyogik, Bahuuddeshiya Sanstha, A/p. Karanjala, Tal & Dist – Washim, Maharashtra . Ph. 07256 – 225138

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**BAPUSAHEB KORADE**

At / Post - Bhat Marali, Tal & Dist – Satara, Maharashtra. Cell: 9823505025

Has a two acre organic horticulture farm and has developed great water & nutrition management practices.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**BABRUWAN KANASE**

A/p. Surdi-Sonesangavi, Tal. Kej, Dist – Beed, Maharashtra. Ph. 02445 – 232747

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**SHAHAJIRAO SAMBAJIRAO GORE**

President, Marathwada Krushi Padavidhar, Shetkari Sangh, A/p. Gorewadi,  
Tal. & Dist- Osmanabad 431 508, Maharashtra. Ph. 02472- 232053

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**RAJENDRA PRALHAD SAMBRE**

A/p. Ashwi(Budruk), Tal. Sangamner, Ahmednagar 422 605, Maharashtra.

Uses traditional seeds, multi-cropping and amrut pani.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**MAHENDRA P. SHROFF**

Shroff Farm, A/p. Vangaon(Western Railway) Dist - Thane, 401 103, Maharashtra.

Organic chikoo plantation.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**RAGHUNATH PISAL**

A/p Hanmantvadiye, Tal. Khanapur, Dist – Sangli, Maharashtra. Cell: 9881102883

Grows organic grapes, best management practices.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**PRAKASH TULPULE**

Tapodharn, Talegaon Railway Station, Dist – Pune, Maharashtra.

Huge plantation work in Kutch (Guj.) in saline lands. He has planted three lakh horticulture plants.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**DR. RAVINDRA M. VORA**

Nisarga Pratishthan, Vanashree Hutatma Nagar, Sangli 416 416, Maharashtra.

Promotion of organic food for health, waste land development and rain water harvesting.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**VINIYOG PARIVAR TRUST**

B-2/104, Vaibhav, Jambli Gali, Borivili(W), Mumbai 400 092 Ph. 022 - 8991781

Works with issues related to gopalan, ahimsa and organic food.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**PANDURANG B. SHITOLE**

Gramparivartan Post Nhavisandes Pune, 412216 Ph - 020 / 6819611  
Industrialist, involved in organic farming for the last 20 years.  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**PADMAKAR CHINCHOLE**

Krusha Agency Near S.T.Stand Post – Jamner, Dist – Jalgaon, Maharashtra. Ph - 02580 / 232554 R, Cell:  
9422771454  
Growing, producing and exporting organic jaggery.  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**MANOJ JAVNJAL**

A/p - Katol, Dist – Nagpur, Maharashtra. Cell: 0982251913  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**NETAJI TAJALE**

A/p - Salai, Tal – Savner, Maharashtra. Ph - 07113 / 241116  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**JAGNNATH BELSARE**

A/p - Movad, Tal - Narkhed, Dist – Nagpur, Maharashtra. Cell: 09423111461  
Organic cotton rain fed farming in Vidharba region.  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**GHANSHYAM CHOPADE**

12, Bhatpatwadi, Vardha, Maharashtra. Cell: 09423087087  
Organic cotton rain fed farming in Vidharba region.  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**BAPU MAHAJAN**

A/p Karanj Bhoge, Tal & Dist - Vardha, Maharashtra . Cell: 09922354663  
Organic cotton rain fed farming in Vidharba region.  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**PANKAJ PATIL**

At- Haladgaon, Post Khandala, Tal – Samudrapur, Dist - Vardha, Maharashtra. Cell:09822363402  
Organic cotton rain fed farming in Vidharba region.  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**DNYANESHWAR DHAGE**

A/p Giroli Dhage, Tal & Dist – Vardha, Maharashtra. Cell: 09372480226  
Organic cotton rain fed farming in Vidharba region.  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**VASANTRAO PATIL**

A/p - Vadi , Tal - Nandura, Dist – Buldhana, Maharashtra. Cell: 09421472340  
Vegetables and organic cotton rain fed farming in Vidharba region.  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**SHRI. SHANKAR NARAYAN BOBADE**

A/p Kalameshwar, Tal – Kalameshwar, Dist – Nagpur, Maharashtra. Cell: 09226132071, 07118091739  
Vegetables and organic cotton rain fed farming in Vidharba region.  
(Source: Jayant Barve)

**SHRI. PAVAN MISHRA**

A/p - Kamar, Tal - Karanjlad, Dist – Vashim, Maharashtra. Cell: 09423851431

Vegetables organic cotton rain fed farming in Vidharba region.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**M/S. SHALIGRAM SHARMILA**

A/p - Arangaon, Dist – AhmedNagar, Maharashtra. Cell: 9822327260

Pruthvi Sanstha, organic farmer, promoting Krishi Rishi organic farming method of Mohan Deshpande among small and marginal farmers.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**SANJAY SONTAKKE**

Gramshri 16, Pasayadan Mahalaxminagar – 2, Manewade Marg, Nagpur, Maharashtra. Ph - 0712 / 2749248

Publishes a monthly magazine on organic farming

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**KALPANATAI VILAS SALUNKHE**

Panipanchayat, Khalad, Dist- Pune, Maharashtra.

Dry land farming and water harvesting.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**VAIJANATH SHETE**

At Post Andora, Taluka Talzapur, District Osmanabad – 413 603, Maharashtra. Phone: Ph. 02471 - 246142, Off. 246168

Hete is a farmer who was nominated assistant researcher at the Agricultural University of Maharashtra. He heads a farmer's cooperative of 500 persons of which some 200 odd are organic. He has also written a book on sugarcane cultivation.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**MILIND & BALBAIN MURUGKAR**

892/2/2 Urgas, Plot No 7 Chetan Nagar, Near Seimens Colony, Nashik – 422 009, Maharashtra.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**MS GANGALAXMI B.**

Kheti Goshala, Brahm Vidya Mandir Ashram, Post Pavnar, Wardha District – 442 111, Maharashtra. Phone: 07152 3518

All ashramites are organic farmers.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**DR. C.M. PANDIT**

6 Suruchi, Sant Janabai Path, Vile Parle (E), Mumbai – 400 057, Maharashtra. Phone: 022 – 26147363

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**G.G. PAREKH**

Tara, Bombay-Pune-Road, Post Barapada, Panvel – 410 207, Maharashtra.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**VASANT GANGAVANE**

Gokul Pratishthan, 2150 Juvekha House, Behind Ram Mandir, Ratnagiri, Maharashtra.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

**Dr. V. P. VARATAK**

Smriti Villa, 2nd Floor, Revenue Colony, Near Hotel Bhushan, Near Modern High School, Jangli Maharaj Road, Pune, Maharashtra.

(Source: Jayant Barve)

## **ALL INDIA FEDERATION OF ORGANIC FARMING (AIFO)**

‘C’ Satya Bhavna, Raghunath Nagar, Thane (W) – 400 604, Maharashtra.

(Source: Communication with OIP)

## **GAJANAN H. GARGHATE**

Magan Sangrahalaya Samiti, Kumarappa Marg, Wardha 442001, Maharashtra

Ph. 07152 245082

(Source: Communication with OIP)

## **ANIL R. GUDDHE**

Magan Sangrahalaya Samiti, Kumarappa Marg, Wardha 442001, Maharashtra

(Source: Communication with OIP)

## **MEDICINAL PLANTS CONSERVATION CENTRE RURAL COMMUNES**

2, Taj Apartment, 97-A/1-8, Salisbury Park, (Next to Pune Adventist Hospital,) Pune - 411 037, Maharashtra. Ph.:

020-24270216/24269418, Email: rcmccc@vsnl.com

Contact: Vivek Gour Broome, J.E.

Organic Farm, Marunji P.O., Mulshi Taluka, Pune 411 057, Maharashtra. Cell: 09822828102 Email:

gourbroome@vsnl.net

(Source: Brochure)

## **RAMBHAU SHIRODE**

41B, Jeevan Deep, S.V. Sovani Path, Girgaum, Mumbai - 400 004, Maharashtra. Ph.: 022-23852045

Karuna, 11, Vivekanand Nagar, Chalisgaon 424 101, Maharashtra. Ph.: 02589-225261, Cell: 09422276552

Organic Farmer

(Source: Communication with OIP)

## **MANOHAR SHRIRAM PARCHURE**

258 Ramnagar, Nagpur – 440 033, Maharashtra.

Manohar Parchure has 16 hectares of farmland, on which four male labourers work full-time. He also hires labour for around 400 mandays in a year. The soil is mostly black cotton with a pH of around 7. Average rainfall is between 800 and 1000 mm.

Twelve hectares of his farm are covered by crops like soyabean, sorghum, green gram, black gram, maize, chili, groundnut and cotton. Four hectares have teak, amla, sweet lime, mango and jujube.

To deal with pests, Parchure first sprays diluted cow urine (10 litres urine with 100 litres water) at the rate of 10 litres per hectare and, one week later, neem extract (25 litres diluted with 100 litres water) at 25 litres per hectare. He has used this practice four times in the last three years on cotton, groundnut, soyabean and pigeon pea with good results every time.

In the beginning, he tried to produce without tilling, but the weeds were too strong for some crops. That is why he now harrows two or three times during the rainy season. In the tree plantation area, the weeds are cut and used as mulch. Cutting weeds is only necessary when the trees are small.

Parchure has installed a drip irrigation system for his cotton and sweet lime plantations. Gram and wheat are irrigated in the winter with water pumped from a well. The jujube and mango trees are watered by earthen pots embedded in the soil which drip slowly.

In the plantations, he mulches the weeds to bring back the nutrients to the soil. On the whole farm, he also applies five tonnes of vermicasts per hectare. This is produced on the farm itself. The dung required for producing the vermicasts is purchased.

Parchure retains two pairs of bullocks, which are used for transport and some tilling work. Straw from maize and sorghum is stored as fodder for the bullocks. For transport he uses the bullock cart or an all terrain diesel vehicle. He also has four Indian breed cows. Their dung and urine is used for preparing beejamrit and jeewamrit, the fermented combinations used for treating the seeds before sowing and for treating the soil to convert it into a living soil.

Over the last 15 years, standard farming practices have been evolved. These include 1) minimum tillage; 2) crop rotation; 3) mixed cropping; 4) choice of crop mixes on the basis of symbiotic action; 5) use of beejamrit to treat the seeds; 6) use of jiwamrit to treat the soil; 7) rain water harvesting to catch the water where it falls; 8) sowing suitable trap crops in every main crop; 9) use of yellow traps, night traps and pheromone traps for estimating the virulence of pest attack; and 10) use of neem or cow urine or other biological pest control agents only when the presence of pest is beyond the threshold limit

Parchure believes that by keeping your own produce as seed, discarding chemicals and by adopting the farming practices referred to above it is possible to obtain good production even in the first year of conversion to organic farming and one need not fear loss of productivity.

It is difficult to calculate net income per hectare, as both production and selling price are uncertain. Nevertheless, Parchure estimates that his net earnings vary between Rs.20,000 and Rs.30,000 per hectare per year as he can grow only one crop on 12 hectares and two crops on the balance four hectares.

For four years, from the farm season 1998-99, Shri Parchure divided his holding into four pieces of four hectares each and handed them over to four of his former employees to cultivate, each paying rent of Rs.16,000 for the land. However, from 2002-2003 the whole farm is now being cultivated as a model farm with a hired manager and labour. Any one who is interested in learning the techniques of organic farming can go and stay on the farm paying Rs.100 per day for vegetarian meals. Parchure now visits the farm only once a week and is available at Nagpur in the office of 'Deshonnati' a Marathi daily, where he works as a Special Honorary Editor for producing a weekly four page colour supplement devoted to the theory and practice of organic farming.

### **MAHARASHTRA ORGANIC FARMING FEDERATION (MOFF)**

1038/11, Balaji Niwas, Flat No:5, Cosmos Bank Lane, Deep Bungalow Chowk, Model Colony, Pune-411 016, Maharashtra. Ph: 020) 25659090 / 32907302, Cell: 9881497092 / 9822060606, Email: moffpune@gmail.com, Web: www.moffindia.com

(Contact: Diliprao Deshmukh)

Maharashtra Organic Farming Federation (MOFF), Pune is an apex organisation working in the field of sustainable farming in Maharashtra.

MOFF conducted an intensive and extensive drive: 'The Farmers' Suicide Prevention Mission' in six districts of Vidharba region from June 2006 to March 2008. The phenomenal success in reducing farmer suicides in the region brought relief to many a people across the state and country.

Its practical approach to tackling situations and its work is based on the understanding that the only factor that farmers are in control of is the cost of cultivation. They can neither control the Government policies nor the market forces or the climatic patterns.

Based on this, MOFF has evolved 'Panchsutri,' a five point formula approach for reasonable livelihood for the small, marginal & resource poor farmers of the region.

The tenets are:

1. Change farmer mind-set.
2. Do not use hybrid seeds, chemical fertilisers, pesticides or weedicides.
3. Keep local breed cattle and use only local variety seeds.
4. Follow mixed cropping patterns and use on farm produced inputs to combat pests and increase soil fertility.
5. Process and market produce at village level.

Other Activities:

- Documentation of sustainable agriculture practices.
- Farmer training programmes.
- Establishment of farmers' groups.
- Participatory Guarantee System (PGS).
- Assistance in establishment of farmers' producer company.
- Marketing of organic farm produce as approved by MOFF.
- Conservation and protection of local seeds.
- Campaign against GM crops through women ('Seeds of Hope') groups.

The Gramdoot Yojana through Service Provider scheme of National Centre of Organic Farming (Government of India) is popularising sustainable agriculture and conducting trainings in sustainable agriculture with the help of 100 Gramdoots and 2000 Grammitras working with 26,500 farmers in 900 villages of Maharashtra. The Gramdoot Yojana is an experiment on their part towards an evergreen revolution for unifying rural society with its urban counterpart.

The Indian Institute of Sustainable Agriculture (IISA) at Ovale, Pune, Maharashtra, is in the process of being established. IISA promises to be the new and permanent home of the organic farming movement in India. The institute is conceived as a centre to provide serious direction and focus to organic farming in India, rest of Asia, Africa, Latin America and elsewhere through a participatory process of organic farmers.

(Source: Brochure and OFSB Archives)

### **VIDHARBHA ORGANIC FARMING ASSOCIATION (VOFA),**

Shivaji Nagar, Yavatmal, District Yavatmal Maharashtra. Tel: 07232 243 999

(Contact: Ram Kalaspurkar 09423131214 Email: ram\_kalaspurkar@rediffmail.com)

A group of farmers started a cooperative movement, VOFA in the Vidharbha region of Maharashtra. In the year 1994-95, VOFA split up and one of these splinters headed by Shri. Anand Subhedar a farmer by birth, who started organic farming in the region, committed himself totally to work for the organization.

Over the years VOFA became well known not only for its field based operations, but also its political activism on a national and international platform to influence policy changes in favor of the farming community. Seed is one of the key areas that VOFA has been focusing on. Ram Kalaspurkar, VOFA's secretary, has been voicing his concern relentlessly over how seed contamination has become a major issue; leading to lesser yields and lesser profits to the farmers. VOFA along with Navdanya of Uttarakhand has started a seed bank at Kalaspur village.

VOFA is constantly fighting against 'Terminator Seeds' which were given to Indian farmers without prior approvals from the Government. Very recently VOFA has found the reasons behind the sudden death of some species of plants like kikar, citrus, shesham, mango and teak. New plant viruses, and their relation with GMOs, how they evolve, how they kill a particular plant variety forever are the main issues that are a cause of concern for VOFA now.

Maharashtra has been a traditional cotton growing state, with rich black cotton soils and enjoyed the distinction of having the largest area under cotton. For a long period, Yeotmal district was regarded as the biggest market yard for cotton in Asia, till the farmers of Punjab and Andhra Pradesh took to cotton growing using chemical inputs.

VOFA's main aim is to promote organic farming and traditional sustainable practices in the Vidharbha region. Their farmer members' farms are certified by SKAL.

Extensive records and related documents regarding terminators seeds, new plant viruses, side effects of GMOs' etc. are available for dissemination to persons and groups working towards bringing sustainability to poor farmers.

(Reference: Communication with OIP)

### **DHARAMITRA**

Bank of India Colony, Nalwadi, District Wardha, Maharashtra. Ph: 07152 250584 Cell:0985034112 Email: tarakdm\_wda@sancharnet.in, dharamitra@sancharnet.in, dharamitra.wda@gmail.com

This institution has done some serious studies on organic agriculture. Dr Tarak Kate was its Director. Now he has retired. The institute is now looking for a new director.

(Source: Communication with OIP)

### **NISARG ORGANIC FARM**

Nisarg, H.No.46/490, A/P Punavale, Malwadi, Jambhe Road, Taluka Mulshi, District Pune – 411 033, Maharashtra. Cell: 09422014638, Email: dsbanavali@vsnl.net

Contact:Dnyanesh S. Banavali

Nisarg organic farm followed Dabolkar's system of farming. The crops are grown in a four tier system of coriander, leafy vegetables and medicinal plants; papaya, custard apple and banana; coconut palms and the upper canopy supporting fruit vines like that of passion fruit.

Banavali has successfully regenerated degraded lands and mountain slopes using khus and grasses like vitiver that grow easily and cover barren lands with the first crop of soil holding plants. These are natural soil erosion controllers with long and fibrous root holding the slope in one piece. He believes that cultivation in one acre of land through this method can make a family self reliant and self supporting.

He has experimented with keeping goat and free-range poultry and a cow for sourcing high nitrogen content manure. He claims that pure goat manure that naturally occurs in pallet form is 4 times more potent than crushed pallets as the nitrogen content is released slowly from pallets over a period of time. The farm has fruit trees like jack and tamarind whose fruit are processed. He also promotes self employment by arranging to supply organic inputs and buyback produce.

(Source: Communication with OIP)

### **CHETANA-VIKAS**

P.O. Gopuri, Wardha-442001, Maharashtra.

Ph.: 07152-241931, 240806, Cell: 9890308597

Email: chetana\_wda@bsnl.in. Web: www.chetanavikas.org

Contact Person:Ashok Bang & Niranjana Maru.

Chetna-Vikas draws its vision from the two words that make up its name. Consciousness and Development play an interlinked complementary role in giving direction to all their work.

It is a registered organization working for sustainable development in specific focused areas of interventions like organic agriculture, natural resource management, health, nutrition, womens' groups and environment education.

Spread across 200 villages of Wardha District, in Central India, its work at the micro grassroots level is with rural people facilitating rural centered strategies of empowerment. It works through 16 local groups and directly with 100

farmers having land holdings in resource constrained conditions. Farmer trainings and demonstration farms are its forte.

At the macro level, it functions as a resource centre catering to the needs of fellow organizations and working alongside action fronts, activists groups, networks, policy making agencies in India and abroad.

As a part of Chetana Vikas work, it is supportive towards making farmer-market linkages. The farmers of this region cultivate the following:

Annuals - cotton, soybean, pigeon pea, mung, udad, chana, chavali, jowar, bajra, maize, amaranthus, dryland paddy, wheat, linseed, coriander, tomato, brinjal, chillies, ladies finger, cluster bean, dolichos bean, cucumber, bottle gourd, ridge gourd, bitter gourd, pumpkin, tapioca, elephant foot yam among others.

Perennials - mango, guava, custard apple, aonla etc.

'Sakhi' is its quarterly newsletter.

It is affiliated to OFAI, SUSTAINET and the PGS National Council of India.

Chetana Vikas operates from its Resource Centre and 12 hectare demonstration farm campus.

(Source: Communication with OIP and website)

### **INSTITUTE FOR INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT (IIRD)**

PO Box. 562, Kanchan Nagar, Nakshatrawadi, Aurangabad – 431002, Maharashtra,

Farm School: at village Bidkin, Aurangabad Ph.: 0240-2376828, 2376336, Fax: 0240-2376866, Cell: 09850676145, Email: info@iird.org.in, Web: www.iird.org.in

Contact: Joy Daniel

IIRD is a grass root development organization of Marathwada region in Maharashtra State founded by late Dr. Alexander Daniel in 1987. It is a short distance from the famous Ajanta caves and rock cut temples. The primary objective of the institute is to promote development alternatives through the initiatives of groups of rural poor. Its partners in this effort are the people from grassroots segments of rural community, institution and organisation, university departments and Govt. bodies. One of its key areas of focus is organic farming. It is centrally involved in the promotion of the Participatory Guarantee Systems or PGS for organic labeled products and organises weekly 'Organic Bazaars' in many villages and Aurangabad town.

IIRD has played a dynamic role in the past decade by initiating and implementing programmes in organic agriculture that has influenced government policies and policies of voluntary organizations in favour of organic agriculture. IIRD in co-operation with several NGOs and thousands of organic farmers developed the first set of organic standards with relevance to agro-climatic and agricultural practices in the country (Concepts, Principles and Basic Standards of Indian Organic Agriculture). This has been translated into several languages by Organic Farming Association of India (OFAI).

It has a rich publication section with books and manuals on techniques and practices in organic farming. Their manual on appropriate methods is widely used as training material for organic farmers.

Other related areas of work include Organic Agriculture Training, Local Guarantee Systems and Alternative Certification, District Organic Promotion Centers (DOPC), Promotion of Organic Bazaars, Local Crop-diversity Conservation, vocational trainings etc.

IIRD is the initiator of the Participatory Guarantee Scheme for peer certification of organic farms.

(Source: Communication with OIP and website)

### **INSTITUTE OF NATURAL ORGANIC AGRICULTURE (INORA)**

11-B, Kulkarni Bungalow, 5th Lane. Shikshak nagar, Paud Road, Pune - 411 038, Maharashtra. Ph/Fax: 020 25390096/ 020 25393045, Email: inora@vsnl.com, info@inoraindia.com, manjushree@inoraindia.com, web: www.inoraindia.com

INORA, a division of Know-How Foundation was established in 1992 by the late Prof. M.R.Bhiday, an eminent physicist and by economist and Padmashri Dr. R T Doshi.

INORA is a pioneer institute active in research, development and promotion of organic farm management, manufacturing of permitted organic farming inputs, organic farming certification systems, earthworm vermi-technology for biological solid and liquid waste composting, treatment and recycling. And, in employing anaerobic composting and bio gas technologies for waste recovery for methane and liquid manure production.

INORA is very active in and around Pune, offering its services for treating huge quantities of bio-wastes generated from food processing industries, religious places, floriculture farms, pharmaceuticals etc.

It also offers trainings in organic farming techniques and other related practices.

The exhaustive website provides a detailed account of its activities and outreach programmes. (Source: website)

## **MALPANI CHARITABLE TRUST**

Office: - Ashish Building, End of Mumbai Central Bridge, Tardeo, Mumbai, 400034

Training Center: -

Krishni Vigyan Kendra, At- Chikhali Gaon, Post- Kinhavali, Taluka Shahpur, District Thane - 421405. Phone: 02527 - 232583 Res.: 022 -27451929, Website: www.prayogpariwar.net

Malpani Charitable Trust is a non-profit NGO, established at Nanded, Maharashtra in 1969. The Trust has been providing financial assistance to needy sections of society for over three decades. One of its activities is to train the local inhabitants in natural means of farming and adopting an eco friendly life-style, so that they can preserve the natural surroundings and also lead a healthy and spiritual way of life. The Trust also encourages research in ayurvedic science (Panch Maha Bhoot) to improve the quality of farming without the use of any chemicals and pesticides.

The Trust has set up a model farm under the expert guidance of Shri Deepak Suchde, an expert on organic farming, who uses an ecologically friendly method known as Natueco Farming Science, developed by the late Shri S.A. Dabholkar. This is a science of farming which is based on knowledge and understanding of the rules of nature as well as the eco system, which will help the farmer and home gardener to continuously produce live, nutritive and productive (nursery) soil. This approach to preparing nursery soil based on Natueco Farming Science has been recognized by the IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movement). Deepak Suchde started 14 village industries based on the concept of 'Learn and Earn.' This programme was designed to let the participants learn and earn at the same time, by dividing their time between four hours of education and four hours of practical work. The industries were selected based on local availability of material and value added by processing these materials and increasing wealth indirectly. All production is meant for local consumption and the surplus is sold in outside markets on advance commitment from either side so that a proper remuneration is obtained. Shri Deepak's work on power-hani has been recognised by the KVIC. The All India Bee Keeping Research Institute has also recognized his improved method of bee keeping.

These farming techniques are used on 45 acres of land. The Trust has a 10 guntha (¼ acre) 'live model' as a field demonstration to show how a rural family of five members can achieve a better quality of life on wasteland of 10 guntha, as long as it has an assured supply of 1000 liters of water per day. The techniques involve heap farming, recycled farm waste for fertiliser, no use of chemicals, pesticides and other toxins. At the heart of this science is the concept of the five elements or 'Panch Maha Bhoot' – akash (sky, ether), vayu (air), agni (fire), jal (water), prithvi (earth). Seeds that are planted on nursery soil are prepared by proper alignment of these elements. The soil is prepared from surrounding biomass by adding top activated soil, and water. This creates humus, a soil condition from where the roots can absorb nutrition and water.

A theme farm is also being set up where farmers can get insights into the various stages of plant physiology in one visit. This will enable the farmers to understand the stages where human intervention is required to get natural and optimum yield.

Three years ago Deepak Suchde moved to Madhya Pradesh. (His farming experiments there are detailed in the Madhya Pradesh chapter.)

(Source: Communication with OIP)

## **ACADEMY OF DEVELOPMENT SCIENCE**

Kashele Post, Karjat Taluka, District Raigad – 410 201, Maharashtra. Phone: 02148-224007, 224008, 224009 Fax: 02148-222479

ADS has developed a community gene bank for traditional rice varieties. The collection includes over 300 varieties from the Konkan region of Maharashtra. ADS also has a collection of ethno-medicinal plants to be found in the Western Ghats which are supplied to community health organisations, institutions and individuals. ADS has published a booklet in Marathi on a self-help method, namely, rice-cloning technology for small farmers as well as several booklets on medicinal plants and their uses.

(Source: Communication with CSE, 1993)

## **ACTION FOR AGRICULTURAL RENEWAL IN MAHARASHTRA (AFARM)**

Building No. 2/23 A-B, Raison Park, Market yard, Pune 411037, Maharashtra. Phone: 426 4641, 426 8302, Fax: (020) - 426 6303, Email: afarm@vsnl.com, Website: www.afarm.org

(Contact Person: Dr. M.A. Ghare, Chairman. & Mr. M.N. Kondhalkar, Executive Director.)

AFARM, established in 1969, is a membership organization of voluntary agencies working in Maharashtra. It functions basically in the areas of development of water resources, community development and agricultural extension. Its main strategies are co-ordination, networking, and conducting training programmes. Over the past 30 years, AFARM has engaged itself in promoting sustainable development of water resources. Watershed development programmes are being pursued by AFARM with an 'integrated approach' to natural resource development, necessarily involving the communities. AFARM today has around 240 NGOs as corporate and associate members. It publishes a

news letter called Mahiti Vahini, in addition to several booklets, video cassettes and CDs. Its support services include evaluations, surveys, soil and water analysis, ground water investigation, financial support for innovative and experimental activities, etc.

AFARM has developed its own methodology which is demonstrated on its one acre agricultural campus at Latur. As a result of organic farming practices followed over the past decade the plot is now fully fertile, yielding quality products.

Simultaneously, AFARM implemented the watershed plus programme on food security for marginal farmers with the help of 340 marginal farmers and 649 acres of land through out Maharashtra. With this experience and excellent results from the pilot programme, Govt. of Maharashtra has nominated AFARM as an Organic Farming Mitra Margadarshak Sanstha in Pune and Latur district. Under this programme AFARM has formed 22 farmers groups (comprising 2033 farmers and 2732.5 ha land) in Latur district. These groups meet regularly at AFARM training center, Latur, for exchange of their ideas, experiences and views regarding organic farming, composting, vermicomposting, bio-pesticides, bio-fertilisers, etc. AFARM has conducted district-wise workshop on organic farming throughout Maharashtra for the motivation and awareness of farmers. (Source: Communication with OIP)

### **JNANA PRABODHINI**

510, Sadashiv Peth, Pune – 411 030, Maharashtra. Phone: 020 24477691 (O)/ 24250160 (R), Email: jnanaprabodhini@vsnl.com

Contact person: Bhageshree Pankshe

The objectives of the project are to work with women's self-help groups to promote organic farming practices, improved agricultural techniques, sustainable agriculture, demonstrate methods of in-situ composting, effective use of agricultural waste and various systems of growing food with minimum water.

Presently Jnana Prabodhini is working with 3000 women through 150 Self Help Groups. (Source: Brochure)

### **INSTITUTE OF RURAL CREDIT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT (IRCED)**

6, Nishant Apt., Nagraj Colony, Vishrambag, Sangli – 416 415, Maharashtra. Phone: 0233 2300045/ 2302125/ 2303460, Email: san\_irced@sancharnet.in, website: www.irced.com

Contact person: Kiran Kulkarni

The mission of IRCED is to undertake activities for the socio-economic development of deprived and marginalized people for self-reliance and sustainable growth from Maharashtra and North Karnataka. The main objective of the programme is to undertake and implement research and development activities (like watershed development, energy conservation, organic farming, food security, etc.) which will be conducive to the development of agriculture and rural economy.

Kiran Kulkarni has designed a model Grain Bank in Karzath (covering 150 tribal villages) that adapts to rural cultural modes and empowers village communities to address food security issues through indigenous solutions. The Grain Bank which is run entirely by the villagers ensures grain to all at low interest rates and has built-in mechanisms to ensure 100% loan repayment and interest recovery. Karzath is a drought prone area. For banking of bajra, jowar, etc., 25% of the deposit has to be a local staple. It also has a community plant germ plasm centre.

(Source: Brochure)

### **VIKAS SAHYOG PRATISHTHAN**

130/1040, D.B. More Marg, Motilal Nagar 1, Goregoan (W), Mumbai 400 104.

Phone: 022 28762135, Fax: 022 28779256, Email: vsp1@vsnl.com, Website: www.vspindia.org

Vikas Sahyog Pratishthan (VSP) is a collective of voluntary organizations from all over Maharashtra concerned with addressing common issues affecting the poor and marginalized sections of society. Vikas Sahyog Pratishthan was formed in 1990 and registered as an autonomous body in 1995.

One of its activities is to campaign for an alternative technology in agriculture, based on the principles of no chemical fertilisers, no pesticides and no ploughing of the land. In other words: Natural Farming. Small farmers are provided with knowledge and skills as is found necessary. VSP utilises the existing biodiversity to the optimum in its programmes.

After experimenting for four years on a ten gunta plot (one gunta is 1089 sq.ft.) VSP has come to the conclusion that two additional guntas are needed for the creation of self-sufficiency for an average family. Thus the 12 gunta Nature Farming model has been evolved. This leads to self-reliance by catering to the family's essential needs such as food grains, vegetables, fruits, medicines, building material, and fuel.

(Source: brochure)

## **PRAKRUTI**

Floor 2, Millenium Enclave, Plot 94, Sector 28, Vashi, Navi Mumbai 400703, Maharashtra. Ph.: 022 27899699, Web: [www.savebombaycommittee.org](http://www.savebombaycommittee.org)

(Contact: Kisan Mehta Cell: 09223448857 Email: [kisansbc@gmail.com](mailto:kisansbc@gmail.com))

Established in 1988, Prakruti deals with sustainable living, Natural/Organic farming and conservation of water and energy with a view to reduce consumption of finite natural resources. The objective of Prakruti is to assist in developing an environmentally viable society based on natural living and sustainable agriculture. Prakruti takes up programmes and campaigns for encouraging farmers to change over to sustainable agriculture and for developing links with consumers for ensuring supply of high quality, chemical free, healthful food and fibre.

Prakruti has more than 100 active members and enjoys the support of more than 500 volunteers, a network built painstakingly over the last 30 years.

Members of Prakruti have conducted tours to hundreds of villages across India over the years to address local issues.

In 1995, campaign for organic natural cotton cultivation involving 135 farmers working on 1200 hectares of land turned out to be the largest organic cotton cultivation in the world.

In 2005, Prakruti members studied the success of Kambalwadi village in Kolhapur District of Maharashtra and brought out a report.

In 2006, Prakruti members undertook Vidarbha Sadbhavana Yatra to provide solace to the victim families and to study reasons for continuing farmer suicides in the Vidarbha region. Prakruti report on the findings and recommendations was presented to the Central and State governments.

One can find detailed reports of Prakruti's work and campaigns on their website.

Shri Kisan Mehta is the driving force behind this work.

(Source: Communication with OIP and web reference)

## **VAN VADI/VISION ACRES**

Earthcare Books, 2 Anand Kamal Compound, 17 Carmichael Road, Mumbai – 400 026, Maharashtra. Phone: 4940920, Email: [bharatmansata@gmail.com](mailto:bharatmansata@gmail.com) and

Earthcare Books, 10 Middleton Street, Kolkata – 700 071, West Bengal.

Bharat is involved in activities like networking, research and writing/editing/publishing. He has authored a book titled 'Ecological Visions', and several articles on ecology and agriculture. His recent books are 'The Great Agricultural Challenge' and 'Organic Revolution.' Vinita manages Earth Care Books which specialises in environment publications, including organic agriculture.

Van wadi is a commonly owned space by a few individuals which even today continues to provide lifes' learnings of land and relationships to its co-owners and to the community. Bharat describes the experiment in his own words:

About ten monsoons ago, three of us – accompanied by Shiva, our then local contact – walked several hours on this land. It was our first visit, and an unforgettable one. We were lost. But winding our way through thick vegetation, hunched below spreading branches and snaking creepers, I kept feeling this was the place we had waited four years and dozens of scouting trips to find!

While the trees we saw around were not very tall, in most parts they were dense. Just a few decades ago, this land had been a full-grown forest with trees having girths that took two pairs of outstretched arms to encircle. A few of their weathered stumps were still around to remind us of their glory now savagely mowed down by deforestation.

We were initially looking to buy about 10-15 acres for farming, to be divided among 3-4 of us. But with more 'like-minded' people joining, the idea of an 'alternative community' of sorts began to gradually evolve – a community that aspired to meet its varied needs in harmony with nature and fellow humans.

We tentatively named our land venture 'Vision Acres.' The broad aim was to 'live close to the land in an ethical and sustainable manner – to benefit ourselves, the land, and perhaps the local people as well.' Progressive self-reliance in basics, like food, was an important goal.

The first guiding principle was earthcare. At least half the land would be under tree cover; agro-chemicals prohibited; water usage conservative; extensive mono-cultures shunned, and biodiversity aided through integration of various edible and locally useful species, particularly indigenous varieties, suited to existing conditions.

Our second guiding principle was 'fair dealings with people and respect for local culture.' Simple lifestyles and social discretion were mentioned in this context.

The third guideline posited that 'quality of life, and local self-reliance should have priority over considerations of monetary profit.'

Eventually we bought 64 contiguous acres of which 10% of the land was held in common, while the balance 90% was demarcated into individual plots. The common land was for access roads, and for sighting shared infrastructural facilities like a well, common house, nursery, etc; or for any common projects that may be taken up in the future.

Several monsoons have passed since we first visited the land. Much has happened in these years, though at its own

sweet, or sometimes tortuous, pace. Over the years, we managed to complete our official boundary survey, do a botanical survey of our main tree and shrub species, and a partial, internal survey of the land's topography and prominent features. We have built our common house and found four full-time local people to live and work on the land.

It was the adivasis who showed us that we could grow here a variety of local millets such as nacchni (ragi, finger millet), varie, kangu – and rice too; the latter in low-lying, relatively flat, run-off beds at the mouth of minor streams, which required only a little more levelling and careful bunding to retain the rainwater needed by the rice plants.

We learnt too from our adivasi workers that we have a number of potential clearances – perhaps totalling a quarter of our entire land area – presently under a predominance of shrubs like the uksi (*Getonia floribunda*) and the thorny karvanda (*Carissa carandas*). These we cut and pushed back to form a dry, protective hedge to keep wandering cattle out.

If there are any people left on this earth who can teach our floundering 'millennium generation' the fine art and science of co-existing in harmony with the forest, it is the adivasis. Or rather, just a few among them now, who still retain the knowledge, skills and the native cultural perspective.

In an average year, the rainfall on our land is close to 200 cms. Much of the rain is soaked by the earth and percolates downward to recharge the groundwater held by underlying aquifers. When a bore-well on our land was first contemplated some years ago, several in our group expressed their reservations. However, we decided to go for one on the condition that we would have only a hand-pump – to avoid wastage. This, we felt, would ensure that the annual withdrawal of ground water never exceeds annual recharge.

While inadequate exposure to sunlight is a limiting factor in growing food crops on terrain that is overgrown with vegetation, the proximity of forested area affords a number of advantages as well. In particular, we have generous abundance of biomass (leaf litter mulch), rich silt and vermicastings to serve as excellent organic fertiliser and soil conditioner – obtained free from our own land, without the need of any other external inputs for growing our field crops, vegetables and fruit trees.

Over the years we have experimented with growing a variety of vegetables particularly indigenous varieties, whose seeds we save from our previous year's crop. We have harvested a good amount of bhendi (okra), bottle-gourd, cucumber, shirali (ridged-gourd), ghosali (sponge gourd), kohla, vangi (brinjal), dudhi (pumpkin), abai (jackbean), some gavar (cluster beans), winged beans, Muli (radish) and leafy greens.

We planted rice as well, experimenting initially with about seven different indigenous varieties obtained from ADS, Kashele. Subsequently we stuck to only two kinds - one, the tall, indigenous Surati Kolam (Nawabi Kolam), whose seeds we got from Bhaskarbai Save. The other – Ratna, a dwarf 'high-yielding variety', which has become the most common choice of many farmers in our area, including our own adivasi workers.

Over 150 trees have been planted by us in the vicinity of the house. These include 15 mango, 15 Sitaphal, 11 Coconut, 9 Banana, 6 Drumstick, 10 Guava and lesser numbers of Jackfruit, Chickoo, Dalim (Pomegranate), Ramphal (Bullsheart), Lime, Mosambi (Sweet Lime), Papaya, Bamboo, Badam, Tamarind, Jambul, Neem, Agastha, Kadi-patta, Banyan, Peepal, Gulmohar, Champa (*Michelia champaca*) and a few other species.

In the forested areas and along main pathways, we have additionally planted about 200 jambuls, a hundred mangos, several dozen sitaphals (Custard Apple), a few jackfruit, some bamboo, tulsi (Holy Basil), and a few ficus species – banyan and peepal (*Ficus religiosa*). Some years ago, we had also planted a few hundred forest species, many of which were medicinal. We have left a few of our more dense forest zones undisturbed to grow as sacred groves of wilderness and natural diversity.

(Source: Bharat Mansata)

### **VASANTRAO BOMBATKAR**

Secretary, Akhil Bharat Krishi Goseva Sangh, Post Gopuri, District Wardha 442 114, Maharashtra.

(Residence: Gitai Nagar, Post Gopuri, Wardha – 442 001, Maharashtra.)

Vasantrao Bombatkar has practical experience in farming, cow rearing and manure making. He has written a book on compost making, the NADEP way. He is also the author of 'The Miracle Called Compost' and the editor of a monthly newsletter titled 'Gogross.' He has started a movement against fertilisers and pesticides and has organised camps in many states.

(Source: Communication with OIP)

### **GREEN CROSS SOCIETY**

203, Nalanda, Opp. Pratap Society, Off J.P. Road, Andheri (W) Mumbai – 400 053, Maharashtra. Phone: 6238467

(Contact: Shantu Shenai)

Green Cross is an NGO involved in the promotion of vermiculture and effective methods of dealing with sewage/garbage treatment in Thane district, Mumbai.

Its brochure states:

We are willing to provide consultancy in vermiculture biotechnology and other vermi-innovations at cost. We seek funding for specific public interest projects like garbage/sewage management through vermiculture biotechnology, organic and natural farming, agro-forestry, protection of existing forests, protection of medicinal plants, protection of our biodiversity, public programs for good civic sense, public programmes for good health through traditional methods and systems, promotion of Vruksha-Ayurveda, public programmes for better communication and relationships, city planning with environmentally sound systems, environment networks, organic farm tours, craft workshops for teachers/street children to train them to make saleable articles from waste, promotion of potted plants, bouquet businesses etc.

(Source: Information sheet)

### **THE HEALTH AWARENESS CENTRE (THAC)**

C/o Streehitavardhini, Lokmanya Nagar, K. Gadgil Marg, Mumbai – 400 025, Maharashtra. Ph.: 022 24361672, 24320788, Email: thacindia@yahoo.com

Organic Farm: Shree Kheti, at Vangani Village, Raigad District, Maharashtra

Contact: Dr. Vijaya Venkat

A few kilometers ahead of Badlapur, on the Mumbai-Pune rail route, lies Vangani – which is still surrounded by the vestiges of what was, half a century ago, dense natural forest. A short walk from the station lie the Mantri Farms, and within them – Shree Kheti, nourished by the river. On the west, the unmatched ‘night sky’ above, (the Astronomer’s Association here, has visitors from all over the world), the craggy, peaks of the western ghats circling it, Shree Kheti, is a result of moving from numbers to nourishment, from self care to health care to earth care. From a system of cure to care.

The Health Awareness Centre (THAC) 1989, Mumbai:

THAC’s main role is to generate awareness about correct foods and their role in health management. This helps to establish and understand the links between our living habits and its effects on the environment. THAC helps people to experientially open up the relationship with natural laws – to help people look after their own health, without dependence on any health-cure-system. It is THAC’s challenge to provide a space where philosophy and activity can be practiced, where economy and the basic needs of life can be met, and where health and healthful living can be experienced. Selfcare is health care is earthcare is THAC’s slogan. THAC is completely self-sustained. It is not founded by an organization – government or otherwise. It works on a no-profit /no-loss basis, with the intention of making people self-reliant, self-sufficient, healthy and happy.

The earthcare components of THAC’s philosophy are integrated at Vangani. Shree Kheti is its launching pad.

Vangani Ventures:

The experiment at Vangani, has been to:

Introduce a collective effort to care, for the earth and self.

Reject all chemicals, fertilisers, pesticides, hybrid seeds, in short, modern agricultural tools and methods have been replaced, through trial and error by dynamic organic methods. These methods include vermiculture, biogas, composting, multiple cropping and regeneration.

Replenish and regenerate the soil and land-thereby allowing an ancient forest to re-grow. The entire ‘original forest’ was sacrificed for the fast expanding/demanding growth of the railways.

Provide a home to disappearing local berries, roots, tubers, vegetables and fruits – and the countless species that visit, for them.

Creating a space to observe and absorb earth energies – and its effects on us, by simply watching/responding to nature.

Integrate with the local community, to make ‘production’ (of food-learning-healing) as a ‘protective’ activity.

At the micro-level:

Work with hands, at the farm itself.

Experience directly a combination of fresh air, sunlight, silence – as energies/fuels/resources.

Recuperate and detoxify at the physical/mental/emotional levels.

Introspect and relax into the integral nature of Nature.

Listen to the body – and observe how it responds to an unpolluted, quiet atmosphere.

At the Community Level:

The land is made productive – without damaging/polluting the air, water or soil.

Regional and indigenous species of vegetables, herbs and fruits are grown – seasonally.

Rice which Vangani village had stopped growing for decades has been re-started.

Classes are held here – so are gatherings and workshops.

In conjunction with the Forest Department, 1 acre of land has been given for joint use by the community to grow and maintain local fruit and fuel bearing trees.

At the Macro Level:

To expand the definition of Food as:

Food should be natural – consisting of organic food elements in their natural, unaltered state;

Food should be whole – complete and unfragmented, neither refined nor enriched;

Food should be poison free – organically grown, free from poisonous chemical residues and additives.

To demonstrate the connection between food and disease, relating that to food and personal health, and thereby to the health of the earth. A community strategy (like the involvement of the Anganwadi children, their parents and teachers) helps strengthen awareness of sustainable models of health care. It has been THAC's experience, that factors that lead to illness, are really nothing but the failure of applying proper health care measures.

Food-Body-Earth

As far back as 1990, THAC was involved with Prakriti, in organizing the first ever conference on Natural-Living-Natural Farming- Natural Habitat, at Bordi in Maharashtra. It was the first time that THAC was in an 'outside setting' making organic food for a large gathering. Many pioneering natural farmers over the years from Bhaskar Save, to Masanobu Fukuoka & Bill Morrisson were inspirational in directing the vision and direction of THAC – as a result of this gathering.

The connection between health and the environment, through our daily living practices, is THAC's continuing mission – vis-à-vis Shree Kheti. This is to create a platform to bring about a collective change beginning with how we live, what we choose, buy and consume.

## **GOMUKH**

Environmental Trust For Sustainable Development, Durga 92/2 Gangote path Erandavane, Pune 411 004. Telefax 020 25660160, 25673324, 25651434, Email: Gomukh@vsnl.com

The Gomukh Environmental Trust for Sustainable Development is a public charitable trust for the promotion of ecological restoration and social justice. It has implemented soil and water conservation works in 17 villages in the Kolwan Valley, Munshi taluka, Pune, under various state government sponsored schemes. Having provided water security to the Kolwan Valley, Gomukh Trust has, since June 2000, diversified its activities to provide training, technical assistance, employment opportunities, marketing assistance for enhancing the social and economic quality of life of the local population.

(Source: Brochure)

## **APPROPRIATE RURAL TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE (ARTI)**

Pune Office: Maninee Apartments, S.No. 13, Dhayarigaon, Pune 411 041, Maharashtra. Ph.: 020-24390348/24392284, Fax: 020-24390348, Email: arti\_pune@vsnl.net

Plaltan Office: Arti Rural Entrepreneurship Development Centre, Ganesh Nagar (Algudewadi), Phaltan-Baramati Road, Tal. Phaltan, Dist. Satara 415 523, Maharashtra. Ph.: 02166-225200/200342

The technologies developed by ARTI are based on known scientific principles. ARTI has standardised / modified all technologies through field testing to suit local conditions.

Following are a sample:

1. Propagation of dicotyledonous species by the simple method of rooted cuttings.
2. Leaf as a propagule of dicot plants.
3. Innovative rural nursery techniques.
4. Nursery business based on seedlings of seasonal crop species.
5. Plant tissue culture.
6. Farming on permanent raised beds.
7. Using seawater for irrigation.
8. Growing root drugs in sand filled channels.
9. High intensity cultivation of cattle fodder.
10. Production of root mats.
11. Low cost greenhouse.
12. Non degradable treatment for bamboo for outdoor structures.
13. Low cost water tank built with bamboo.
14. Growing bamboo as a crop.
15. Shampoo powder from pods of *Acacia auriculiformis*.
16. Subsurface drip irrigation for tree plantations.
17. Sewage disposal through plantation of timber and fuelwood.
18. Rural energy from agro-waste.
19. Improved cookstoves.
20. Fuel briquettes from light agro-waste.

21. Sarai stove-and-cooker system.
22. Pyrolysis gas stoves.
23. User friendly biogas technology.
24. Peat substitute from agro-waste.
25. New method of organic farming.

ARTI can be contacted for hands on training in these technologies and for technology transfer.

#### **KRISHIVARADA**

F3/302 Rutu Enclave, Opp. Muchhala Polytechnic, Ghodbunder Road, Thane (W) - 400 607, Maharashtra. Cell: 09821089329/ 09320089329, Email: krishivarada@consultant.com

Contact: Jilpa P. Nijasure & Prashant M. Nijasure

Fruit and vegetable cultivation, organic farming, bird & butterfly garden, landscape designing, medicinal and aromatic plants, eco tourism.

#### **DR KUMARAPPA GOBARDHAN KENDRA**

Bakuka-Nadep Experiments, Pusad – 445 204, Yavatmal District, Maharashtra. Phone: 072334 6184

Shri Pandaripande, during his time, developed a compost from gohar by a method which is three times more effective than the normal method. It is called NADEP compost and Pandaripande was affectionately called NADEP Kaka.

Since the preparation of compost is labour intensive, it is ideal for landless labourers as additional source of income.

NABARD has circulated this compost procedure, so that small scale viable projects can be initiated. The Centre of Science for Villages, Wardha is also implementing this package.

#### **MAHARASHTRA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER FOR RURAL AREAS (MITTRA)**

BAIF – Mittra Bhavan, Opp. Niwas Homes, Behind Bodhale Nagar, Nashik -422 011, Maharashtra. Ph.: 0253 2416057 / 58, Fax: (0253) 2416056, Email: mittra\_nsk@dataone.in

Contact: Sanjay M. Patil, Programme Director, Mob: 09869985820

BAIF works in the area of regeneration of soil.

(Source: Brochure)

#### **RAMESHCHANDRA DHIRUBHAI NAIK**

Mamadev Wadi, Khakhwada, Via. Gadat, Taluka Gandevi, Dist: Navsari 396 350, Maharashtra. Ph.: 02634 266865

#### **ORGANIC CERTIFICATION IN MAHARASHTRA FOLLOWING THE PARTICIPATORY GUARANTEE SYSTEM (PGS)**

Maharashtra has 1872 organic farmers registered through 138 farmers local groups. IIRD, OFAI and Chetana Vikas are the PGS Organic Facilitation Councils that coordinate the process of forming grassroots level farmers groups. IIRD and Chetana Vikas have 78 and 16 local groups respectively under their council and MOFF which is OFAI's coordinating agency in the state accounts for 44 local groups.

Details of these local groups and their organic produce is posted at the [www.pgsorganic.in](http://www.pgsorganic.in)