

Organic Farmers and Farms in Orissa

SAMBHAV

Rohibank – 752090, Nayagarh, Orissa.

(Contact person: Prof. Radhamohan, HIG – 238, Kalinga Vihar, Patrapada post, Bhubaneswar – 752090, Orissa. Email: radhamohan_cwsy@yahoo.co.in)

Sambhav is an organisation working on sustainable practices. Prof. Radhamohan is its founder and advisor. It is engaged in practising, demonstrating and training in organic and natural farming. Sambhav is developing an 85 acre farm purely on ecological principles.

(Source: Communication with OIP)

RATNAKAR SAHOO

Tapovan, At/Po Khuntasamalai, Patnagarh, Balangir- 767 025, Orissa. Cell: 09937746772

Ratnakar Sahoo at 76 is a bundle of energy and a treasure house of practical wisdom – of the original kind – gained from working close to the land. He has always been an organic farmer ever since he started farming actively way back in 1955.

According to him, agriculture consists of four parts: first and second, natural forests with all the small and big creatures therein; third, horti- and floriculture and fourth, crops and cultivated fields.

His 15 and half acre land follows this pattern in which 3 to 4 acres of the highland hilly area have been developed and maintained as natural forests. The low land area has been deployed for cultivation of paddy, ginger and turmeric. The areas interspersed in between these two and also within the crop fields have horticultural trees like mango, orange, lemon, ber, wood apple and a couple of coconut trees. The farm depends on an open well and rain for its water needs. Some bamboo from the forested area of his farm fetches him a yearly income and so does the sale of fruits, paddy etc.

Sahoo tried, like most people, using urea for a couple of years during the peak of green revolution, only to discard it as useless to farming. He proudly says that all his life he has only been a farmer and nothing else. He is very vocal about his dislike for borewells because he thinks they eat into ground water reserves that nature in her wisdom has designed as underground storehouses for water. In the same breath he continues that Mother Nature in her wisdom created appropriate foods for all creatures and if man has manipulated this design, it is due to a lack of foresight and selfish greed.

He believes in living as closely with nature as far as present circumstance permit and very wisely says, 'What we eat will ultimately eat us.' According to him food and eating are habits that one must cultivate with great caution for one's own health and the health of the environment. His views on food scarcity are also quite strong. He is convinced that scarcity of food is a myth created by those who wish control over nations and people and thinks farm subsidy doled out in India to farmers is an ugly ploy to promote chemical inputs and keep the farmer under govt. control. On the subject of organic, he says the government continues to sit on the fence, is not doing enough to disseminate information and provide training in organic practices to farmers.

On his farm he uses compost, panchakavya, amritpani, bone meal and green manure. Cows maintained on the farm provide raw material for farm inputs. He says he has not bothered particularly with vermicompost as his land is on its own thriving with earthworms. Labour problem has made him reduce paddy cultivation and opt for fruit orchards. His personal message to promoters of organic farming is, while promoting any ideology one must bear in mind that every human being has a personal and social side to his personality and support from social structures come in so many numerous ways that one must always reciprocate with ones own contribution to them. This message he believes must be carried along as part of their promotional activity. His comments on labour reveal a deep connection with the land. He believes that a farm should have no major labour issues if one can only nurture insects, bees, birds, earthworms and sub soil micro and macro flora and fauna.

(Source: OIP interview)

DULAL

Convent Road, Baripada, Mayurbhanj Dist- 757001, Orissa. Ph.: 06792- 262120 Cell: 09438116453 Email: dulalbaripada@yahoo.co.in

Contact person: Kalicharan Marandi (Agriculture officer)

Dulal, an organizational member of OFAI, has been working since 2003-04 on issues related to organic farming. It works with close to 5,000 farming families through some 500 village level groups. Crops common to these farmers are paddy, maize, millet, tubers and roots, pulses, oil seeds, vegetables, mango, cashew nut, jackfruit, etc.

Dulal is a social work organisation working with downtrodden tribal peasants in Mayurbhanj district of Orissa. The vision is food sovereignty and economic solidarity. 'We believe in traditional food culture, traditional farming, traditional knowledge, traditional seeds and traits, localised seed exchange, localised intellectual property rights so that quality food is available to marginal farmers independent of external agencies. According to us, traditional farmer is an agronomist, entomologist, soil scientist, plant breeder, horticulturist, agricultural economist, food expert, health care and nutritionist, seed technologist all rolled into one. We do not believe in universalisation of any farming knowledge because farming knowledge varies from place to place. We strongly believe in process-oriented work rather than project-oriented. Organic terminology creates the feeling of export oriented agriculture and therefore we strongly believe in calling our practices Traditional Agriculture.

Our thrust is towards regaining and reclaiming our traditional orchards (wadi), foods ,agricultural practices, herbal health care, institutions, clothing, education and languages. 'Krushaka Katha,' our annual magazine, is published in Oriya.

(Source: Communication with OIP)

LIVING FARMS

Plot No.1181 / 2146, Ratnakarbag-2, Tankapani Road, Bhubaneswar – 751018, Orissa. Ph.: 0674-2430176, Cell: 09938582616, Email: livingfarms@gmail.com Web: www.living-farms.org

(Contact: Debyeet Sarangi)

Living Farms is a non-governmental and non-sectarian organisation, established in 2006 with the mission to uphold food sovereignty. They work together with the landless, small and marginalised farmers in the dry and hilly region of Orissa. The effort is to improve their wellbeing through ecological and sustainable agriculture, re-establish their control over food and farming systems through the conservation, renewal and rejuvenation of biodiversity.

Living Farms is committed to creating a future in which farming communities prosper, biodiversity and cultural diversity thrives and consumers get poison free food.

The driving convictions giving impetus to all their work are:

Food is a basic human right.

Agrarian reform should give landless and farming people – especially women – ownership and control of the land they work.

Food is first and foremost a source of local self sufficiency and nutrition and only secondarily an item of trade. Local self sufficiency of food comes first.

People who work the land must have the right to practice sustainable management of natural resources and to conserve biodiversity free of restrictive intellectual property rights.

The globalisation of hunger should be resisted with all force.

Everyone has the right to be free from violence. Lack of food must not be used as a weapon by the monetarily stable peoples or nations.

Smallholder farmers especially women must have access to accurate information in a language understood by them. Formulating agricultural policies should be a democratic process at all levels.

A close encounter with hunger and malnutrition in tribal villages of Northern Orissa in 1998 compelled Debyeet Sarangi, founder of Living Farms, to search for ways and means to respond to existing scarcity of food and nutrition. Having been intimately associated with tribals in Orissa for more than eight years, he tried to look for solutions which were closer to rural life. This search led him to work as a farmer under the guidance of an experienced teacher of ecological agriculture for one year.

Living Farms was formally initiated in 2005 with a conscious decision to work with landless agricultural labourers, marginal and small farmers towards making food security and sovereignty a reality.

Presently, fifteen hundred farmers are being directly reached through its efforts. Organisations like Sholai school and DDS have played major roles in this process and so have people like Ardhendu Chatterjee and Narayan Reddy.

(Source: website and communication with OIP)

TEAM FOR HUMAN RESOURCE EDUCATION & ACTION FOR DEVELOPMENT (THREAD)

Siddharth Village, PO Box NO:9, Jatni, Dist-Khurda, Orissa. Ph: 0674- / 2490516 /Fax-0674-2490160 Web: www.siddharthvillage.com

THREAD is a training organisation that believes the best is possible through the collective awareness of each individual.

The Orissa Nari Samaj (ONS), a federation of 55 block level Tribal Women's Organisations across 14 districts of Orissa is a unique spin-off of THREAD's training methodology. It is their flagship programme that has now turned into a movement of the tribal women to reclaim their traditional moorings that are rooted in the land. Consisting of 53 registered Samajas which oversee the functioning of cluster level committees and 3255 village level Sanghas with a total membership of 2,50,000, it is a strong grass root level womens' force to reckon with.

Within its multiple activities and approaches ONS promotes Organic Farming through trainings and technical inputs. Its approach to organic farming is placed in the ecological context of its operational areas which are drought-prone, with poor agricultural yields and degraded lands. There are now, within this fold, 800 men and women organic farmers. This encouraging trend has led to the setting up of two pilot demonstration projects.

ONS took up an anti GM Campaign at the panchayat level, to declare panchayats GM free. A singular achievement of ONS has been the banning of Bt brinjal by Orissa government, resulting in the saving of 362 indigenous varieties.

Its ongoing endeavour is for the promotion of organic farming and a Campaign for a GM-Free Organic Agricultural State.

(Source: website)

NATABAR SARANGI

Chairman, Loka Samabaya Pratisthan, 2510 (J) Kedar Gouri Area, Lweis Road, Bhubaneshwar 751 002, Orissa. Cell: 9937620883, email: lokasambayapratisthan@rediffmail.com

Residence address: Loka Samabaya Pratisthan, Vil. Nariso, Dist. Kurda, Orissa.

Shri Natabar Sarangi has been farming organically since 1998. His work place is a village at Nariso, Kurda district of Orissa. His father was a traditional farmer. When the green revolution came in, Natabarji suggested they go in for synthetic farming. This continued till 1995. On taking over farming responsibilities after his father's demise, he realised that many negative impacts had come into the farm due to the use of chemical inputs. Soil deterioration, depletion in-fertility, waste crop production and more input cost. In spite of this, he continued till 1995. After his retirement as a teacher in 1996 he cultivated CR 1009 (high yield variety) released by CRRI, Cattack and used all inputs as advised by agricultural department.

One day, a farm labourer was spraying carbo furol, a highly poisonous pesticide of the

phorate group on the farm. He had only sprayed ½ an acre of the 3 and he simply fell down half conscious. Immediately he was rushed to the hospital. In a few hours there were dead snakes, frogs, earthworms and insects all over the half acre of land that was sprayed with pesticide.

This was a turning point in his agricultural practice. Shri Natabar took an on-the-spot decision never to use chemicals on the farm again. He buried all the pesticide stock with him, hoping for the best it would not leach into the surrounding area.

In the same year he read 'One Straw Revolution' and started cultivation using organic methods using high yield seed. Simultaneously he started to collect indigenous paddy along with his colleague Jubaraj Swain. In 1998 they had five varieties, in 2000, 40 and by 2007, 305 indigenous paddy varieties. Of these, 55 are very high yielding varieties, specific and well suited to drought, flooding, water logging, pest and disease conditions. His farm is frequently visited by nearby farmers. He uses green manure, 10 kgs per acre of dhaincha, a local plant of sesbania species. Director, CRRI, on a visit to his farm was pleasantly surprised to see the yield and health of the farm.

(Source: Communication with OIP)

D. NARAYAN

At/Po Makarajhola, via Kanchuru, Dist- Ganjam, Orissa. Cell: 9861328455

D. Narayan's five acre farm is located in Makarajhola, Ganjam. Having farmed chemically since 1969 he switched to organic farming recently in 2005. He cultivates rice, ragi, chili, sugarcane, tomato, brinjal, lady's finger, beans, ridge gourd, bengal gram, green gram, harar, masur, til, sunflower and groundnut on his farm. The surplus yield is sold. Panchgavya, Jeebamrut, amrutpani, vermicompost, egg solution and kunnappa jal is prepared and used on the farm. So far he has not found major difference in yield after having converted to organic methods. The positive features however are that organic production requires less external inputs, and has less pests and less disease. His farm yields two tons paddy per acre, 90 tons sugarcane per acre, 6 quintals areca per acre. The farm produce is sold to Biosaurcina at Bhubaneshwar. He plans to continue with organic farming.

(Source: Communication with OIP)

RAMAKRISHNA

Secretary, Sambhav, At/Post Rohi Bank via Kural – 752090, Dist.- Nayagarh, Orissa. Cell: 09937469961

Ramakrishna has been farming organically since 1989. He grows paddy, seasonal vegetables, coconut, lichi, sapota, mango and guava on his farm. He also provides training for processing produce into pickles and jams. Sambhav has 10 local groups covering more than 100 villagers and promoting self sustaining agriculture. They have outreach and training programmes that reach 7,500 farmers per year and publish material on composting health and organic farming techniques. Sambhav deals with two issues: ecology and gender. They have started forest protection movement and find that organic agriculture or non-violent agriculture is in tune with Sambhav's ecological ideology. Information on zero tillage cultivation, biodynamic agriculture is disseminated widely. They prepare a localised lunar calendar for biodynamic farming practices with information like: no farm activity on new moon days results in exceptional yield, harvest time, seed sowing in the morning, ploughing in the evening, full moon day being ideal for sowing etc. for the benefit of local farmers. Sambhav farmers practice zero tillage cultivation for wheat on 90 acres of dry, degraded, waste land with exceptional results. This miracle in farming initiated them to call their efforts Sambhav. Sambhav also conducts seed exchange and provides liaison assistance for farmers with government officials, NGOs and voluntary groups. They believe that 5 things in nature have to be cared for and kept in mind always: soil, water, light, air and sky. Says Shri.

Ramakrishna, Treasurer of Sambhav and a school teacher. 'I am a school teacher. I have ample opportunities to spend time with students and the teacher community and have used

this well to train and pass on ecology based ideology to hundreds of them. Professor Radhamohan is my inspiration and guru.’

(Source: Communication with OIP)

SHRI TRINATH BISWAL,

Rushikulya Rayat Mahasabha At/Post Sasan Ambagaon, Via Hinjli, Dist Ganjam, Orissa. Ph.: 0680-2111680, Cell: 09937282330

The six acre farm is located in Badi Ambagaon, Ganjam. He has been farming organically since 4 years, before which he practiced chemical farming for 40 years. He grows paddy, betel, black gram, chilly, brinjal, lady finger, tomato, groundnut and bitter gourd. The surplus is sold. Pot compost and cow dung compost are used. He says, organic farming is most necessary for eco friendly agriculture but there is not enough support or initiative by the government to promote organic practices. He wishes to establish a nursery so that seedlings can be made available to local farmers throughout the year.

(Source: Communication with OIP)

AGRAGAMEE

Head Office: At/P.O-Kashipur, Dist.-Rayagada - 765015,Orissa. Ph./Fax: 91-6865-285174

Bhubaneswar Office: ND-8, V.I.P Area, Nayapalli, IRC Village, Bhubaneswar – 751015, Orissa. Ph.: 91-674 - 2551123 , Fax: 91-674 -2551130, Email: info@agragamee.org

Agragamee works in the remote and inaccessible tribal areas of Kashipur block of Raygada district of Orissa. The area was once a mix deciduous forest. The best contribution towards this community was identified as vegetable cultivation and promptly taken up in 2004. Three hundred farmers from 15 villages in 3 panchayats brought 300 hectares of land under vegetable cultivation with the assistance of Agragamee. Farmyard manure, compost, vermicompost, poultry manure, mulching, oil cakes, fungal and bacterial preparations were built into the farming process.

Today, in less than 4 years, the production has gone up from 210 tons initially to 4,926 tons. The total acreage brought under cultivation now is 2,445 hectares. All this has been possible through adoption of integrated nutrient management techniques. There is a now demand from the tribal areas of Koraput, Kalahandi, Nabarangpur, Nuapada and Kandhamal districts to replicate the programme of introducing organic agriculture. Production has diversified into cereals, pulses, oil seed, spices, etc., as per market demand. Certification has come into a few farms from SKAL and STC India. The farmers are now forming cooperatives and corporations for collective marketing of their products. The area produces surplus organic onion, available for procurement.

Agragamee has adopted organic agriculture as a consistent system approach based on the perception that tomorrow’s ecology is more important than today’s economy.

(Source: ‘Problems and Prospects of Organic Farming – An experience of Agragamee.’)

BIOSOURCING.COM PVT LTD

A-41, Ashok Nagar, Bhubaneswar - 751 009, Orissa. Ph: 094 37016509, Fax: 067 4253-5509, Email: sales@biosourcing.com, Web: www.biosourcing.com & www.organic.co.in

Contact: Sidharth Routray Cell: 094370 16509. Anita Misra Cell: 094375-77324

Kui tribes from the jungles of the Eastern Ghats in India have believed that fertilisers and other chemicals are poisonous and should not have anything to do with their crop.

Biosourcing.com is working with these remote tribes of Orissa and delivering 100% organic products from farm to customer through an integrated process.

Certified organic products available are: spices, cereals, pulses, oil seeds, herbs and health food supplements.

Products are available as ‘Kui Organic’ and ‘Nature Natural.’

(Source: Leaflet and web research)

SAMBANDH

Plot : 2926/5198, Jayadevnagar, Lewis Road, Bhubaneswar-2

Tel: 0674-2436660 Fax : 0674- 2435550. Email: Sambandhindia@gmail.com

Contact: Mr. Bibhukalyan Mohanty – Cell: 09437024367, Biswaprakash Bhattachaya – Cell: 09437023082. Puspalata Pani – Cell: 09437444550.

SAMBANDH has initiated the PGS movement along with establishing an organic bazaar in Orissa. Sambandh publishes quarterly journals on sustainable agriculture and health. These are available on request.

(Source: Brochure and web research)

DR SHAMBU PRASAD

Xavier's Institute of Management, Xavier Square, Bhubaneswar - 751 013, India.

Phone:0674-3012345, Fax: 0674-2300995, Email: shambuprasad@gmail.com Web: www.ximb.ac.in

Dr. Shambhu Prasad has extensively documented work related to the SRI system of cultivation and has a database on these experiments. Some of the documentation and reports can be viewed online or one can request for copies by writing to him direct.

(Source: OFAI Archives)

AMBIKA MENON

c/o Gram Vikas, Mohuda Post, Berhampur – 760 001, Orissa.

(Source: ARISE)

JACINTHA VINCENT

Centre for Community Development, Ankoran Narayanapatna PO, Koraput – 765 114, Orissa.

(Source: ARISE)

SCMARCHALA NAHAK

Secretary, Rusikulya Rayat Mahasabha, Chatrapar, Ganjam - 761 020, Orissa. Ph.: 06811-262528, Cell: 09338059088

(Source: OFAI Archives)

ANNKURAN

Narayanapatna Post, Koraput district - 765014, Orissa. Ph: 06856 – 223147 (O), 222671 (R), 222297 (F), Fax: 06856 – 224264, Email: ankuran@rediffmail.com

(Source: OFAI Archives)

KASAM

Netaji Subash Bose Road, Phulbani, Kandhamal, Orissa. Ph.: 06842-253022, Fax: 06842-255206 Email: orissakasam@rediffmail.com/ orikasam@sancharnet.in, Web: www.kasamorganic.com

KASAM (Kandhamal Apex Spice Association for Marketing) has within its fold close to 12,000 indigenous organic spice farmers of the Khandamal hills of Orissa. It initially linked its operations to Government of India's Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (IJRY) to support adoption of modern organic farming methods with emphasis on growing high curcumin tumeric and low fibre ginger – aimed at the export market. The members being part of 61 local farmer groups benefited from capacity building processes that helped them regroup as KASAM at the end of IJRY project period.

Today they operate as a society for upgrading, purchasing, processing and marketing organic spices under the collective brand identity of KASAM.

KASAM's 5 acre central storage, processing, and business centre is a highly motivated marketing hub. It has complete business connectivity and is equipped with the full complement of processing equipment – cleaners, polishers, pulverisers, slicers, sieves – and has an installed packaging capacity of 2.8 MT a day.

(Source: Brochure & web)

PRADEEP KUMAR MOHAPATRA

Teacher, trainer/social activist, Bhimapur, Padmanabhapur, Ganjam - 761 007, Orissa

Has expertise in recycling farm wastes.

(Source: *Leisa India*, Sept 2007)