

# Farm – India

Annual Report 2006 – 2007

## Preface:

**“Ask not what the nation did for you: ask what you did for the nation”**. In fact this caption induced us to make our organization Farm India. (*Federation for Agricultural Research Methodologies*). Even though we keep agricultural methodologies in our name, we identify education as our major thrust area. However we continued our efforts in empowering our women folks and bringing Organic technologies to our farmers which should be the only way to give sustainability to their life.

The following works were done during this period.

### Education:

1. Enrolment Campaigns.
2. Environment programs.
3. Multimedia classes.
4. Supply of computers to member schools.
5. Language skill development.
6. “Thirukkural” Deepa
7. Kalvi Thiruvizha – Annual meet at Pudevadi Middle School.

### Organic Farming & Women Empowerment:

1. Training on Organic Farming.
2. Water Management programs.
3. Bamboo Cultivation.
4. Bamboo Mat production.
5. Napkin – Training & production

### Social Harmony:

1. Support to senior citizens.
2. “Kaman Pandigai” – A symbol of Social Harmony.

### [www.farmlandia.org](http://www.farmlandia.org) is on the web:

We wish to mention a special thanks to **SoftSirpy Infotech India Pvt Ltd**, Trichy for their help in designing and uploading our website [www.farmlandia.org](http://www.farmlandia.org).

## **Farm – India’s activities during 2006 – 2007:**

### **Education:**

#### **1. Enrolment Campaign:**

To bring new students to schools, we conducted enrolment campaigns together with the school teachers and other students. This is our regular program. This year we extended this campaign to most of our member schools.

We at Farm India continued our support to the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan program. The list of schools come under Nadupatti CRC Centre is listed as follows.

- a. Nadupatti Primary School
- b. Nadupatti Higher Secondary School (Middle section)
- c. Kalpatti Middle School
- d. Karaiyampatti Primary School
- e. Pudukkottai Middle School
- f. Pudevadi Middle School
- g. Pudevadi – Pudur Primary School
- h. Seekampatti Primary School
- i. Kalliankattupatti Model School
- j. Keeranur Primary School

The main problem in our region is poverty. Most of the families live under “Poverty-Line”. So obviously the parents want their children to take care of cattle or the infants at home so that they can go out for work to earn their livelihood. So it becomes really a tough job for the school teachers to explain the necessity for education. We from Farm India go to the villagers and convince them to put their children to the school.

#### **2. Environment Program.**

Environment is a major concern in the global context. But most of our students, even teachers are not aware about these issues. We can not just blame them for their ignorance. We need to bring knowledge and opportunities to our young minds.

As our Honorable President always says that the future of our country lies in the hands of these young children, we want to create awareness to them and we want to tell them that the earth is theirs. So they have to understand the implications of over exploitations of natural resources and degradation of soil, water and air due to pollutions

We organized Eco-Tours for Nadupatti primary school children. About 50 students and 5 teachers participated in this program. We have a routine to invite the 5<sup>th</sup> Standard students to this Eco-Tour so that when they enter High school / Middle school next year they have some knowledge in environment sciences.

Over a period of few years, we hope the entire student's community in our member schools is equipped with environment knowledge.

**GBM – Green Bag Movement:** As we mentioned in our earlier reports, we have successfully implemented this GBM during this academic year. We are very happy and proud of this movement.

We issue green color bags to all our students. In villages mostly students are the daily shoppers. But in most cases, plastic bags are used to carry goods. When one visits some of these remote villages, he or she can see used plastic carry bags everywhere, particularly in the agricultural fields. Unfortunately our people do not understand the implications of these plastics and how worst these plastics are.

So we have given orientation programs to our school children in environment and motivate them not to use plastics and train them on how to dispose plastics safely. Our students will insist the shop keepers to wrap the daily needs / goods in used newspapers and carry them using our Green Bags.

Thus, we have a dream to totally drive away the plastics from our villages within a period of 5 – 6 years, if not we will certainly reduce the usage of plastics.

**Supply of Tooth Brush:** Moreover we supplied tooth brushes to all students (from 1<sup>st</sup> Standard to 8<sup>th</sup> Standard) of Pudevadi Middle School to culture a habit of regular brushing habits among the school children. We intend to extend this program to all our member schools in coming years.

### **3. Multimedia Classes:**

Bringing multimedia classes to our member schools is becoming more and more popular in our region. Honestly, many of the neighboring schools who do not come under CRC centre, used to make comments that these school children (Nadupatti CRC Centre Schools) are really lucky because they have been supported by Farm India.

We are not mentioning it here just to boost ourselves but to emphasize the impact of bringing high-tech teaching methodologies to village schools.

When we use computers and DLP / LCD projectors to explain a complex phenomena or a scientific invention, it becomes easier for the teacher to make the students visualize the concept. We, in fact wish to extend our hands to all neighboring schools. But due to very limited resources, we are not able to do that.

Our Multimedia classes were conducted periodically in all our member schools in the following subjects.

1. Science & Technology
2. Inventions & Discovery
3. Environment Science
4. Latest development in Information Technology
5. World countries and cities
6. Moral stories and importance of Ethics
7. Freedom struggle and our great national leaders

We at Farm India strongly believe that molding the young generation with not only knowledge and wisdom but also with patriotism and good ethical values. High-tech teaching aids certainly help us in fulfilling these needs.

We are looking for partners who can help us in bringing this methodology to more number of schools and students.

#### **4. Supply of computers to member schools:**

Our aim is to create some interest of computer knowledge to our children. We thought arranging a personal computer to all our member school will help us in this project. During last year, we already arranged 3 personal computers to Nadupatti Higher Secondary School. It was really useful not only for the 12<sup>th</sup> Standard computer science students but also other students who are interested in computers.

This year we requested M/s Madras Cements Ltd., to help us to supply their used computers. We are grateful to Mr. Saravanaperumal, Vice President – Admin who took much pain to arrange three personal computers from their company. He not only arranged the computers, but also re-furbished all these PCs at his cost and brought them to our schools and installed all of them.

Mr. Saravanaperumal and Mrs. Gandhi Saravanaperumal joined us during our “Kalvi Thiruvizha 2006-2007” at Pudevadi Middle school and shared their happiness with our young children for the whole day.

They also promised that they will arrange computers to all our member schools during next academic year in addition to a cash assistance of INR 15000 per year which can be utilized for infrastructure build-up. Farm India solicits its heartiest thanks to this couple for their whole hearted support and involvement to our school children.

We will appoint a computer teacher next year who will travel to all our member schools at periodic intervals to teach our children in computers and applications. We expect over a period of 5 years, every student from our region will have enough basic knowledge of computers which is an unavoidable tool in modern life / profession.

## **5. Language skill development:**

Every year almost more than 60000 engineering graduates are coming out from various colleges and universities from Tamilnadu. But there are only 10% of them have a good communication ability. So they can easily find placements in reputed companies. So, we from Farm India plan to bring lessons to our poor village children, who otherwise do not have access to modern teaching methods. We want to appoint a special English teacher who can visit all our member schools to conduct spoken English classes.

Of course we will find one coordinator from each school who can follow up the exercises and can support our teacher in this program.

## **6. Thirukkural Deepa:**

We are so proud to announce one of our students from Kurumbapatti School (This school is not in Nadupatti CRC Center. However we are invited to attend many school functions in this school and the neighboring Sundakkampatti School) Deepa, nine years old girl whose parents are just agricultural workers will enter into the Guinness World of Records.

Deepa is able to recite all 1330 “Thirukkural” within 13 minutes. This means she takes only 0.59 seconds to speak out a “kural” which contains 7 words. The most fascinating point here is that she can tell the exact “Kural” if someone tells her the number such as 12, 135, 456 or 1157. She is preparing herself to understand the meanings for all 1330 “kurals”.

Farm India supports this child in bringing her excellence to more audiences. Moreover, we are seriously working on how to bring this to the Guinness World of Records.

## **7. Kalvi Thiruvizha – Annual meet at Pudevadi Middle School.**

As we mentioned in our earlier reports, Kalvi Thiruvizha is our prestigious program. We provide a platform for our poor school children to expose their cultural, artistic and sport skills. Moreover these children learn a great culture of integrity and team spirit during these kinds of Inter-School Meets.

This year, we organized “Kalvi Thiruvizha 2006-07” at Pudevadi middle school. All our member schools represented their presence in the occasion.

The following dignitaries joined us on this occasion other than our farm India members and school teachers.

Mr. Saravanaperumal, Vice President –Admin, Madras Cements.  
Mrs. Gandhi Saravanaperumal, Retired Reader, Parasakthi College, Courtalam.  
Mr. Sembian, Secretary, Arignar Anna Peravai, Chennai.  
Mr. Krishnamurthy, Mahatma Eye Hospital, Trichy.

We had the following programs on that day.

1. Science Exhibition
2. Sports for teachers & parents
3. Community Lunch
4. Computer Lab Inauguration
5. Cultural Programs
6. Launch of GBM (Green Bag Movement)
7. Prize distribution

We could see novel ideas from the young minds during the science exhibition. The primary school children created a model of a micro irrigation system based on a local river. This is what we wanted to happen.

Many children performed cultural programs and it was a great show. We want to continue this Kalvi Thiruvizha in coming years and we want to add more and more quality programs into this function.

## **Organic Farming & Women Empowerment:**

### **1. Training on Organic Farming:**

In today's agriculture, most of the farmers are in debt trap. They spend lot of money to buy fertilizers, pesticides, etc. If the crop fails or the market fails to fetch a reasonable price, then the farmer comes to a decision of committing suicide with his entire family. The reaction from the government or the society for these incidents is just some condolence or sympathy to the affected families. Even after so many actions taken from the government side, this problem continues.

We at farm India think in line with the Natural way of farming or living. We conducted a field study on growing tomatoes by adopting both ways of farming. We selected the same field belonging to the same farmer.

**Conventional Farming:** Hybrid tomatoes were grown in 0.25 acre of land following all recommendations by the seed manufacturer. We followed an N: P: K = 100:100:80 kgs per hectare and sprayed all needed pesticides and fungicides as per their requirement. We could harvest about 3000kgs and we got a reasonable price of INR 5 per kilo and the total revenue / turnover was INR 15000. If someone from outside looks at this, he or she will be certainly amazed. But when you see the total cost involved, you start rubbing yourself.

Yes, we spent almost INR 12000 including, fertilizer, pesticide, etc. So, the net income was only INR 3000.

**Organic Farming:** We planted the same hybrid tomatoes (normally it is believed that hybrid tomatoes can not be grown organically) in the other plot of 0.25 acre following Organic technology. We applied, *Vermi compost, Pancha Kawya, Amutha Karaisal*, etc. But to substantiate flowering and fruit setting, we applied 0.1 ppm solution of *Natural Brassinolides* at two intervals. We could get almost 2200 kgs and the total revenue generated was INR 11000 where as the total cost involved including PGR spray, labor cost on preparing Vermi compost, etc was only INR 2500. This means the net profit was INR 8500.

The story does not end here. In fact, when we conducted this study, we were fortunate to get INR 5 per kilo for our tomatoes. Just three months later, the tomato price had plunged to a down bottom of INR 1 per kilo.

One can imagine what will happen to a farmer who spent INR 12000 and could generate revenue of only INR 3000 where as in Organic farming the net loss was only few hundreds.

So we conducted few training programs on Organic agriculture emphasizing the following points.

1. Organic farming helps the farmer to control his / her cost.
2. It improves soil fertility.
3. Very low risk of getting into debt trap.
4. On a long run, Organic farming improves the sustainability of the whole farming Process and thus brings sustainability to farmers life.

Farm India helped our farming groups to participate in few training programs conducted by Uzhavar Thozhilnutpa Kazhagam, Sathiyamangalam which were very much useful for our farmers to understand and practice Organic farming.

## **2. Water Management:**

Development brings prosperity into our people's life. At the same time it also brings disasters to the same people. Trichy – Dindigul segment of broad-gauge conversion by Indian Railways is a very good example in this case.

Indian Railway made a valley of almost 30 - 40 meters deep for more than 7 kilometers. So the water table along this length went down below 40 meters where before excavation process, the water table was around 10 – 15 meters. Farmers using open-well were all forced to go for bore-well and now the water table is below 150 meters. The following villages were affected due to this project.

1. Kalpatti
2. Karaiyampatti
3. Kumarampatti
4. Pudukodi
5. Pudukottai

Many families left agriculture and migrated to places like Chennai, Thirupur, etc to make their livelihood as construction labors. This phenomenon also creates another social problem of leaving their children at home.

Anyway, we can not force the government to drop these kinds of projects to protect environment. But we conducted some special training programs to the farming groups from all these villages.

### **3. Bamboo Cultivation:**

When we visited China, we could find the usage of bamboo in farming in an extensive manner. The Chinese use bamboo as fencing, support for creepers and other vegetables like tomatoes, etc. This certainly helps the farmers in improving their quality of cultivation, thus increase in the quality of produces.

But in India the bamboo species cultivated are having too many thorns and they grow as dense bushes. It becomes very difficult to cut even a single bamboo from the bush. So in India, bamboo cultivation is not at all popular among our farmers. We have been studying various aspects of bringing / developing similar bamboo varieties to our farmers.

In this context, Farm India arranged a fact finding cum learning tour to Kerala Forest Research Institute, Peechi. We met specialists in thorn-less bamboo varieties including Dr. Seethalakshmi of KFRI who is supposed to be an authority in Indian bamboos. We plan to work closely with KFRI and other like minded farming groups to bring user friendly thorn-less bamboo varieties to our farmers.

### **4. Bamboo Mat Production:**

Farm India successfully continues its bamboo mats production unit for the third consecutive year. Twenty women from local SHGs are running this business where as Farm India helps them in the following lines.

1. New technology – Training
2. Transport of input raw materials and finished goods
3. Accounting & marketing

As we mentioned in our last year report, we were successful in forming a bamboo processing unit by our supporting people. This unit will be purely a private company but will help our women groups in supplying quality / modern raw materials.

We also have bigger chances to introduce our products into International markets in our own brand name. This means more profit to our SHGs.

### **5. Napkin – Training & Production:**

We identified Sanitary Napkin as one of our major thrust area to create the habit of using hygienic products by our local folks and also generate more employment opportunities for our women by starting production units. We supported our SHGs to impart training by various organizations. We sincerely thank the following organizations for their support in this program.

1. Padikal Trust, Dindigul
2. Women Trust, Keeranur
3. Jayashree Industries, Coimbatore
4. Nichi-In Biosciences, Chennai
5. K.P.Agencies, Sivakasi

We would like to mention a special thanks to Mr.Pounrajan, Partner, K.P.Agencies, Sivakasi who provided support in printing the outer wrapper for our Napkin.

We also started pilot production and supplied samples to various hospitals, medical stores in addition to our own women groups. The market feed back is excellent. When compared with other SHG products and also commercial brands in this category, our **“Mangaiyar Choice”** brand Napkin fetches good rapport from the customers. We are still studying various aspects like, Aqua pearl gel, Medicated cotton, releasing paper & gum, etc and fine-tuning the total process of manufacturing a versatile sanitary napkin which should be not only of high quality but also cost effective.

We have to go for mass production in coming year engaging our new SHG comprising of another 20 local women. We plan to take the help of the following donor organization to support us providing necessary monetary support in this program.

**M/s Weltgebetstag der Frauen Deutsches Komitee e.V**  
**Deutenbacher Str. 1. 90547 Stein**  
**Postfach 1240, 90544 Stein,**  
**Germany.**

## **Social Harmony:**

### **1. Support to Senior Citizens:**

We continue our support to our local senior citizens by providing them with food and more specifically moral support. We are seriously looking forward to donors with whom we can build our “*Old-Age Home*” where we can accommodate our elders and give them a relatively peaceful life.

### **2. Kaman Pandigai – A symbol of Social Harmony:**

This festival is our prestigious function. This year also, we could celebrate this festival in a grand manner with the support of all our local people cutting across the society. We have been sponsoring the whole festival right from the inception of our organization. Now there are many local public show interests in extending their hands to make this festival more successful.

This makes our job easier. In coming years, we expect a local team comprising youths and seniors from our Panchayat should form a committee themselves to organize the entire programs of this festival.

Going online should also help us in bringing the message to International community.

### **Conclusion:**

We have been successful in achieving the following issues.

1. Extending quality education to the under-privileged school children.
2. Imparting special training programs on environmental issues.
3. Identifying special skills (Thirukkural Deepa) from rural areas and support them.
4. We have successfully started supplying personal computers to our member schools.
5. Improving the quality of bamboo mats production.
6. Successfully completed the training & pilot production of our “*Mangaiyar Choice*” Sanitary Napkin.
7. GBM commencement.
8. Kalvi Thiruvizha & Kaman Pandigai.

We wish to record our sincere thanks to all our supporters, farming groups, SHGs, and one and other extended their helping hands to Farm India.

***We Love Nature & God***