

Participating Farmers

- Mr.Saravanan Vadakkumadevi, (P.O.) Perambalur
- Mr.D.Sankar, Aranarai (P.O.) Perambalur
- Mr.Gunasekaran, Vadakkumadevi, Perambalur
- Ms.N.Rajeswari, Karattampatti, Tiruchirapalli
- Ms.G.Anjana devi, Karattampatti, Tiruchirapalli
- Ms.Malarkodi, Perumathurkudikadu, Perambalur
- Mr.Jeyakumar, Sellimpalayam (via), Perambalur
- Ms.Vijayalakshmi, Manbarai, Tiruchirapalli
- Mr.D.Duraisamy, Kunnam, Perambalur
- Ms.Geetha, Pulivalam, Musiri (Block), Musiri (Taluk), Tiruchirapalli
- Ms.T.Dhanam, Vazhavandhi, Tiruchirapalli
- Ms.Thamilarasi, Manbarai, Tiruchirapalli
- Ms.Vijayalakshmi, Karattampatti, Tiruchirapalli
- Mr.Jayavel, Kudikadu
- Mr.Dhanasekar, Mangalam therkumedu
- Mr.Mahendran, Perumathurkudikadu, Perambalur

Feedback

This programme helps us to recollect and implement those practices which conserve the natural resources. The multiple uses of inter crops which you had dealt with, reminded me of an old proverb which shows the importance of inter crops in meeting the nutritional needs of the family.

- Vanoli piriai, Namakkal

This programme delivered by AMEF is very much useful for students like me, self employed persons and farmers.

- T. Anand, Student, Thalaimalaipatti, Tiruchirapalli

Your programme is wonderful. I extend my gratitude to AMEF, AIR and Agriculture Department.

- Santhalumar, Kovilvenni, Thiruvarur

AME Foundation

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Mahilchi tharum maanavaari

'Drylands bring joy'



AMEF-AIR collaborative Farm School Programme

A 13-week serial programme with a difference



AME Foundation promotes ecological agriculture among small and marginal farmers in the semi arid areas of the Deccan Plateau. It identifies five key tasks. These key tasks include creating an eco-farming base, working with Eco Network Partners, fostering LEISA initiatives, building linkages with like minded institutions and sharing experiences through documentation and dissemination. AMEF-AIR coordinated programme is one of the dissemination activities of the Foundation.

Genesis

A documentation workshop for NGO staff was organized in July 2005. Several mass media representatives were invited. During the workshop, the representative from All India Radio (AIR), Tiruchi expressed keen interest in covering AMEF activities in the Farm programme of AIR. Subsequently, three episodes of farmers' sharing their experiences in dryland Natural Resource Management (NRM) and Natural Resource Utilisation (NRU) were aired by AIR, which evoked good response from farmers. It was then a collaboration between AME and AIR for a holistic (Farm School on AIR) programme on livelihood improvement of dryland farmers was conceptualised and launched.

Participatory programme development

Preparatory activities included a live phone-in programme to get the views of farmers. A workshop with representatives from the University, Research institutions, credit agencies etc, was organised. Based on the farmers views and workshop inputs, a curriculum was developed.

Prime time coverage

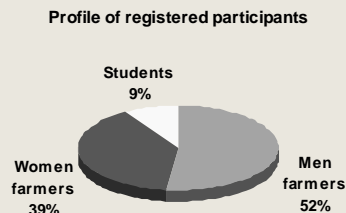
The 13-week programme starting from 20.03.2006 was aired during the prime time of AIR, Tiruchi i.e., 7.25 pm. The duration of each episode of the programme was 30 minutes.

Curriculum

The topics covered included various aspects of dryland NRM and NRU, income generation and available government and banking schemes.

Novel contact programme

Farmers who were interested to know more about the aired content registered themselves by paying a nominal registration fee. Around 1100 farmers from 22 districts registered for the programme which included 101 school children. These registered farmers participated in a one day contact programme and received the course material and a certificate.



Programme uniqueness

- Specific focus on drylands
- Interactive lessons rather than straight talks
- Experience sharing by farmers as a part of every lesson
- Sharing information on various schemes by Department Officials
- A novel contact programme enabling interaction between experts and registered farmers
- Huge farmers' response considered by AIR to be a great achievement
- Production of a *booklet* containing the content of the thirteen week programme including relevant experiences of farmers
- Production of a priced *seasonal activity calendar* showcasing the Sustainable Agriculture activities, which became popular
- AIR-Tiruchi, for the first time, released the contents of the *Farm School on AIR* programme on a CD



Partners



- District Watershed Development Agency
- Department of Agriculture
- Veterinary University Res and Training center
- Department of Horticulture
- Khadi Village and Industries Corporation
- College of Agricultural Engineering

Resource Persons

AMEF - Tiruchi Area Unit Staff - Ms.B.Vijayalakshmi, Ms.M.R.Kalaivani, Ms.K.Gandhimathi, Mr.M.Lawrence

AMEF - Dharmapuri Area Unit staff - Mr.G.Ravi Kumar, Dr.G.Diraviam

Ms.Jayarani, Extension officer, District Watershed Devt Agency, Mannarpuram, Tiruchirapalli, Mr.Krishnasamy, Asst. Dir. of Agrl. Office of ADA, Keeranur, Pudukottai, Mr.Kamaldoss, Asst. devt officer, KVIC, Theppakulam, Tiruchirapalli, Dr.Babu, Veterinary University Res. and Training centre, Tiruchirapalli, Mr.Nazhankili Thenmozhi, Horticulture Officer, Dept. of horticulture, Thuraiyur Dr.Tajudeen, Professor and Head, College of Agricultural Engineering, Kumulur, Tiruchirapalli.