

## Documentation

Case Study Series-6, *Vermicomposting brings better yields and returns - A small farmer shows the way.*

Individual Factsheets of AMEF and its Area Units for the year 2006 were brought out during this period.

Mr. Ravindranath Reddy and Mr. Anil More, *Features of FFS*, in Adike Patrike.

J.Krishnan, *Indigenous knowledge systems*, Bio - Farm Newsletter.

Raichur Unit, *Training guideline on Farm Entrepreneurship development programme.*

Dharmapuri Unit has started a bimonthly newsletter in Tamil, *Vazhavaikkum Maanavaari.*

## LEISA India

Issue on "Knowledge building processes" was brought out during this period.

Ms. Edith van Walsum, the new Director of ILEIA and Mr. Jorge Chavez Tafur visited AMEF during 19-24 February 2007. They had discussions with the LEISA India team on the proposed activities, strategies and budgets for the period 2007-10.

## Visitors

Dr. John Rogers, Australia and Dr. Anita, ICRISAT, Hyderabad visited Raichur Unit on 8-9 Feb 07 to know the status of the White grub project to study the impact of white grub management. They interacted with the farmers of Jambaldinni and Puchaladinni villages. Dr. John Rogers earlier visited Madanapalli area during 6-7 February for the same purpose.

.....

## AMEF - AREA UNITS

**MADANAPALLI:** II-253-D-7, Colony Ring Road, Chittoor District, Madanapalli - 517 325 Andhra Pradesh Ph: 08571 222943 & 227137  
[amef\\_mpl@yahoo.co.in](mailto:amef_mpl@yahoo.co.in) / [amefmpl\\_7@yahoo.co.in](mailto:amefmpl_7@yahoo.co.in)

**TIRUCHI:** No. 37, EVR Road, K.K. Nagar, Tiruchirappalli - 620 021, Tamil Nadu Ph: 0431-2458726 / 2455408  
[amefoundation@dataone.in](mailto:amefoundation@dataone.in) / [ameftry@yahoo.co.in](mailto:ameftry@yahoo.co.in)

**RAICHUR:** 1-3-309, R.R. Colony, Asapur Road, Raichur - 584 101 Karnataka Ph: 08532 228895 / 226917  
[amefrai@yahoo.co.in](mailto:amefrai@yahoo.co.in) / [amef\\_rai@yahoo.co.in](mailto:amef_rai@yahoo.co.in)

**BELLARY:** "Brindavana" No.161, Near Sanjay Gandhi Rural Polytechnic college, Sanjay Gandhi Nagar, Bellary - 583103 Karnataka Ph: 08392 268558/268337  
[amefbellary@yahoo.co.in](mailto:amefbellary@yahoo.co.in) / [amefbly@sancharnet.in](mailto:amefbly@sancharnet.in)

**BIJAPUR:** 159/2A, Behind Darbar High School, Asar Mohal Area, Bijapur - 586101 Karnataka Ph: 08352 258055/ 2462610  
[amefbjp@sancharnet.in](mailto:amefbjp@sancharnet.in) / [amefbijapur@yahoo.co.in](mailto:amefbijapur@yahoo.co.in)

**MAHABUBNAGAR:** Plot No. 68 & 69, H. No. 4 - 88, Bhutpur Road, Mahabubnagar 509 001 Andhra Pradesh Ph: 08542 -275126/275100  
[amefmhb@gmail.com](mailto:amefmhb@gmail.com) / [amefmhb@yahoo.co.in](mailto:amefmhb@yahoo.co.in)

**DHARMAPURI:** No. 3/11, Erikarai Road, Pidamaneri, Dharmapuri - 636 701 Tamil Nadu Ph: 04342 280135  
[amef\\_dpi@dataone.in](mailto:amef_dpi@dataone.in) / [amef\\_dpi@yahoo.co.in](mailto:amef_dpi@yahoo.co.in)

Mr. Theodor Bergmann, Germany and Mr. LiWeimin, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, China, visited Mittamalapalli and ToF Training Center in Madanapalli area and appreciated AMEF's commitment towards SA promotion.

South Sudan Team from CONCERN World Wide and Japan Asian Association Friendship Society (JAFFS), its network members and 35 students and 6 scientists from Agriculture College, Bijapur visited Bijapur AU. They visited the MToF training centre and the cluster villages to understand SA activities and methodologies adopted.

Dr. Francesca of FAO visited Dharmapuri Unit during 14 and 17 March 2007. She facilitated the FFS follow up workshop and the Sustainable Livelihood Analysis (SLA) study for assessing the impact of MToF and FFS on SHG women.

Mr. Sudhakar, Infrasy, USA, visited Milaganatham of Perambalur in Tiruchi district to explore opportunities for energy conservation programme.

A team from Second Green Foundation, USA visited Tiruchi Unit to know about AMEF's intervention and impact on sustainable agriculture in dry land farming systems.

Mr. Suresh, AGM, NABARD visited Minagonapalli in Mahabubnagar and interacted with the farmers about the SA practices adopted in paddy.


Ms. Veronique Lucas, a Journalist from France visited Raichur AU on 7-8 February 07. She interacted with Puchaladinni farmers, to understand the LEISA practices adopted by them and the impact it has made.

Faculty from IOWA State University (ISU), USA, visited AMEF Bangalore on 6 January 2007, along with Dr. Chengappa, Professor, UAS. They discussed about the possibility of ISU students visiting AMEF for an exposure on international agriculture.

.....

To,

From:

 No. 204, 100 ft. Ring road, 3rd Phase, Banashankari 2nd Block, 3rd Stage, Bangalore - 560 085 Ph: 080-26699512, 26699522 Fax: 91-80-26699410  
[amebang@viasbg01.vsnl.net.in](mailto:amebang@viasbg01.vsnl.net.in); [amefbang@amefound.org](mailto:amefbang@amefound.org) Website: [amefound.org](http://amefound.org)

**AME Foundation** promotes ecological agriculture among small and marginal farmers in the semi arid areas of the Deccan Plateau by generating farming alternatives, enriching farmers knowledge, linking development agencies and sharing experience.



With the crops being harvested, the activities in this period were focused more towards assessing crop performance and sharing experience. Also, this period witnessed intensive preparations for the next season and sharing of work plans with farmers and partner organisations.

Efforts in scaling up SA activities has been the focal activity. The period is marked with a number of capacity building activities like meetings, workshops and training events for the internal staff as well as for AMEF partners. The growing visibility of AMEF is reflected in terms of increasing number of visitors to AMEF during this period.

## Field activities

In **Tiruchi**, the maize varietal trials included the ruling hybrids and Co-1 variety. Co-1 variety performed well in terms of grain weight and savings in seed cost, though the yields across varieties did not vary much. The grain weight was 250 grams from a single cob in Co-1 while it was 216 grams in hybrids. Also as farmers could save on the seed cost (Co-1 was Rs.15 Per Kg while the hybrid was Rs.100 by per Kg), they decided to go in for seed production of Co-1 variety.

Around twenty-five farmers from five villages in **Dharmapuri** have taken up Tapioca trials on improved management practices, rain water conservation methods, soil fertility up gradation and varietal performance assessment among H-226 (ruling cultivar), Co-2, Co-3 and Co-4. Under the trials, soil testing, sett treatment with biofertilisers, sett hardening, border planting with bajra, compartmental bunding were some of the SA practices adopted. With no rainfall during this quarter, the impact of in-situ rain water management measures is yet to be observed.

The raised bed method is becoming popular among tomato farmers in **Madanapalli** area. Farmers have found this method useful as the germination rate is good, seedlings are healthy



Maize field under trials-in Tiruchi

and incidence of damping off disease is low. A farmer from an eco-farming group in **Eguvachennamari** village, used the raised bed technique and produced 10,000 seedlings, which he supplied to his fellow farmers.

In **Bellary**, pisciculture is catching up as an income generating activity. About 45 farmers across 24 villages, have adopted this activity and are finding it remunerative. *Catla* variety was found promising as compared to *Rohu* and *Mrugal*, in terms of growth. Further, the fishes in the pond have been attracting birds, helping in managing crop pests.

Farmers of **Gadar, Kamalapur** and **Nagalapur** villages in **Raichur** have gone in for deep ploughing in deep black soils after harvesting sorghum, bengalgram and cotton.

Farmers of 14 villages in **Bijapur** have taken up varietal trials in sorghum. *DSA-4, Muguthi* and *M35-1* are the three new varieties tested with the local variety as a check. In 10 villages *M35-1* performed well with higher grain yield than *DSV-4* and *Muguthi*. In other 4 villages *DSV-4* variety has yielded more grain. *M35-1* has given better fodder yield in majority of the villages.

About 21 Sorghum Field Days were organised across 4 taluks in Bijapur district, as a part of IToF programme. More than 3000 farmers participated, of which 771 were women. Farmers shared their learning on soil and water conservation, soil fertility improvement practices and how these practices contributed to enhanced crop yield.

In **Mahabubnagar**, 50 farmers have taken up protective water management practices for horticulture plants under the Greening the Drylands programme. Farmers have fenced the plants with locally available material to prevent grazing.

## Study tours

More than 60 farmers from **Turkandona, Navalkal, Narubhandi, Hamingad, Goudur, Jadaldinni** and **Veergota** villages of Raichur visited the eco farming base in Puchaladinni, a cluster village. Farmers could see various soil and water conservation and soil fertility enhancement models in the village.



Farmers during their visit to Bellary area to know about ericulture

Farmers and ENP staff from Mahabubnagar visited working area of Bellary Unit during 11-12 February, where Ericulture is being promoted on a large scale. The study visit motivated farmers to take up the Ericulture activity in Kharif 2007.

### Working with partners

Raichur Unit organised a week-long Refresher Training of Facilitators (R-ToF) to strengthen ENP staff and lead farmers capacity to facilitate FFS. The training programme was conducted at KVK, Raichur.

A two-day FFS followup workshop was organised in Dharmapuri on 16-17 March, to identify the role of institutions like SHG and Community Managed Resource Centre (CMRC) in promoting large-scale adoption of Sustainable Agriculture practices. About thirty-three participants including practice FFS farmers and trained facilitators of MYRADA participated.

Bellary Unit in collaboration with the Agriculture Department organised a District Level Workshop on Post Harvest Processing of Agriculture Products on 4-5 January 2007. Around 68 farmers from cluster and ENP villages participated. Two farmers made use of this training by setting up a paper-plate making unit in Sandur taluk and a small-scale flour mill at K.B Hatti.

Raichur Unit in collaboration with CEDOK Dharwad trained 38 SHG members from *Deodurga* and *Manvi* taluks, on *Farm Entrepreneurship Development*. A field visit to cluster villages was organised to show them the SA practices adopted by the farmers.

Bijapur Unit in collaboration with CEDOK, trained 22 farmers of *Muttagi*, *Nagawad*, *Takkalaki* and *Uppaladinni* villages, on *Farm Entrepreneurship Development*, from 22-25 January 2007.

In collaboration with Agriculture Department, Bellary Unit trained 50 farmers in cotton production technologies on 6-7 February 2007 at Kolar.

Refresher training on *Gender in Sustainable Agriculture* was organised on 22-23 February for ENP staff in Bijapur. ENP staff critically analysed the role of men and women in agriculture and constraints faced by women in carrying out agriculture activities. Gender sensitive action plans were prepared.



### Training of Facilitators (ToF) commences in Madanapalli

The season long ToF on Integrated Farming Systems for livelihood improvement commenced on 19 January 2007 at the OUTREACH Training Center, near Madanapalli, Andhra Pradesh. The programme was inaugurated by Dr. Krishnakumar, Chairman, Madanapalli Institute of Technology & Science, and Mr. Shankara Naik, Project Co-coordinator, OUTREACH.

The focus of ToF is broadened to include farming systems. Though the main crop is tomato, crops like groundnut and castor are also included for creating more learning opportunities for the participants. Other components like groundnut seed production, livestock management, ground water management, fisheries, ericulture and other allied activities are being dealt as a part of IFS.

A five-member team (FAO trained) including 4 AMEF staff and one from DoA, Karnataka, is facilitating the ToF. Around 34 participants including 29 men and 5 women are being trained. The participants are undergoing residential training for five days a week and are conducting the practice FFS on the sixth day. Around 300 farmers are being reached through practice FFS in 15 villages.

As the programme has completed about 11 weeks, there are interesting learning and impacts being observed. For instance, through a short study on azolla, participants learnt that azolla grows well where soil and cowdung are used and the weight of the chicks improved by 450 grams, when they were fed with azolla.

The impact of PFFS conducted by ToF participants is clearly visible in Cluster villages. The cluster village farmers adopted 4 new SA practices like raised bed in tomato, vermicompost pit method, tomato seedling treated with panchagavya, spraying of Bordeaux mixture, with promising good results.



ToF participants observing tomato seedlings in raised bed nurseries



### Innovative Training of Facilitators (IToF) programme concludes in Bijapur

The season-long MToF for training facilitators on FFS methodology on *Livelihood Improvements on the Drylands* concluded on 18 February 2007.

The five months of intensive training programme has brought out many useful lessons. As many as 29 staff members of ENPs are trained on sorghum FFS with focus on critical issues in dryland agriculture, like on-farm rainwater management, soil fertility improvement, dealing with crops and cropping systems, the need for increased generation of biomass and to supplement their income with allied income generation activities. More than 500 farmers have been reached through practice FFS.

A Valedictory function was organised on 8 February 2007. The Chief Guest, Dr. J H Kulkarni, Vice Chancellor of UAS Dharwad appreciated the programme and issued Graduation certificates to the IToF participants. An exhibition was organised wherein participants set up stalls to showcase their learning in IToF. Stalls exhibited information on technical aspects like long term experiments, Agro-ecosystem analysis, insect zoo, Sustainable Agriculture model and some short studies taken up during the IToF.



A women farmer explaining about the production of bio-agents to MToF participants during the Study Tour

### Fostering LEISA initiatives

More than 60 officers from the Watershed Department, Andhra Pradesh, were trained on SA at CSWCRTI, Bellary. Participants understood the importance of integrating SA activities with watershed activities for better effectiveness.

Dharmapuri Unit trained 30 participants consisting of farmers and staff of DEEPS, an NGO on the key operations in Sustainable Agriculture. The training was organised by DEEPS on 21 March.

Bellary Unit organised a one-day orientation on SA for the members of Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRI) of the working villages. More than 110 PRI members were oriented in various programmes organised at Molakalmuru, Rampura, Pujarahalli, Chilakanahatti and Bandri.



### Radio Talks

#### Bellary Unit

*Azolla production* by Mr. Megeri

*IPM in Onion crop* by Mr. Sangamesh

*IPM in Chickpea crop* by Mr. S.N Joshi

*Ericulture* by Mr. C.S Kallimani

#### Bijapur Unit

*AMEF Experience in Promoting SA - Azolla as a fodder supplement* by Mr. S. N. Doni

*Gender in Agriculture and Women in Agriculture* by Ms. Bhavani

*Soil and Water Conservation through FFS* by Mr. Sathish Pattepur

INDO Trust, a network partner in Tiruchi, reached around 490 farmers through its trainings on SA to the groups under Nehru Yuva Kendra and as a part of the NSS Camp organised by Dhanalakshmi Engineering College at Perambalur.

Raichur Unit oriented 18 students from the Agriculture College and 50 Pre-University students from Sankanur village, on SA concepts.

On request from the Agriculture Department, Raichur Unit trained SHG women on *Agri-enterprise* under the WYTEP programme, on 13 March 2007.

### Participation in Workshops

As an internal capacity building programme, a Training on Basic Moderation Skills was organised during 19-23 February 2007 at SEARCH Training Center, Bangalore. Around 25 participants including 20 from AMEF and 5 from ENPs participated.

Ms. G. Hemalatha and Mr. A. Balaji participated in a Training on Micro finance, organised by IRMA, Anand during 22-25 January 2007.

Mr. M. Lawrance participated in the Workshop on Documentation of Traditional ITK's during 8-12 March 2007 at Center of Science for villages, Kumarappapuram, Wardha. The Workshop was organised to discuss the processes and methodologies for ITK Documentation.

Mr. Shyam and Mr. Yallappa were invited as resource persons for the training on Bio Fuel Production on 24 March 2007, at Agriculture College, Raichur.

Ms. Swaruparani was invited as a resource person for the workshop on "Participatory Knowledge Management" for NVA Fellows at MS Swaminathan Research Foundation, Coimbatore on 14-17 February.