

ALTER MEDIA

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Alter Media (AM) is a one stop shop for eco friendly products and alternative literature. Started way back in 1987, attention was then focused on the publishing and distribution of books related to alternate approaches which helped to transform the sensibilities of the discerning reader.

Over time it has evolved, and having transcended the stage of mere distribution and propagation of such ideas it now concentrates on producing, sharing/distributing eco products and thus reaching the potential user in both the rural and urban areas. A M wishes to promote alternative rural systems to stem the onslaught of modern, industrialised methods.

Imbibing the idea of a diet that rhymes with changing seasons, A M distributes traditional herbal porridge during the month of Karkkidakam (July-August) so as to encourage a health-conscious society that is nourished by its own immediate surroundings.

(Source: Communication with OIP)

ELEMENTS

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elements is a business initiative that attempts to bridge the physical as well as emotional distance between the sensitive farmer/ producer and the conscious consumer.

A stone's throw away from the beach in Calicut (Kozhikode), Kerala, is a unique and very interesting store called elements. The store was set up to give an impetus to the organic farming movement in India by providing visibility to organic producers and their products.

Entering the store barefoot on coir matted floor instantaneously takes you on to a peaceful, non-hurried, non-consumerist, needful purchasing experience. As you browse through the shelves

you are astonished to find wares ranging from freshly delivered string beans and bitter gourd to grains and lentils, natural cosmetics, organic cotton and books. The food items on the shelves are grown organically, without chemical fertilizers or pesticides and are processed without artificial additives. The craft section mainly has cane, bamboo and paper products as elements considers these material to be more fitting the eco-friendly definition than stone, metal or terra cotta that involve intensive ecological destruction during production. Packaging, although utilitarian is still an issue and to avoid wasteful packaging, elements offers its customers discounts when they bring in their shopping bags and also when they choose to buy things loose.

elements deals both in certified and non certified organic produce. Each product is identified by the farm from where it is sourced and the details of the farmer/producer provides easy traceability.

Organic vegetables, fruits and grains are the main focus of elements and it has a steady clientele built over the past ten years that sustains the store. Mango lovers eagerly await the March-May months when elements gets the tastiest mangoes of the season from Anuragham and a few other organic farms from the southern region.

A second outlet with a coffee shop on one of the busiest city roads hopes to inspire a sense of reverence towards nature, which elements believes can alone upturn the indigence of a weary cityscape. And we wish Elements all the goodwill in their endeavour.

Box

Tomy & Seepja, who started Elements in 1999, have this to say in a nutshell of their decade long experience in marketing of organic produce:

Presently Elements seems a complete store as it offers a wholesome basket of organic food products (except milk, milk products, meat and poultry though!). Elements' strength lies in the fact that we never shied away from dealing with perishables and unlike many other organic stores that end up stacking honey, rice and preserves, where the shelf life is comparatively easier to manage, our store has steadily increased its offer of seasonal vegetables and fruits. Since we

consume everything that we sell, we realize how important variety is and that reflects on our shelves as well.

Dealing with organic farmers and farmer organizations has been a crucial aspect. Since organic/ness and marketing do not readily go hand in hand, it was a tight rope act trying to balance supplies, infestation and timely payments during the initial phase. Things are certainly better as the customer base has considerably improved and we now have multiple supply sources. Parameters of conventional marketing do not apply when we deal with organic products as sensitivity towards ecology is paramount and every step is a challenge. Element's corporate philosophy tries to encompass our 'marketing strategy':

1. The determining characteristic of all our business endeavours is 'organic' and 'fair' – the former denoting our relationship with the larger universe and the latter, the relationship with our fellow human beings.
2. We constantly strive to reduce the size of the 'environmental footprint' of the goods and services we deal in.
3. We seek to uphold principles of equity and fair play in dealing with our various stakeholders. This includes affirmative action in favour of primary producers of goods and services and preferential commercial dealings with those disadvantaged by global commerce.
4. We seek to define afresh and continuously extend the boundaries of corporate social responsibility and ensure that our business objectives are not merely aligned to but dictated by our responsibility as a corporate citizen.
5. We seek to set standards and serve as a benchmark for North- South business partnerships anchored on mutual respect, cultural sensitivity and global economic justice.

(Source: Seepja)

PDS ORGANIC SPICES

Peermade Development Society, Valanjanganam, Kuttikanam P.O., Peermade 685 531,
Idukki Dist, Kerala. Ph: 04869 233988/ 233989, Fax: 04869 233 875, Email:
pdsexports@sancharnet.in, Web: www.pdsorganicspice.com

PDS is a three decade old organisation working on integrated rural sustainable development issues through various programmes in organic farming, watershed management, womens groups, marketing of organic products etc.

The Peermade Development Society has pioneered organic cultivation of spices in India.

The PDS range of organic spices include ginger, turmeric, clove, nutmeg, mace, cardamom, vanilla, garcinia, black pepper and white pepper.

Seed spices like coriander, celery, cumin, fennel and fenugreek are in the process of organic certification.

Several more spices are to be brought under organic cultivation in a phased programme.

PDS has been declared as a Centre for Excellence by the Department of Science & Technology, Government of India. CAPART, another organization in the Government of India's Ministry for Rural Areas & Employment, has made the Society its Resource Centre & Nodal Agency for South India. It works closely with the Spices Board of India in regard to programmes on organic spice production and export.

Product List: Black Pepper (Steam Sterilised, Malabar/Tellichery Grades/Ground), White Pepper (Steam Sterilised, Whole/Ground), Turmeric(Steam Sterilised, Whole/Ground), Ginger (Steam Sterilised, Whole/Sliced/Ground), Nutmeg, Mace, Clove, Cardamom, Thyme, Rosemary, Oregano.

(Source: Brochure)

MATHEW MOOTHEDATH

Moothedathu house, Arakkulam P.O., Thodupuzha, Idukki - 685 591, Kerala. Ph.: 04862 25201.

Making and promoting various agrobased value added food products

Food syrups like pineapple, naruneendi, ginger, nutmeg, vilumbica wine, banana wine

Pickles – mango, nutmeg, lemon, ginger, papaya

Planting medicinal plants and herbs

(Source: Rony Joseph)

AVT NATURAL PRODUCTS LTD

S. Vazhakulam, Marampilly PO, Aluva 683 107, Ernakulam District, Kerala. Ph.: 0484 2677262/2677263, Dir: 0484 2677384, Res: 0484 2314429, Fax: 0484 2677512, Email: Thomas_kadavan@avtspice.com

Contact: M.Thomas Kadavan, General Manager

(Source: Brochure)

KERALEEYAM KALAVARA – Green Channel and Eco Shop

Municipal Market Building, Kokkalai, Thrissur 21, Kerala. Ph.: 0487 2421385 (O) /0480 2720144 (R), Email: keraleeyam_kalavara@rediffmail.com

Contact: C.A. Robin

(Source: Brochure)

MATA AMIRTANANDAMAYI ASHRAM

Amirtapuri P.O., Karunagapally, Kollam Dist. 690525, Kerala. Cell: 09895459746

POABS SAFE FOODS

TC 11/769 (4), Green Valley Road, Plamood, Pattom P.O., Thiruvananthapuram – 4, Kerala. Ph: 0471 3293022