



Fair Trade Alliance Kerala (FTAK) is a small farmer organisation consisting of 4500 farmers that has made a mark in the hilly tracts of Malabar by procuring from its members agricultural commodities like cashew, coffee, spices, coconut, etc. at prices that match the cost of sustainable production. Born at the peak of the agrarian crisis in Kerala, the organisation initially focused on remunerative prices and fair market access.

In a span of 6 years the organisation has managed to build on this and engender sustainable farming practices. The entire membership is in to organic farming – it is by far the single largest group of organic farmers in Kerala.

For the years 2012-15 FTAK has adopted the themes Biodiversity, Food Security and Gender Justice titled the Fair Trade + 3 agenda:



The organisational mandate which the organisation adopted at its General Assembly in December 2011, reads:

“By 2015 we will steward thirty thousand acres of homestead farms to conditions that are near akin to a tropical rainforest. The ten thousand farming families that will rally around in this effort will be net food suppliers. Women will assert their due role and space both in the management of the homestead farming economy and in the governance of Fair Trade Alliance Kerala.”

It is in line with this overarching organisational mandate and more particularly its food security angle that Fair Trade Alliance Kerala is organising ***Vithum Kaikottum - Seed Festival*** from April 11 to 13 at Kelakam village in the Kannur district of Kerala. The organisation has embarked on the initiative under the firm belief that it can recapture the food security of the farming households and community only if it can achieve ***seed swaraj*** in its truest sense.

The seed festival is envisaged as a focused effort at displaying, exchanging and preserving all sorts of seeds, planting material, indigenous livestock, medicinal plants, indigenous and wild trees etc. The Seed Fest will also be a venue for the sharing of experiences and knowledge related to preservation and propagation of indigenous seeds. While the effort will be led by 4500 farmer members of FTAK it is visualized as an inclusive initiative that will be embraced by the sensitive farming community in the Malabar region of Kerala.

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