

## **Organic Farmers and Farms in Assam**

### **ORGANIC FARMERS ASSOCIATION OF ASSAM**

Sonapur - Khetri Citrus Project

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OFAA was established in the year 2003 by a dynamic civil-servant and administrator, A.K Absar Hazarika, with Anil Boro as Secretary, and L N Mahanta as Honorary Adviser. The Society now has over 1,600 registered farmers. OFAA's technical team comprises graduates and postgraduates in agricultural and horticultural sciences, who provide technical know-how to farmers, and manage nurseries of citrus, medicinal and aromatics plants.

The Sonapur Citrus farm-belt:

Located at Sonapur, just 50 kilometres from Guwahati - the capital of India's northeastern province of Assam - the Sonapur citrus farm-belt covers over 2,000 hectares of hilly and virgin land.

Field visits and in-depth studies of the area's rainfall, topography and soil were conducted by horticultural experts from the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Assam Agricultural University (AAU) which revealed that the soil was virgin, and untouched by chemical fertilisers or pesticides. It was, so to say, organic by default.

In 2006, OFAA's Sonapur farm-belt was accorded 'organic certification' by SKAL International of The Netherlands.

Apart from ginger, chillies and vegetables over 6,00,000 saplings of khasi mandarins and rough lemon have been planted.

Assam has over 600 varieties of medicinal and aromatic plants; nurseries have been set up to explore large scale production of these plants.

Presently, a distillation plant for aromatic oils and a citrus juice extraction plant are being set up.

(Source: Vincent Darlong)

### **ABALI ORGANIC TEA ESTATE**

Chottagola A.T.Road, Dibrugarh 786001 Assam. Ph.: 0373-2302650, 2300495, Cell:

9435031097, E-mail: info@abaliorganictea.com, Web: www.abaliorganictea.com

Garden and factory: P.O.Roing, 792110, Dist: Lower Dibang Valley, Arunachal Pradesh.

Contact: Binod Saharia

The 65 hectare tea garden is located in the extreme North Eastern part of India (old North Eastern Frontier Agency, NEFA), in Arunachal Pradesh, known as the land of the rising sun.

This is also the land of Idu Mishmi and Adi Padum tribe who came centuries ago from China. This is where tea was first found in India by Robert Bruce and his brother C.A. Bruce, who was in charge of the British Gunboat division in the war with the Burmese occupying Assam in 1824.

Binod Saharia and his partners' decision to go organic was assisted by the timely intervention of Swami Valmiki Srinivasa Ayangarya who introduced the methods of Vrikshayurveda at the tea gardens in 2004.

Vrikshayurveda methods have improved the soil fertility, corrected mineral deficiencies, righted the pH balance of the soil and have almost eliminated heliopeltis, leaf blister and a host of other plant diseases and pests in the span of a little over a year!

More than 20 formulations have been developed using local vegetation; mostly wild fruits, grasses, leaves and weeds like guatemala grass, mechania, outenga, rabak tenga etc. Even

parthenium (congress grass), lantana and water hyacinth, have been used.

A dry dairy of over 100 free grazing cows is maintained for dung and cow urine.

Two simple formulations are: 'sasyagavya' and 'chara sudha.'

'Sasyagavya': one part green biomass, one part cow dung and one part water mixed together and allowed to ferment in a drum for a period of 10-15 days. The resultant slurry is used as a foliar spray and as a soil drench.

'Chara Sudha' entails fermenting of waste in a covered vessel buried underground for a period of three months. The resultant liquid is a potent manure and growth promoter for all types of crops.

(Source: Communication with OIP)

#### **SOCIAL WORK AND RESEARCH CENTRE (SWRC)**

P.O. Runikhata 783 375 , District Kokrajhar, Assam, Ph.: 03664-236611, 276650

Contact: Loken Warie, Regional coordinator

SWRC is one of the outreach locations of Barefoot College of Rajasthan. Loken Warie is actively engaged in promotion of organic farming, renewable energy and outreach programmes in Assam.

(Source: Arise, CSE & TOI 9-2-2-2002)

#### **SHANTI SADHANA ASHRAM**

Vasistha, Beltola, Guahati-28, Assam

Contact: Sh. Hem Bhai

(Source : Bharatendu Prakash)

#### **ASSAM GOSEWA SAMITI**

Beltola, Guahati- 28, Assam

Contact: Sh. Nirmal Kr. Shastri

(Source : Bharatendu Prakash)

#### **SHRI UMESH LOHKAR**

C/o Hotel Madhuram, Old Jail Road, Golaghat-785621, Assam

(Source : Bharatendu Prakash)