



CHETHANA



MYSORE SEED FESTIVAL

Celebrating the rich heritage of traditional seed diversity

On 5th & 6th July 2014, the city known for its stunning palaces-Mysore witnessed a celebration for traditional seed diversity held at Nanjaraja Bahadur Choultry. The event kicked off with a march by farmers and the public carrying basket covered lush green sprouted-paddy, millets and pulses called the attention of the bystanders' attraction besides slogans aired popularizing the indigenous crop varieties and seed diversity. Men dressed in cultural-warrior suits equipped with swords led the march. The *Beeja Yatra* (Seed March) also symbolizes the guardian of traditional seed diversity-the farmers and seed savers conserving local varieties will be jeopardized, if not guarded promptly. More than 1500 varieties of indigenous seed diversity were exhibited.

The event was organized by **Sahaja Samrudha** jointly in collaboration with **Chethana** and **Alliance for Sustainable & Holistic Agriculture** to elevate the income standards of farm livelihoods through ecological agri-practices founded on indigenous seeds and locally available resources. Seed Exhibition, Sale of organic groceries and aroma of organic millet dishes energized more than 3000 visitors from the urban community. The celebration emphasized on traditional food choices, health benefits of traditional paddy varieties, organic open-pollinated seeds and indigenous agricultural values and wisdom that paves way for sustenance of farming.

The festival was inaugurated by Mysore Zilla Panchayat CEO P.A. Gopal along with farmer representatives by lighting of lamp. A book titled "Beeja Bangara" authored by G.S.Jayadeva of Deenabandhu Trust was released.

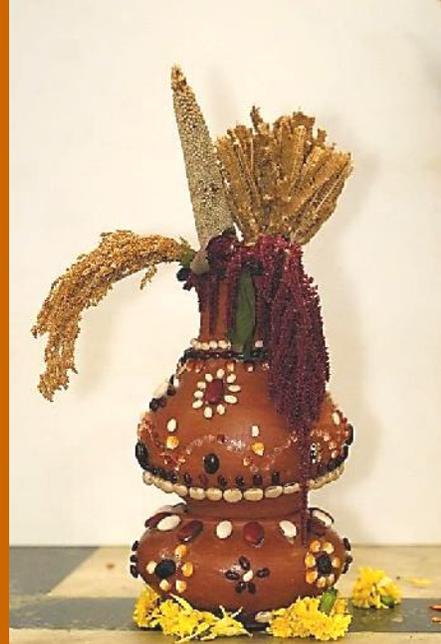


Photo Gallery

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Farmer Groups Participation

S.No	Organization/Farmer Group Name	Purpose of Participation
1	Sahaja Samrudha, Bangalore	Display of diff rice & millet varieties
2	Save our Rice campaign, Karnataka	Display of 200 diff rice varieties and Publications
3	Sahaja Organic Producer Company Ltd, Bangalore	Sale of Organic Rice, Millets, Pulses, Value-added food products etc
4	Desi Seed Producers Company Ltd, Karnataka	Sale of organic open-pollinated vegetable seeds
5	NESARA Farmer Market, Mysore	Sale of millet products and organic food catering
6	NATURE STORE, Mysore	Sale of organic rice, millet, pulses, jaggery and flour items
7	Desi Hatti Belegara Sangha, Gadag	Display and sale of desi cotton varieties, wheat and seeds
8	Millet savers association of Karnataka	Display and sale of Millet Seeds and Millet Rice (Foxtail, Little, Kodo, Brown top Millet)
9	Malnadu Rice Growers association , Karnataka	Red rices (Kari Kagga, Nereguli, Yedukuni)
10	Desi Krushikara Balaga, Karnataka	Millet Based value added products (Multi Millet Atta)
11	Honneru Balaga	Display of diff rice varieties and value added millet products
12	Savayava Krushikara Sangha, Hubli	Display and sale of traditional millet varieties
13	Kebbekara Savayava Krushikara Sangha, Kollegala	Display and sale of traditional rice, pulses and millets
14	Sri Janarthana Swamy Savayava Krushikara Sangha, Hittnehebagalu, Periyapatna, Mysore	Display of Rajmudi and other rice varieties
15	Doddamma Thai Savayava Krushikara Balaga, Melur, Periyaptna, Mysore	Display of diff traditional paddy, pulses, greens and vegetables varieties
16	Savayava Krushikara Sangha, HD Kote, Mysore	Display of pulses, millets, cotton and vegetables
17	Sri Veeranjeneya Savayava Krushikara Balaga, Amabalveeralli, Nagamangala, Mandya	Display of Raj Bhog, Putta Bhatta and diff rice varieties, and organic onions
18	Savayava Krsuhikara Balaga, Hubli	Sale of local varieties of black Bengal gram, proso millet and red gram

Many farmer groups from other states also participated. Farmer organizations like BIRDS, SABALA from Andhra Pradesh, KUDUMBAM, Minor Millets Growers Association and Pasumai Sigaram Nature Farms from Tamil Nadu to name a few. It was amazing to see farmers from other states and Kodagu hills bought few bags of local paddy seeds for conservation and self-consumption.

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Highlights

Dialogue with the Director of Horticulture

An interaction session with Director of Horticulture, Dr.Ramakrishnappa was organized, more than 70 farmers and seed savers gathered along with dignitaries present on the second day of the festival. Director of Horticulture, Dr.K.Ramakrishnappa, Vice President of Jaivik Krushik Society, Asst. Director of Dept of Horticulture, Mr. Nagaraj and Director of Sahaja Samrudha, Mr.Krishnaprasad chaired the dialogue session with the farmers gathered. Dr.K.Ramakrishnappa introduced to the farmers about the marketing support mechanisms in the pipeline - to benefit horticultural farmers in and around the city. He declared that in the next few days, JKS outlets will be opened in Hebbalu road, Ramakrishna nagar and Hunsur road, and farmers will be linked to the nearest outlets as it functions at Bangalore in a collectivized manner. Land allocation request submitted to Mysore Corporation for their approval. He also asserted that the central government has declared 2014' as the year of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), we have already 1028 farmer groups formed across the state. Initially, 2 FPOs will coordinate with the farmer groups in each districts of the state, to facilitate the farmers with marketing linkages and better price remuneration.

Product Launch: BEEJABUTTI

Beejabutti (Seed Basket) – assortment of 10 varieties of local vegetables, greens and fruits seeds. All the seeds are organic heirloom varieties which allows the farmers to be an independent and nutrition secured. Beejabutti is a product of producers network spread across the country based at Bangalore. Mysore Zilla Panchayat CEO P.A. Gopal launched the product for sale along with farmers. .



Public Support

Renowned Litterateur Padma Shri. Devanur Mahadeva appreciated the organizers for the show and bought a seed basket for backyard gardening. With a smile he said, 'an easy contribution to revive and consume indigenous crops.' The event happen to be an exciting excursion for farmers, school students, academic circle and the urban consumers, to interact with farmers, see diverse seed collection and to buy seeds for gardening, farm cultivation and research activities. More than 3500 people visited the two-day event with an over-all sale worth of Rs.10 lakh.

Acknowledgement

Our wholehearted thanks to all staffs for their tireless contribution that made this event a grand success!

Sale on Stall



Burma Black Rice



Red Rice



Minor Millets



Jaggery



Jackfruits



Seeds