



Dear All,

SRI is taking strong roots in India. The reports from many states are positive. SRI is good for individual farmer but now its benefits have to be translated into national level.

SRI can play a major role at national level in increasing the food security while reducing the water conflicts.

This news letter is to strengthen the partnerships- farmers, civil society, government institutions, research agencies, funding agencies to work together for large scale adoption of SRI. It is also time to openly discuss issues related to SRI so that mechanisms can be established to address them in the field. This newsletter, an initiative of SRI partners is one such attempt to provide a platform to share the knowledge. This is the first issue and with your valuable feed back and critical support hope to improve it further

Dr. Biksham Gujja

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Punjab



Green Revolution in Retrospect

Mapping the Present of Agrarian Punjab

Dr. Amrik singh

Balle Balle – the word itself transfers us to the vast stretch of beautiful lush green fields of Punjab. Mid-nineteen-sixties, the Green revolution transformed the states' agriculture and contributed significantly in making India self-reliant vis-à-vis food security; a legendary increase in production and productivity of wheat and rice in the history of agriculture in the country.

Punjab's abundant natural resources and an enthusiastic farming community have contributed to an increase

in grain-production from 73 lakh tonne in 1970-71 to 253 lakh tonnes in 1999-2000. The state contributed in 1999-2000, around 50 per cent to the Central Pool Stock of wheat and rice. Cropping intensity in Punjab is currently more than 185 per cent as against 133 per cent in the country as a whole, and consumption of fertilizer (NPK) is 184 kilogram per hectare as compared to the Indian average of 70 kilogram per hectare.

The strategy for increasing agricultural production followed in Punjab was



Adoption and expand in area under SRI method of rice cultivation

Year	No. of farmers	Area (acres)
2005-06	10	3
2006-07	25	30
2007-08	150	175
2008-09	100*	153*

*Gurdaspur district only

based on putting large cultivated areas under wheat and rice rotation; use of high yielding seeds, water and fertilizers. Consequently, the production of food grains in Punjab rose more than seven times, from 3.16 million tonnes in 1964-65 to 25.30 million tonnes in 2000-01.

However, over time, the wheat-rice rotation, now covering over 60 per cent of gross sown area, has created problems of serious consequences. Groundwater resources in the state have taken a sharp dip. Sustainability in agricultural production and the natural resource base are under threat, as warnings have been sounded on over-

exploitation of land and water resources, and degradation of the environment and ecology.

Punjab, in search of alternative growth paths to expand its potential was introduced to the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) 3 years ago at Gurdaspur district. SRI was started without puddling during the kharif season of the year 2005-2006 with only 3 demonstration with encouraging results under central sponsored scheme "Support to State Extension Programme for Extension Reforms" by Department of Agriculture Punjab, Gurdaspur . All the trials have been carried out on various farmers' fields in

different blocks of the district during Kharif season of 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08. The experiments consisted of 2 treatments: crop establishment according to SRI methods (10-12 day-old seedlings planted one plant per hill at 2-leaf stage at a spacing of 25x25 cm) and with puddling, conventional transplanting of 35 day-old 2 seedlings per hill with conventional method of random sampling. Various varieties like PAU-201, PUSA-1121 and Basmati-386 were used.

Paddy plants under SRI methods have shown significant difference in the number of tillers per square meter over conventional methods of rice cultivation. By adopting SRI methods of rice cultivation nearly 35- 45 per cent of water was conserved and with an increase in the production of rice from 25-35 per cent.

For reaping large benefits with out over-exploiting land and water resources, the need of the hour is wider adoption of the SRI method of rice cultivation by the farmers of Punjab.

Farm Schools on SRI in Gurdaspur

Four farm schools to deal with SRI methods for farmers have been initiated at Hayatnagar, Kot Santokh Rai, Ramdewali, and Saulibholi villages of Gurdaspur district, Punjab by Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA), a society of various stakeholders of agriculture in the district. These farm schools are expected to directly benefit around 670 farmers of the district.

The schools are supported by the Government of India sponsored scheme "Support to State Extension Programme for Extension Reform".

The schools would adopt the method of 'learning by doing' to propagate System of Rice Intensification (SRI) techniques to augment productivity and profits for the farmers.



SRI in Tamil Nadu

T. M. Thiyagarajan

SRI had an official introduction in Tamil Nadu, India when Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) took up a research project on “Water-less rice” in 2000 and introduced SRI principles in the experiments. The very first experiment showed the effect of weeder use on yield increase and saving of water. Experiments that continued after that lead to the development of a package of practices including new nursery management. Evaluations in farmer’s fields took place in 2003. SRI was recommended for adoption by farmers in 2004 as the state Government was keen to promote the new cultivation method to increase food production and conserve irrigation water for rice production.

In spite of realized yield advantage, farmers were reluctant to adopt SRI, for reasons of major deviations in the agronomic approaches involved in SRI and the need for learning by doing. Realizing that more demonstrations are needed to build the confidence of rice farmers, TNAU included SRI as one of the major thrust in the World Bank funded mega project on modernization of river basins in

the state. Demonstrations were organized in about 2000 ha and a series of measures to popularize SRI through media, seminars, field days, exposure visits. For the first time in the history of agriculture in the state, all the district administrators (Collectors) were sensitized on SRI towards increasing the rice production in the state to 10.8 million tonnes by adopting SRI in 0.875 million hectares (1/3rd rice area of the state) during 2008-09. Many of the top bureaucrats of the State Government have visited SRI fields to directly assess the benefits of SRI and are giving full support to SRI. Many of the elected representatives (Members of State Legislative Assembly, National parliament, state and central ministers) have been exposed to SRI in farmers’s fields. For both TNAU and the State Government Department of Agriculture, SRI is the major focus of agricultural development in the state.

SRI had already helped in achieving record yield of 14.27 tonnes per hectare of paddy by a farmer in Dindigul district

and many farmers have recorded yield increases up to 70 per cent. Farmers have realized reduction in seed requirement, reduction in cost of cultivation (in nursery, irrigation, labour for weeding and planting), higher profit and water saving. That SRI requires more personal attention and care than conventional cultivation may perhaps be one of the major block for adoption by those who have not tried SRI.

SRI Status in India

To take stock of SRI status in India to help plan future course of action, we need to compile the available information data from across the country and synthesize the status report. We seek information on the following topics from each state.

1. Efforts taken by State Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Universities and NGOs to popularize SRI.
2. Results of SRI evaluation.
3. Acceptance and extent of adoption.
4. Initiatives in scientific understanding of SRI and results if any.
5. Difficulties in adoption and reasons for non-adoption.
6. Action required to promote SRI effectively.

We request all those involved in the evaluation and promotion of SRI to lend their support in preparing this document so that it could be presented and discussed in the 3rd National Symposium on SRI to be held at TNAU from December 1-3, 2008.

SRI *Dhan* in Mountain Farms

Debashish Sen



To promote SRI techniques in the state of Himachal Pradesh, 10 partners were selected and an Inception Workshop was organized on April 18, 2008, at Shimla.

To extent knowledge, skills and information about SRI to farmers, a total of 84 one-day farmers' orientation workshops were organized by Master Trainers with support of PSI in 5 districts of the state, covering about 3,733 farmers. While smooth and easy availability of weeders and markers for farmers is being ensured by

Partner Organizations, farmers have chipped in by contributing Rs. 100 each for a set of weeder and marker amongst ten farmers.

An elaborate field support was launched by PSI staff in the run-up for seed selection, seed treatment, nursery bed preparation and sowing phase beginning June 2008. According to the latest data available with PSI, upto July 31st, 2008, a total of 2709 farmers have completed transplanting operations in their field areas in Himachal Pradesh.

System of Wheat Intensification (SWI): Boon for the Mountain Farmers

Field trials on research farm of People's Science Institute (PSI), Dehradun conducted during Rabi, 2006 for crop intensification on wheat showed an average increase of about 25-55 per cent in grain yields from the SWI plots compared to the conventional method.

This encouraged PSI to conduct (during Rabi 2007) further trials on farmlands of 35 farmers in Uttarakhand and 15 farmers in Himachal Pradesh, both under irrigated and unirrigated conditions. The trials showed amazing results leaving the farmers to wonder as there was a production of 80-120 kg by SWI method from one *nali* (200 sq. m) of land from while earlier harvest was just about 40-60 kg.

Farmers who have tried SWI have expressed immense satisfaction with the results. Perceived benefits are (i) less seed requirement, (ii) saving in water, (iii) early maturity, and (iv) high grain and straw yields.

SRI Village

T.M Radha

Two farmers of Nallathangalpatti village of Tiruchi district, Tamil Nadu, started SRI in 2005 on small plots of land. However, though more than 60 households were growing paddy in the village, SRI

method of rice cultivation was not taken up by other farmers. During 2007, the local NGO, 'BEST' conducted a season-long FFS as part of the short-term Training of Facilitators programme organized by AME Foundation. The FFS process helped in convincing farmers about SRI and has inspired around 27 farmers in

Nallathangalpatti village to take up SRI on 42 acres.

Today, Nallathangalpatti village is attracting a lot of visitors to its field's vis-à-vis the success of SRI practices. Farmers are confident that by next year the entire village will turn towards SRI and make Nallathangalpatti a 'SRI Village'.

AMEF-WWF SRI Programme

Dr. Arun Balamati

With support from WWF-ICRISAT, AMEF has been promoting SRI method of paddy cultivation in dryland areas of Andhra Pradesh (Mahabubnagar and Chittoor districts), Karnataka (Dharwad and Bellary districts) and Tamil Nadu (Krishnagiri and Tiruchi districts) as a response to farmers' need for

knowledge and skill support to SRI. Across the three states, wherever crop season has begun, the activities are in progress at various stages. Necessary support to the farmers was provided through trainings and orientations. Necessary tools and equipments were also given to the farmers.



Tiruchi unit organized a SRI Consultation Workshop in July, 2008, at TASSOS, Tiruchi. The workshop was attended by 45 participants from Agriculture Departments, University, KVKs, Research Institutions, NGOs and farmers.

Overview of the number of farmers selected for SRI promotion

State	Unit	No. of villages	No. of farmers	By whom
AP	Mahabubnagar	21	396	AMEF, Eco Club, IRDO
	Chittoor	6	100	SPANDANA
Tamil Nadu	Tiruchi	6	Selection of farmers is in process	BEST NGO
	Krishnagiri	4	60	AMEF
Karnataka	Dharwad	4	27	AMEF
	Bellary	*	*	

*In Bellary district, the cropping season is yet to begin and hence, activities are yet to be initiated.

This workshop was a platform for the various participants to share their experiences, share critical issues related to SRI adoption and seek alternatives for them. Also, this platform facilitated to identify ways for building strong Knowledge Alliances with various stakeholders and strengthen the SRI movement.

The food insecurity at Malda (Gazole block) is severe. According to a study on Household Food Insecurity (Access), it was found that 7.5 per cent are food secured (access), 5.1 per cent mild food insecure, 19 per cent moderate food insecure and 68.3 per cent severe food insecure and such conditions force for mass migration, high drop-out rates among children, and increased girl-child marriages.

World Vision has played a key role in introducing SRI practices initially among the farmers who had access to water from

SRI at Malda

Jyoti Kumar Mukhia

constructed ponds of 60'x40'x15' size. After necessary orientation was given to the farmers, a total of 180 farmers were identified to experiment with SRI techniques.



Awareness meetings on SRI were organized with support from Prasari (Saikat Pal) from Kolkata. These apart, core farmers group with 41 members were formed and organised video shows for them who further took the initiative to show the videos in 13 villages. Also, SRI Flex in Bengali was displayed in the villages. This helped other farmers also to know of the SRI practices.

These apart, certified seeds, Japanese Cono Weeder, and Bavistan has been supplied to the 180 farmers. Seeds have been sown in the nursery beds in the last week of August 2008.

SRI Under Rainfed Conditions

Avijit Choudhury and Ashok Kumar

The District of Purulia in southwestern West Bengal bordering Jharkhand is part of the AEZVII. Rural population in the district is about 90.6 per cent and 43.65 per cent of them are officially below the poverty line. All the blocks in the district are identified under DPAP. More than 80 per cent of the population directly depend on agriculture and paddy accounting for 85 to 90 per cent of gross cropped area. 90 per cent of land holdings belong to small and marginal farmers. The productivity of land under traditional cropping system (a single crop of *kharif* paddy) is as low as $2\text{-}3\text{ t ha}^{-1}$ owing to a number of reasons ranging from topography, insufficient irrigation systems and other institutional support, and so on.

PRADAN Purulia team was instrumental in making systematic efforts to promote SRI since



2002 as a robust model of rain fed paddy cultivation for small and marginal farmers. To begin with 5 farmers opted for SRI and SHG members and their spouses were

encouraged to visit the farms and know the practice. With such humble beginnings, today over 6000 families spread over Bihar, Jharkhand, Bengal, Orissa, Chattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh are engaged in SRI practices.

Extensive trainings and working together with various concerned government departments have paved way for such a strong impact. However, in the operational area of PRADAN the mainstream agriculture extension system is yet to appreciate and support SRI. What is important to note here is the fact that small and marginal farmers are able to produce yields much higher than the earlier 2 t ha^{-1} and improving their life and living conditions.

SRI in Madhya Pradesh

SRIJAN is going to initiate paddy productivity enhancement programme (through SRI method) with the marginal poor families in Anuppur District of Madhya Pradesh. In collaboration with the Madhya Pradesh Government (MPRLP), the team is going to explore SRI thematic interventions for food security and livelihood enhancement of the tribal community.

Rajesh Tripathy

Experiences and Learnings at Sambhav

C Sambhu Prasad

Sambhav has been actively engaged in promoting SRI and simultaneously attempting to document the experiences, success and constraints in SRI practices of paddy cultivation across varieties and geographic conditions.

At a workshop with 42 farmers and other 'friends' who were involved in promoting SRI, each and every participants' experiences were shared and recorded. It was a rather emotional session. Many farmers shared their feelings that despite several humiliations, ambiguities, and erratic weather conditions they were successful in producing higher yields than through the conventional methods. They felt proud that they were the pioneers in experimenting with a new method without any financial support from anybody, particularly from government. They were also happy that they did not have to invest anything extra on inputs, they could use their own seeds, they could design their own methods/equipments according to the situation and they could prove that they could harvest more from the same land.

Sambhav had contributed an article on their experiences in practising SRI for a book edited by Prof. Shambhu Prasad, which was released on the eve of Second National Level Symposium on SRI, at Tripura. It would be prudent to note here that several of the other articles in the same book had actually referred to and acknowledged the training support by Sambhav.

Sambhav is now attempting to document the whole process of their experiments and experiences on video for the whole crop season and expects to bring out a detailed video CD of the same.



Growing SUMATHI the SRI way

P. Lakshmi Reddy

Rice is an important food and fodder crop grown under well irrigation in Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh. Growing scented rice varieties has gained popularity in the mandals of Bathalapalli, Tadimarri of the district as it is seen as economically more viable compared to normal rice varieties.

With SRI method of rice cultivation progressing well in the district

since its inception in the year 2003, an inspired farmer N. Eswaraiyah of Garlandinne village started growing Sumathi variety of scented rice during kharif last season by adopting SRI methods. Under well irrigation in red soils, 14 days old single seedling transplantation at spacing of 25 cm X 25 cm in rows was carried out. Weeding and irrigation practices were followed as per the

principles of SRI method. Manures and fertilizers were applied as per the existing method of rice cultivation. The result yield was 6600 kg ha⁻¹ compared to 4125 kg ha⁻¹ scented variety grown the conventional way. Inspired by these results, about dozen farmers in Garlandinne and the nearby villages have started growing the Sumathi variety under SRI system during kharif, 2008.

Performance of scented variety Sumathi in SRI

Normal yield : 4125 kg ha⁻¹

Yield advantage : 60 per cent

Parameter	SRI
Tillers / hill	16
Panicle length (cm)	22.5
Grains / panicle	170
Grain yield (kg ha ⁻¹)	6600
Straw yield (kg ha ⁻¹)	5824

Third National Symposium on SRI

With SRI being practiced in different agro-climatic zones at a national level in India, continuous efforts to share, synthesize and document the experiences while articulating opportunities and constraints to up-scale SRI is important.

The First National Symposium on SRI was organised in November 2006 at Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. The national dialogue hosted by Acharya N.G Ranga Agricultural University (ANGRAU) with support from World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), brought farmers, scientists, and civil

society organisations together for the first time in India. Built on the success of the first one, the Second National Symposium on SRI held at Agartala, Tripura in October 2007 was further expanded to the policy makers, and was instrumental in generating interest among government, banks and private trusts to invest in SRI by directly supporting the farmers in many states.

This year, the Third National Symposium on SRI is proposed to meet from 1st – 3rd December, 2008 at the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) at Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.

The Third National Symposium has great potential for achieving convergence of ideas based on field experiences of farmers, civil society and scientists from across the country to look critically at the results and assess the performance of SRI methods.

The last date for submission of full papers/posters - 30th October 2008

Guidelines can be downloaded from websites: www.tnau.ac.in and www.sri-india.net

For more information:
Email: tnausri2008@gmail.com

Rice was introduced in Morocco four decades ago as part of developing the Gharb region through a systematic and well-invested irrigation programme. The Regional office of the Agricultural development of the Gharb (ORMVAG) is responsible for creating and maintaining the irrigation infrastructure in the region to support rice cultivation.

Morocco has constructed 13 dams on Sebou and Ouergha rivers to provide protection from floods and irrigation to 250,000 ha. But, for the last fifteen years the area under rice is fluctuating between 11,000 ha (1994) to less than 1,000 ha (1995). Water is allocated at the rate of 14,000 cu m per ha and farmers are charged 0.32 MDH per cu m of water supplied. This is perhaps one of the highest water charges in the world for irrigation water.

High water prices, lack of profitability, high production costs and recent trade liberalisation are some of the main reasons for fluctuations and downward trend.



SRI in Morocco

Dr. V. Vinod Goud

However, productivity of rice is relatively higher, around 6-8 t ha⁻¹. But certain years it is going as low as 3 t/ha. Certain individual farmers did report over 9 t ha⁻¹.

In the coming decades, there will be much more pressure on water resources in Morocco. Therefore, there is a need for less water intensive methods to cultivate rice in Morocco.

The Team Leader, Dr. Biksham Gujja made a visit to Morocco during October 2007 to understand the scenario of production of rice, problems related and the feasibility of introducing SRI in Morocco. Subsequently, in the first week of March 2008, a team consisting of two ORMVAG officials



and representative of WWF MedPO visited India to learn about SRI. The team underwent training in SRI practices and visited few SRI fields. This visit has helped to appreciate the method by ORMVAG officials.

Later, WWF-ICRISAT Project, WWF MedPO and ORMVAG officials arrived at a partnership to introduce SRI method in Morocco and test its adoptability in the Gharb region.

The pilot project of introducing SRI in Morocco has the following objectives:

- To reduce at least 30 per cent of water consumption
- To reduce 25 per cent of fertilisers and other chemical inputs, and
- Produce the same or 10 per cent more production over the average of last five years

Four farmers (each with 2.5 ha) and one research farm have been selected to ground SRI in rice cultivation in about 11 ha. Two SRI experts from India, one Farmer and a Scientist, visited Morocco to provide technical inputs and stayed there for a considerable period to provide on-the-job training and hand-holding support to farmers till transplanting. The farmers are looking after the SRI fields by managing the weeds and so far the performance of the crops seem to be better. The participating farmers have been offered compensation in case there is loss in yields in comparison with the average yields during the previous season.

Hands-on training program on SRI

Kishan Rao

A three day training of trainers program on SRI was conducted by Sukshetram at Chinna Mandava village in Khammam district of Andhra Pradesh in July, 2008. The objective of the training program was to build a team of resource persons who could disseminate the knowledge at the grass-root level i.e. among the farmers.

Mr. Kishan Rao and Mr. K.V. Rao, the resource persons for the training provided many valuable inputs to the participants. While Mr Kishan Rao provided valuable



hands-on training on SRI, Mr. K.V. Rao emphasized on organic farming and bio- dynamics.

The training program also aimed at understanding the local issues and adapting the SRI practices

accordingly to the local situations. For this, the training program had clearly emphasised the need to understand the terms, jargons, climatic and topographic conditions, and so on involved in cultivation practices across various locations in the country and make necessary transformations in the basic 6 principles of SRI methods for high productivity and less consumption of natural resources.

As the participants noted, practical demonstrations of the practices of SRI and preparation of various organic manure, pesticides, and so on, has clearly marked a strong impact among the participants.

SRI farmers meet

A Farmers meet was organized by WWF and ANGRAU in July at ANGRAU campus.

The agenda of the meeting was to learn from the experiences of the SRI farmers from AP, and develop a modified SRI manual, discuss concerns of weeder and discuss how government organizations can be influenced to support in scaling up of SRI.

Part of the meet, the team visited SRI farmers field at Jangaon, Warangal district. Different types of weeders were displayed for farmers to test them practically on the SRI Field.

DRR training

SRI Model training course was organised by DRR for Agriculture officers of different states.

Sponsored by Department of Extension, New Delhi, the training was attended by 15 participants from 8 states; Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Bihar, Nagaland and Manipur

The resource team were experts from ICRISAT, ANGRAU, Progressive SRI Farmers and DRR scientists.

Similar training will be conducted next year. For details DRR website may be contacted drricar.org

'Uzhavar Mughaam-2008'

G. Moghanraj Yadhav

'Uzhavar Mughaam - 2008' (State Level Farmers Campaign) was organized by VAANGHAI at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Sikkal, Nagapattinam in July, 2008. The event was supported by Tamil Nadu State Council for Science & Technology (TNSCSC), National Bank for Agriculture & Rural Development (NABARD), Indian Overseas Bank (IOB), Bay of Bengal Project, KVK Sikkal and TARI Biotech, Thanjavur.

This was the tenth year of the farmers' campaign and the main objective was to promote Natural Way of Rice Cultivation through SRI practices. Around 150 farmers

(Contd. on page 10)



Woman farmer an advocate of SRI

J. Srinath

Ms. Amritham doubles her role as a house-wife, taking care of household chores, and as a farmer in their 2 acres agriculture field. She picked up knowledge on agriculture, at a very young age, while in her father's field. Today, Amritham, mother of four daughters, practices SRI methods of rice cultivation in her field in Embalam village about 20 km away from Pondichery.

In July 2006, when Amritham and her husband learnt from elders and fellow farmers of their village on benefits of SRI method of Rice cultivation, they immediately enrolled along with 50 farmers to attend a 3-month training-cum-demonstration programme on SRI

conducted by the Department of Agriculture, Government of Pondichery with support from M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation's Village Resource Centre at Pillaiyarkuppam, Pondichery.

Many fellow farmers discouraged her not to take up SRI cultivation as the seeds used were less and consumed less water so the yield would be lesser than what she was getting. Determined, as the couple was, they continued to follow the SRI methods to principle.

The crop was harvested in 100 – 115 days. Amritham reported that she could harvest an additional 900 kg more rice per acre through

SRI methods while also conserving groundwater and cutting down on fertilizer input costs.

The economics, for her, is simple. For an expense of Rs. 5000 per acre she could earn Rs 12,200 as income and therefore a clear profit of Rs. 7200.

Fellow farmers of her village who had earlier discouraged her while she took up SRI practices appreciate her bold initiative. Village youth have shown interest in SRI practices after the success. 5 farmers of her village have started following SRI methods.

She now travels to nearby villages and shares her experiences in SRI practices. She has also trained 15 farmers in Agalagan village in Nagapattinam district for adopting SRI practices.

Amritham was selected as **Fellow of National Virtual Academy of M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation** in January 2006 for her commitment in encouraging micro-enterprises suitable for poor villagers and helping aged women and widows to get their monthly pension from the concerned departments.

'Uzhavar...' (Contd. from page 9)

from Madurai, Pudukottai, Trichy, Salem, Namakkal, Cuddalore, Chennai, Karaikkal, Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam districts of Tamil Nadu participated in the campaign.

Several speakers from various

reputed organizations and institutions such as KVK, NABARD, Regional Research Station, gave away information on the techniques and value of SRI. Mr. Kishan Rao from 'Sukshetram', Khammam district, Andhra Pradesh, a strong proponent of SRI, made an inter-active presentation on SRI

to clear the myth & misgivings surrounding the methodology for the benefit of farmers.

The farmers, by the end of the campaign, were sufficiently convinced of the practices in SRI and encouragingly spoke of practising SRI.

Here's more reading and video links on SRI

1. More for Less

<http://www.deccanherald.com/Content/Jul222008/snt2008072180112.asp>

2. Reports of Gains Bring Attention to Rice-Growing Method

<http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/2008-07-07-voa3.cfm>

3. Collectors told to focus on new projects

Sunday July 27 2008 00:14 IST
<http://www.newindpress.com/NewsItems.asp?ID=IET20080726135326&Page=T&Title=Southern+New+s++Tamil+Nadu&Topic=0>
Express News Service

4. Experimenting with SRI in Iraq

Khidhir A. Hameed
LEISA MAGAZINE 23.2 JUNE 2007

5. Agri. & Commodities

Implement agricultural schemes more vigorously
<http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/015200807270323.htm>

6. Palakkad to get Rs.188.85 lakhs for implementation of the National Food Security Mission

<http://www.thehindu.com/2008/08/04/stories/2008080451490300.htm>

7. Test new rice farming method, Agriculture dep't urged

07/04/2008
<http://www.gmanews.tv/story/105182/Test-new-rice-farming-method-Agriculture-dept-urged>

8. India can produce more rice through 'SRI'

<http://www.assamtimes.org/Editorial/1652.html>

9. When Pusa Sugandha outshone GM

Rakesh Agrawal, Dehradun, CIVIL SOCIETY Magazine (July 2008)

10. Rice intensification scheme picking up among farmers in Cumbum Valley

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/07/23/stories/2008072355460300.htm>

11. Native paddy varieties go well with organic farming

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/07/23/stories/2008072353400300.htm>

12. Nepali farmers should be able to benefit from the rise in food prices

<http://www.nepalitimes.com.np/issue/2008/07/5/EconomicSense/15009>

13. 25,000 hectares to come under new system of rice intensification method

<http://www.thehindu.com/2008/07/24/stories/2008072457970600.htm>

14. New system gives more paddy yield

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/08/01/stories/2008080152770300.htm>

15. Farmers urged to adopt new cultivation method

<http://www.thehindu.com/2008/08/23/stories/2008082357620300.htm>

16. Banks urged to focus on crop insurance

<http://www.thehindu.com/2008/08/24/stories/2008082461070300.htm>

17. Keep weeds at bay with paper

<http://www.thehindu.com/2008/08/26/stories/2008082651200300.htm>

18. SRI Implementation process in Pitchavaram Village, Tamil Nadu, India

<http://in.youtube.com/watch?v=RmtnNJgfZKs>

19. Watch Power weeders / anshumanlakshmi

www.youtube.com/



Mainstreaming SRI in India

Dr. V. Vinod Goud

The world is facing major food crisis today. After three decades, once again, shortage of cereals and sharp rise in their prices has raked-up debates on food security and its socio-political and ecological implications.

According to a recent estimate, India needs 165 million tonnes of paddy by 2025, which is about 40 per cent higher than the current production. But, the yield has remained stagnant for more than a decade now. Climate change, increasing water scarcity and urbanisation are adding to the existing woes. The greatest challenge for India is to adopt measures that consumes less water, fertilizers and other inputs and maximises production whereby

benefiting the farmer, economy and the ecosystem at large.

System of Rice Intensification (SRI) method of rice cultivation was introduced in India in 2000 purely on the basis of interest it generated among the organic farmers. Time again, SRI benefits have been proven but, the irony of the situation is that since its inception, systematic evaluation of SRI in different agro-climatic conditions has been sporadic



and due to lack of adequate understanding and extension strategies, acceptance of SRI by farmers in some states is not very encouraging unlike states that are doing extremely well with local government's support and initiative.

While there are constraints which are not entirely impossible to solve, what is required is concerted efforts on the part of governments to formulate appropriate policies and institutions to address them. For such a situation to take shape, civil society, which is at the forefront in promoting SRI, private trusts who are financially supporting SRI in several places, and some Government institutions that are proactive in promoting the method need to join together on a common platform.

National level interactions through two national SRI symposiums have so far helped in bringing most of the actors together. However, this process needs to be continued for wider reach and strengthen the national network until necessary institutional mechanisms are established for scaling up SRI at a national level.



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