



# GB Pant University of Agriculture & Technology ASIAN AGRI-HISTORY FOUNDATION PANTNAGAR



## VRIKSHAYURVED FARMING NEWS



**Volume 1, No. 1**

**November 2020**



### Vrikshayurved Farming News Dedicated to late Dr YL Nene



**Founder Chairman of AAHF**

### Message from the Chief Editor



**Dr J Kumar**

VRIKSHAYURVED FARMING NEWS, a joint initiative of AAHF and its regional Chapters, and GBPUA&T, Pantnagar, is being launched with an objective to educate the farmer audience on our ancient agricultural heritage and Vrikshayurveda, which has a great relevance to modern agriculture. In general the word 'Vrikshayurveda', literally meaning ayurveda for plants, is used to denote knowledge of plant life in all its varied aspects. Agricultural development, in the past decades, primarily focused on enhanced productivity, ignoring the maintenance of soil health, based on external inputs resulting in neglect and improper use of local resources. This has resulted in damage to the environmental resources and disappearance of indigenous knowledge. This Vrikshayurved Farming News would offer systematization of the practices, validations and adoption of prescriptions found in Vrikshayurved at the end of stakeholders. Although the main target audience is farmers, the Newsletter will also serve a useful purpose of communication between extension personnel and the farmers and scientists. In this regard, receipt of contributions to the newsletter would be greatly appreciated.

### Message from the Chairman



**Dr SPS Beniwal**

It gives me an immense pleasure to learn that AAHF is starting a new newsletter "Vrikshayurveda Farming News" at the occasion of the 84<sup>th</sup> birthday of late Dr YL Nene, the founder Chairman of AAHF. I consider it a great initiative. I am confident that this newsletter will serve a very useful purpose in exchange of information and experiences on Vrikshayurveda farming and also organic farming among the farming community, extension specialists and the scientists.

I congratulate the Chief Editor Dr J Kumar and the Editorial Committee for initiating this new activity of AAHF, and wish them great success.

### Message from the Vice-Chancellor, GBPUA&T

It gives me immense pleasure to know that Asian Agri-History Foundation (AAHF), founded by our pioneer, legendary and luminary plant scientist Dr YL Nene, is launching a Newsletter to make farmers, students, scientists and extension workers cognizant with enormous and forgotten treasure of Vrikshayurved. Vrikshayurved written from C.400 BCE to 1725 CE by our ancient sages and pioneers of agriculture, is a gigantic science, consisting of almost all agricultural technologies, namely, Bhumi nirupana, Bijoptividhi, Padapavivaksa, Ropana vidhana, Nise canavidhi, (To be contd. page 4)



**Dr Tej Pratap**

### Message from AAHF Chief Advisor

India has had a rich agricultural heritage which is evident in a number of our ancient scriptures which have documented these practices that sustained our agriculture for a long time. Vrikshayurved by Surapal is one of these scriptures providing guidance for sustainable agricultural production practices. These ancient practices are even more relevant now than they were at the time they were developed, because of increasing degradation of the natural resources caused by current exploitative agriculture practices adopted by farmers to meet the increasing demand for food and other agricultural products. Recognizing the value of the knowledge contained in Vrikshayurved for current and future agriculture, the Asian Agri-History Foundation (AAHF), under the guidance of Late Dr YL Nene, initiated efforts to bring this ancient knowledge to the present day farmers so that they could benefit from it. This Newsletter is a continuation of those efforts and it aims at encouraging the farming community...(To be contd. page 4)



**Dr MC Saxena**

### Message from the Dean Agriculture

The ancient Indian strictures are a testimony of excellence in science, astrology, astronomy, physics, medicine, agriculture and other allied disciplines upto the minutest of details. The present day science can get many answers of unrevealed queries if we get back to the roots. Unfortunately, the civilization left out Sanskrit and the manuscripts as a matter of prayer and worship, which otherwise is vast, deep and immensely useful. It is high time to look back into the roots and to get in depth into the science hidden in each verses of ancient scriptures like the Vrikshayurveda, the Parashar Samhita, the Vedas, the Yog Sutras and other available testimonies of ancient wisdom...(To be contd. page 4)



**Dr SK Kashyap**

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**Managing Editor: Dr SPS Beniwal**

## Briefings on Vrikshayurved Farming

### Potential of Farmers' WhatsApp Group in Popularizing Vrikshayurved-based Kunapjal

The work on the popularization of Vrikshayurved-based Herbal Kunapjal was started in the Kumaon hills of Uttarakhand in November 2019 with the formation of a WhatsApp group “Vrikshayurved in UK Hills” in November 2019. The group consisted of farmers, who had attended the Vrikshayurved Workshop in Pantnagar, 23-24 October 2019, scientific staff of GBPUA&T KVKs, NGOs, and the officials of the Dept of Agriculture and Organic Board of Uttarakhand government. It was through this WhatsApp group that farmers, NGOs and others learnt how to prepare Vrikshayurved's Herbal Kunapjal and successfully used it in different crops that they grow. The group encouraged interaction among farmers and share their experiences with the use of Kunapjal, and proved very useful in communicating with the farmers and other members during the COVID-19 period from March till October 2020. The group currently has 132 members. Farmers and others desirous of joining the group may **please contact AAHF-Pantnagar (Mob: 88590 20329).**

### A New WhatsApp Formed for the Farmers of West UP and Tarai of Uttarakhand and UP

After realizing the success of the Uttarakhand WhatsApp group, AAHF started another WhatsApp group for the farmers of West UP and the Tarai of Uttarakhand, named “Vrikshayurved se atm nirbhar kisan” beginning August of 2020. The objective was to educate the farmers on the advantages of Herbal Kunapjal in field crops such as sugarcane, rice and wheat. The group with 123 members has enabled educate farmers on how to prepare the Herbal Kunapjal and use it in different crops and popularize it among farmers, and encourage exchange of information on aspects related to farming of different crops. Farmers from West UP and Tarai area of Uttarakhand and UP interested to join the group may **please contact AAHF-Pantnagar (Mob: 88590 20329).**

### Successful use of Herbal Kunapjal in Peaches

Farmer Sri Pramod Gunwant of village Simrad of Ramgarh block in Nainital district enhanced the production of peaches by the use of Herbal Kunapjal in 2020. Sri Pramod had 50 peach trees in his farm which were not yielding much fruits due to the leaf curl disease. After preparing the Herbal Kunapjal in November 2019, he applied it to his peach plants after pruning as soil drench and also as sprays in December 2019. In the spring of 2020 he observed good and healthy growth in his peach trees. To his and his father's surprise they



harvested a bumper peach crop (about 12 quintals) from these trees with good quality peach fruits (Fig) (Sri Pramod Gunwant, Simrad, Nainital; Mob. : 6398226224).

### Use of Herbal Kunapjal by Uttarakhand Farmers

Herbal Kunapjal has been popularised by AAHF in Nainital, Almora and Champawat districts of Uttarakhand since November 2019. Farmers first learnt how to prepare it and used then it in their different crops. The preparation method was described on the WhatsApp group “Vrikshayurved for UK Hills” and also guidance provided on how to use it. Thanks to cooperation of KVK-Jeolikote and Lohaghat, ATMA and NGO (Maya Negi-Kotabagh) some preparation demonstrations were organised for the farmers. As a result, now about 10 farmers are already preparing Herbal Kunapjal and using their in different vegetable, field and fruit crops that they grow. This is in spite of the COVID-19 period during which we have not been able to visit the farmers. Other farmers especially those who grow apples and other temperate fruits are being encouraged to use Herbal Kunapjal through drench application and foliar sprays after pruning in December.

### Use of Clerodendrum infortunatum fermented solution for die-back disease of tea bushes

Die-back disease is a serious disease of tea in the Assam and Darjeeling and Dooars areas of West Bengal. It affects roots, stem and shoots of the tea bushes. Dieback starts from bottom and moves up slowly killing the entire plant. It is affecting more



areas due to global warming with every passing year. Work done in some tea gardens under the technical guidance of AAHF showed that a fermented solution of Clerodendrum infortunatum (known as Bhat or Hill glory bower) in cow urine was found highly effective in controlling the die-back disease. The Clerodendrum solution is made by taking 40 kg of finely chopped or crushed leaf material and mixing it with 100 l of cow urine in 200 l plastic drum and adding water to fill the drum. The material is fermented for 7 days after which it is filtered and used. The solution is applied either as spray (200 l/ha) or soil drench (500 l/ha). It is also now recommended by the Tea Research Association (TRA) to control this serious disease of tea, and about 60% of the tea gardens are now using it to manage the die-back disease. (Sri Vijay S Parmar, Sr Advisor, Tea Gardens, Siliguri; Mob. : 9434064757)



## News on Organic Farming, Training Activities and Farmers' Producer Groups

### Uttarakhand Declares 10 Blocks as Organic

The Uttarakhand government in an attempt to make the state as organic in due course of time declared 10 block as organic, where no chemical fertilizers and pesticides are allowed to be used against diseases and insect-pests. Among these Blocks, one, Betalghat falls in Nainital district. Having realized this, AAHF with the help of ATO Sri Gopal Krishna Joshi ji, Uttarakhand Jaivik Utpad Parishad, Nainital Unit and Sri Narendra Pilakhwal ji of Bank of Baroda, Garampani, was able to organize farmer training on a Herbal Kunapjal on 25 September 2020. The trainer in this course was a Herbal Kunapjal enthusiast and progressive farmer, Sri Pramod Gunwant of Simrad village of Ramgarh Block, Nainital district. He provided training to the farmers of Block on the preparation and use of Herbal Kunapjal in their crops. One interesting part of this training course was that most of the participants were women farmers. With this, Sri Gunwant becomes our first Farmer trainer on Herbal Kunapjal. Congratulations to the organizers and the new Kunapjal trainer **Sri Pramod Gunwant (Mob. : 6398226224). Well done!**



### Vrikshayurveda Krishipadashala (Pathshala)

Kerala Chapter of Asian Agri-History Foundation (KC-AAHF) has initiated Vrikshayurveda Krishipadashala at Kottiyoor Panchayath of Kannur district during the year 2019. This is Kerala's first Vrikshayurveda Krishipadashala recognized and supported by Department of Agriculture, Government of Kerala.

Vrikshayurveda farmers of Kottiyoor Panchayath, Sri Sony Mathew and Sri Rajesh are entrusted with the responsibility to manage Vrikshayurveda Krishipadashala by KC-AAHF. Total area comprises of 14 acres of leased land which includes a large water storage structure for irrigation and another for aquaculture. Almost all vegetables including sweet potato, winter season vegetables, paddy, tapioca, etc. are grown following Vrikshayurveda-based farming system. This farm also has demonstration plot on open precision farming and fertigation with herbal Kunapjal. Cow urine pesticide prepared in copper vessel is used to manage sucking pests of vegetable and paddy.



Farmers from Kottiyoor panchayath and other Panchayaths of Kannur district visit this farm for learning Vrikshayurveda-based farming system.



Sri Sony Mathew and Sri Rajesh are also marketing the Vrikshayurveda produce of this farm and also produce of other Vrikshayurveda farmers of Kottiyoor Panchayath under the brand name "Kannur Vrikshayurveda" in eco-shops and urban street markets of Department of Agriculture in Kannur district.



Director of Agriculture Dr K Vasuki, IAS has visited this farm this year and appreciated the efforts of KC-AAHF in popularizing Vrikshayurveda knowledge among farmers of Kerala (**Sri CV Jidesh, Kannur; Mob. 9446052342**).

### A New Farmers' Producer Organization (FPO) for Organic Kiwi

More and more farmers are now opting for organic farming of different crops. As we all know, farmers are facing the problem in marketing of the organic produce.



One solution to this problem is formation of farmers' producer group or FPO, which is also being encouraged by the government. One such FPO has been formed by 167 kiwi producing farmers of Shama and Ana of Bageshwar in Uttarakhand, which is called Katyurghati Himalayan Organic Kiwi and Herb Farmer Producer Company Limited, which is registered in the Company Act. It is managed by the member farmers and is managing to sell the kiwis directly to exporters. The member farmers in the group also share techniques and experiences of growing kiwi and the machinery with one another. They grow organic kiwis which are recently certified by the UK Certification & Inspection Limited ([www.ukcertifications.org.uk](http://www.ukcertifications.org.uk)).

This Katyurghati FPO is also running a Kiwi Orchard-cum-Training Center in village Ana. They have demonstrated the harvesting and packaging of kiwi fruits. Congratulations to the Katyurghati FPO. (**Sri Rajneesh, Katyurghati FPO, Ana, Bageshwar, Uttarakhand; Mob. : 8171398042**).



### Continued from page 1...(Vice-chancellor)

Posana vidhi, Drumaraksa, Taru Chikitsa, Upavanakriya, Nivasa sanna taru, Subhasubha Laksana, Taru Mahima and Citrikarana, in various documents. Contemporary agricultural practices of the selection of soil, successful cultivation of trees, harvesting and processing of the produce became known that were based on agricultural principles followed by our ancient agriculturists (Rishis). It was through these practices that they had evolved sustainable agricultural management practices in South and Southwest Asia that could sustain agriculture for several millennia. Numerous such practices together with the first organic and fermented biofertilizer, Kunapjal, are very well explained in the book Vrikshayurved by Surpal (c. 1000 CE).

I believe that it is very appropriate and timely to launch a National Newsletter “Vrikshayurved Farming News” on the 84th birth anniversary of late Dr YL Nene from the present Headquarter of AAHF, GBPUAT, Pantnagar, a place where Dr Nene started his professional career in 1960. The information to be shared in this newsletter would surely be useful for the farmers, extension workers as well as for the scientific fraternity. I wish this endeavour all the success!

### Continued from page 1...(AAHF Chief Advisor)

to adopt and benefit from these ancient practices, as such or suitably modified to enhance their value for the changing agro-ecological and socioeconomic environment. The modern farmer, while using these practices, can also experiment – assisted by the scientific community wherever necessary – to see how these

practices can be further improved to meet their current need and share their experiences with each other. This Newsletter will provide this opportunity also. I congratulate the AAHF team, under the leadership of Dr SPS Beniwal, to embark upon this very timely and much needed initiative and wish all success!

### Continued from page 1...(Dean Agriculture)

The Asian Agri History Foundation has taken an auspicious initiative in this direction and an eminent scientist of agriculture late Dr YL Nene dedicated his life for this cause which is indeed a tremendous contribution in conserving and preserving the Indian wisdom to nurture humanity and also to provide an insight to the present day Science which is being experienced in the contemporary context with enhanced intensity. I put on record my heartiest greetings to the efforts made by the Asian Agri-History Foundation and trust that the upcoming generation will indeed get nearer to the roots and consequently utilize their ancestral heritage of ancient Indian wisdom for the sake of humanity across the globe.

### Attention

Please send your contributions to the Newsletter to  
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