



# THE LIVING FIELD

Newsletter of the Organic Farming Association of India

February 2016. Issue Twenty-One  
(Past issues at [www.ofai.org](http://www.ofai.org))

(For private circulation)

## Organic World Congress 2017 (Jaivik Krishi Vishwa Kumbh)

*World's biggest organic farming event comes to India, with OFAI as host*

- *Event will take place from November 9-11, 2017 at New Delhi*
- *Prime Minister being invited to inaugurate the World Congress*
- *Ministry of Agriculture decides to associate as "joint-organiser"*
- *National Centre of Organic Farming is member of Congress Steering Committee*
- *Organic farmers to get four separate halls to make their presentations*
  - *BIOFACH Trade Fair will be part of the event*
- *OFAI members will get priority provided they act on time*

The Organic World Congress (OWC), organised by IFOAM - Organics International, is held in a different country every three years.

It was held last in Istanbul, in October 2014.

The procedure is that organisations, or even governments, make a formal bid (via a presentation) to the General Assembly of IFOAM to host the Congress in their country. The IFOAM World Assembly then chooses the best bid by ballot.

At Istanbul, the bid put up by OFAI and its trade event partner (PDA Trade Fairs and Events, Bengaluru) was voted in the best proposal. OFAI won the bid against competition from Russia, China and Brazil.

OFAI was able to bid because PDA Trade Fairs agreed to make the necessary financial investments required for holding a World Congress of this kind.

Once assured that OFAI and PDA Trade Fairs had the requisite financial muscle to host the event, the General Assembly found OFAI's proposal – to turn the OWC into a world organic farmers' event – most interesting and attractive. Hitherto, almost all OWC events have been unsuccessful in attracting organic farmers. This is because participants must pay their own fares, accommodation, and steep registration fees. This has ensured that only those who



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could afford a minimum of one lakh rupees equivalent could participate.

All that has now been changed with the India edition of the Congress.

The 2017 OWC will cost lower than all the earlier OWCs. In fact, the registration charges for Indian organic farmers is Rs.2000 only, for all three days, inclusive of meals.

All organic farmers from Asia, Africa and Latin America are being provided 50% off on the registration fees.

Since this is an OFAI hosted event, OFAI members will get priority in registration.

OWC India is being held in the spirit of a kumbh. The three days will be a confluence spot of organic farmers from across the world.

The specific aim of the OWC is to showcase the organic farming practices and innovations of organic farmers from Asia, Africa and Latin America to the rest of the world, with strong emphasis on the pioneer: India.

For this reason, this Congress will be much different from OFAI's Biennial Conventions. Only selected and registered participants who can contribute some valuable content to the world community of organic farming will be able to enter the venue.

Newcomers to organic farming, including those who are still doing chemical farming and want to get introduced to organic farming, will not be able to register for this Congress.

Only those organic farmers who have an innovation or technique which the world organic farming community would benefit from knowing about, would get first chance.

So if you are an organic farmer and fall into the category of farmers who have tried out some successful organic farming technique or any innovation connected with organic farming, and want to share it with the whole world, start work immediately.

Pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter provide all details of how you can try to get your presentation prepared and accepted for the OWC.

## More details about the Organic World Congress 2017

The Organic World Congress is being held in New Delhi from November 9-11, 2017 and will have several major components.

The main focus of the event is of course the 5 "tracks" through which the Congress is generally organised.

These 5 "tracks" will be organised independently in 8 separate halls at the Trade Expo and Mart complex in Greater Noida.

These include the Main Track (2), the Science Track (1), the Workshops Track (1), the Farmers Track (3) and the Marketing and Assurance Track (1).

The Farmers' Track will be held in three separate halls.

One additional space for farmer experiments will be held in the grounds outside the halls.

All the farmer track events will be the exclusive responsibility of OFAI.

The marketing and assurance track will be in the hands of the National Centre of Organic Farming (NCOF) which will focus principally on large scale exposure to certification under PGS. The sessions will be managed by NCOF, PGS Organic Council, ICCOA, World Fair Trade Organisation, etc. Chairing the Market Track is Dr A.K. Yadav, former Director, NCOF.

The science track will be under the general supervision of Gerald Rahman, from IFOAM. Farmers and agricultural research scientists may also present papers in the science track.

Though OFAI will ensure that all the five tracks run successfully with maximum attendance, it will focus all its organisational skills on the farmer presentations.

Considering the number of farmers wanting to make presentations, a total of 240 organic farmers from across the world may be accommodated in the three-day time-table. Of these only about 100 slots (perhaps less) may be available for Indian organic farmers, while the balance 140 will go to farmers from Africa, Latin America, Asia and other parts of the world.

OFAI is proposing to sign a MOU with Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) New Delhi which will take overall charge of copying and formatting all soft copies of farmer presentations and ensuring their ready availability during the Congress.

Besides the farmer presentations, the OWC will also see the largest possible seed exhibition in our times. A group of seedkeepers will handle the arrangements for seed display. Space for the display is being made available free of cost by the organisers.



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Other major events at OWC:

The Congress Steering Committee (CSC) which is monitoring the organisation of the event on behalf of both IFOAM - Organics International and OFAI, has agreed to OFAI's suggestion<sup>n</sup> to work to create a celebratory atmosphere at the Congress venue.

Nehha Bhatnagar from Sarvam Foundation has been invited to head the team that will ensure a world class cultural show for the delegates. All cultural troupes wishing to submit items for the cultural event will send their proposals to the Sarvam Foundation which will select them from all aspects.

Wendell Rodricks, one of India's most creative fashion designers and a supporter of organic farming, will present a fashion show of organic and handwoven fabric.

In the year 2017, BIOFACH India will host its trade show on organic also at the same venue, under the overall rubric of the OWC. All those in the organic trade wishing to put up stalls for purpose of B2B promotion will sign up directly with BIOFACH.

Official pavilions of governments, both central, state and foreign will be allocated space in a separate hall, adjoining the Congress, and will sign up directly with OWC itself.

A small number of pre-conferences are also being organised one day prior to the OWC event. These will be hosted at the NCOF premises in Ghaziabad and other locations.

Post-OWC, members of the General Assembly of IFOAM - Organics International will shift to New Delhi city proper, to hold the 22nd General Assembly (GA) of the organisation. The business of the association will be conducted over 12 and 13 of November, 2017. The GA will also elect a new Executive Board to manage the association for the next three years.

For delegates who wish to see and visit organic farms, OFAI will be making the necessary arrangements after the event.

### Organic Farming Sourcebook Update

The first ever documentation of the organic farming community – the Organic Farming Source Book – is being updated, to be released during the OWC 2017.

We welcome you all to send in your comments or corrections about the information in the earlier edition. Some organic farmers have already left the planet. A few have even returned to conventional farmers. A veritable new army of new organic farmers is now on the horizon. Please help us with whatever information you can send us either through letter, email or even by phone.

All written or typed information should be sent to:

OFAI  
G-8, St Britto's Apts.,  
Feira Alta,  
Mapusa 403507 Goa.  
Phone - 0832-2255913  
Email - myofai@gmail.com

A new book called *A Sourcebook on India's Organic Seeds* is forthcoming from the Other India Bookstore. It is a compilation that provides easy access to traditional folk seed knowledge for farmers, and champions the cause of their conservation.

For more information, or to buy a copy contact the Other India Bookstore.  
Phone - 0832-2263305  
Email- otherindiabookstore@gmail.com

### Cultural events at OWC 2017

The OWC will play host to organic farmers from all over the world. To welcome them and show them the flavours and colours of India, we are organising a cultural extravaganza with song and dance from all regions of India.

Overall charge of the cultural events is with Nehha Bhatnagar of the Sarvam Foundation and her team.

If you want to contribute to the cultural night events, please let Nehha know. She will personally visit you, so that you can present the cultural item to her and she can come to an opinion.

Her address:

Nehha Bhatnagar  
Sarovam Foundation  
New Delhi

# Making Presentations before the World Congress

Do you want to make a presentation of your innovations or techniques at the Organic World Congress? You should!  
Follow these steps. If you succeed, your travel and registration charges may be waived.

Steps to follow for getting your presentation accepted:

1. If you feel that the world organic community will benefit from a sharing of your organic farming work, contact the person appointed in your region. The list of contact people will be updated on the OFAI website.
2. All organic farmer presentations are to be made in a fixed format. Total number of slides permitted is 20. Slides must be only photographs, with space left for one sentence below the photograph.
3. If you can take the photos yourself or if you can get the help of anyone in the neighbourhood, please do so. If you cannot, contact OFAI office and sometime in the coming months, a trained person will connect with you and then help you prepare the PPT.
4. Once the PPT is done, it is despatched to the myofai email id. The Central Secretariat staff will make copies and then send it for consideration to the Presentation Approval Committee (PAC) for its decision.
5. If your proposal or PPT is accepted, the PPT will go for translation into 11 other-languages. It will then be sent to Digital Empowerment Foundation in New Delhi for ensuring uniform good quality in the presentations.
6. Hindi and English are the official languages of OWC 2017. However, organic farmers are allowed to submit their presentations in any of the following 14 languages:  
English, Hindi, Gujarati  
Spanish, French, Chinese & Portuguese  
Malayalam, Tamil, Kannada  
Bengali, Oriya, Telugu, and Marathi.
7. Once the PPT is accepted, it will go to the Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) for professional upgrade and conversion into standard format for projection at the Congress.
9. All organic farmers making presentations will be allowed to speak in English, Hindi or their mother-tongue.
10. All organic farmer presentations must be prepared before 1 October, 2016, in order to enable the process of selection and translation to be completed on time.
11. All farmers whose presentations have been approved, will be informed well in advance so that they can book their tickets to New Delhi well in time.

Presentation Approval Committee (PAC)

OFAI has set up a Presentation Approval Committee (PAC). All the presentations will be sent to the committee for selection. The members are mostly organic farmers. They are listed here:

1. Sarvadaman Patel, President (OFAI)
2. Dr. Deva Kumar
3. Raghava, Treasurer (OFAI)
4. Kapil Shah, Secretary (OFAI)
5. Debal Deb
6. S.R. Sundaraman
7. Dr. K. Natrajan
8. Ramaswamy Selvam
9. Natobar Sarangi
10. Sultan Ismail
11. B.N. Nandesh
12. Arun Sharma
13. Shamika Mone
14. Sabarmatee (Sambhav)
15. Clea Chandmal
16. Yogita Mehra

Preliminary List of Farmers Identified:

OFAI has also compiled a preliminary list of farmers who will be invited to give presentations at the Congress. If you know of anyone that we missed, please get in touch with us.

1. Bagappa
2. N.V.Venu Gopal
3. Santosh Kumar
4. Suvarnamma
5. Timbaktu Collective
6. Bhaskar Mahanta
7. Bina Chetia
8. Kamala Kaman
9. Neelam Datta
10. Bhupendra Singh
11. Shivnath Yadav
12. Clea Chandmal
13. Yogita Mehra and Karan Manral
14. Abhijeet Save
15. Arun P. Sheth
16. Badrishankar Motira Joshi
17. Ishwar Singh
18. Rajnikant K. Patel
19. Samatbhai Jada
20. Sarvdaman Patel
21. Sumitra Thacker
22. Vijay Shah
23. Bheem Singh
24. Dalipsingh
25. Phul Kumar
26. Praveen Kumar
27. Raj Bala
28. Rajkumar Arya
29. Ramesh Chander Dagar
30. Ramkishan
31. Udhay Bhan
32. Nek Ram Sharma
33. Rajni Vikram Rawat
34. A. P. Chandrasekhar
35. A.N. Channappagoudru Patil
36. Azad Cariappa
37. B. Basavaraju
38. B.N. Nandish
39. Basavraj Santeshwara
40. Dr. B N Viswanath
41. Dr. Varanashi Krishna Moorthy
42. G. Indrakumar
43. G. Vijayakumar
44. Ganapathy Bandu Jada
45. Garugadoddi Natraj
46. Juli and Vivek Cariappa
47. K.M. Belliappa
48. K.M. Kumbal
49. K.R. Neelakanta Murthy
50. Krishna Prasad
51. Narasimhamurthy.K.
52. Narayan Reddy
53. Raghava
54. Richard Rebello
55. Sangita Sharma
56. ShivKumar
57. Sumangala Veerabhadrappe
58. Syed Ghani Khan
59. Abdul Latheef
60. Anuradha Sarang
61. Arun Kumar K.R./ Sidy
62. Arvindan
63. Asokakumar V
64. C. G. Prakashan
65. Chandran Master
66. George Anthony
67. Illias KP
68. Indira Kodakara
69. Jafar Ali and Salma
70. K V Deyal
71. K. J. Paul
72. K. V. Sreeja and Narayanan
73. M Brahmadhath
74. Molly Paul
75. Molly Thomas
76. Rajeesh Uppala
77. Suman K B
78. Suraj
79. Suresh
80. T. V. Jayakrishnan
81. Tomy Vadakkancheri
82. Unni Alur
83. V. K. Sajeewan
84. Jacob Sebastian
85. P.N. Unnikrishnan
86. T.S.Viswan
87. Ajeet Kelkar
88. Arun Dike
89. Deepak Suchde
90. Gordhan Tiwari
91. Rajendra Singh Rathod
92. Raju & Shalini Titus
93. Shashi Bhushan Singh
94. Shyam Bahadur Namra
95. Anandrao Subedar
100. Arun Desai

101. Ashok Bang & Niranjana Maru
102. Babulal Gandhi
103. Bapusaheb Korde Guruji
104. Brajesh Shah
106. Dada Wadekar
108. Dr Mahadev Pachegaonkar
110. Geeta Deshmukh
112. Jayant Barve
113. Jitubhai Kutmutia
114. Kad Siddheshwar Swami
115. Kamalkishore Dhiran
116. Kantilal Nalage
117. Kori
118. Madhav Barve
119. Manohar Khake
120. Manohar Shriram Parchure
121. MOFF
122. Mona Patrao
123. Nagesh Swami
124. Narendra Khot, MKCL
126. Padmakar Chinchole
127. Pandurang Patil
128. Prakash Borge
129. Pramod Jagtap
130. Pranjali Borse
131. Prithwiraj N Ghorpade
133. Raghunath Dhole
134. Rahul Deshpande
135. Sajal
136. Sanat Kumar Das
137. Saneer Zanzurne
138. Sanjay Patil
139. Sanjay Patil Guruji
140. Santosh Nimbarkar
141. Shirish Pawar
142. Shitole Pandurang Balkrishna
143. Shobha Jagtap
144. Shubhada Pandhare
145. Soumendra Lokhande
146. Subhash Sharma
147. Sudhakar Sable
148. Suresh Bhaurao Parab
149. Suresh Desai
150. Swaraj Prayog Pariwar
151. Tarak Kate
152. Vasant & Karuna Futane
153. Vasudha Sardar
154. Vidhya Rudrakshi
155. Vishwas Patil
156. P Devakanta
157. Lumlang Khongthohrem
158. Abokali Jimomi
159. Adi Kumuruka
160. Debdulal Bhattacharya
161. Dolagobinda Panda
162. Ekadashi Nandi
163. Jagannath Mazi
164. Loknath Nauri
165. Minati
166. Natabar Sarangi
167. Padma Behere
168. Sabarmatee
169. Shiv Prasad Sahu
170. Sudam Sahu
171. Suryamani Kadraka
172. Deepika Kundaji & Bernard Declercq
173. Amarjit Sharma
174. Amarnath Singh
175. Awtar Singh
177. Gurmail Singh
178. Gurpreet Singh
179. Harmail Singh
180. Hartej Singh Mehta
181. Hem Khosla
182. Jagtar Singh Dhaliwal
183. Ravdeep Singh
184. Sukhchain Singh Gill
185. Swarn Singh
187. Vinod Jyani
188. Arjun Ram ji
189. Arun K. Sharma
190. Chaganlal Meghwal
191. Chain Singh Jodha
192. Chaturbhuj Prajapat
193. Ganpat Singh
194. Gopal Singh
195. Hukam Chand Patidar
196. Kailash Chaudhary
197. Kanku Bai
198. Krishan Kumar Jankhad
199. Madan Lal Devara
200. Manaram Aangari
201. Om Prakashji Sharma
202. Punaram Dagacha
203. Rampalji Ravat
204. Ratan Lal Daga
205. Sunda Ram Verma
206. Vardhi Chand Patel
207. Dhanapati Sapkota
208. B. R. Narayanswamy
209. Dr. K. Natrajan
210. Dr. Sultan Ahmed Ismail
211. Jayachandran
213. Madhu Ramakrishnan
214. N Gopalkrishnan
215. P B Murali
217. Ramasamy Selvam & Poongadi
218. S R Sundaraman
219. V Ravi
220. V S Arunachalan
221. Vinod
222. B. R. Narayanswamy
223. R. Murugesan
224. Chetna Organic Society
225. Deccan Development
226. Abhishek
227. Brijpalsingh
228. Dharmendra Singh
230. Fula Devi
231. Himanshu Gangwar
233. Man singh
234. Prashant
236. Prem Singh
237. Pushpendrabhai
238. Ratiya Singh
239. Shanti Devi
240. Shoor Vir Singh
241. Surat Singh
242. Vivek Chaturvedi
244. Alauddin Ahmed
245. Animesh Bera
246. Ardhendu S Chatterjee
247. Asamanjan Barman
248. Balai Hembram
249. Balaram Das
250. Bikash Mahato
251. Bimal Biswas
252. Chaitanya Mahato
253. Devnarayan Nayek
254. Dhiren Mahato
255. Dilip Murmur
256. Dr. Debal Deb
257. Himanshu Biswas
258. Jaydeb Barman
259. Jogenrda Mahato
260. Kanak Ray
261. Kartik Mahato
262. Madhabi Satpati
263. Mahadev Tudu
264. Matindra Das
265. Matu Haya
266. Nirmal Singha
267. Panumati Soren
268. Pashupati Murmu
269. Pradeep Maity
270. Pramod Biswas
271. Ramani Baske
272. Ramen Mistry
273. RenupadaBagdi
274. Sahadev Murmur
275. Sanaka Hembram
276. Shyamoli Satpati
277. Sibani Soren
278. SonamaniTudu
279. Srimanta Soren
280. Subhash Biswas
281. Sukdev Mondal
282. Sunil Murmu
283. Surendra Biswas
284. Suresh Mahato
285. Sushama Arui
286. Tapas Das
287. Uday Hajra

# Sample 20-Slide Presentation (PPT) for OWC

Read the slides from left to right. This is a slide show prepared by a Goan organic farming couple. We have not used all the 20 slides because of space constraints. Please follow the guidelines on the next page when preparing the PPT.

**Growing food organically on hard rocky terrain**

Green Essentials at the International Centre Goa  
PANJIM, GOA, INDIA



2011



We started with building raised beds on what was virtually hard rock

2011



Shallow rooted crops begin growing on heavily composted beds

2012



Growing required regular addition of compost

2012



Companion plants like marigolds were added to deal with insect problems

2013



Introduced mulch with magical effect on soil health and moisture retention

2014



Modifying layout to enable shade, vertical growing space and more mulch production

2014



Soaking glyricidia stakes in panchagavya to improve survival and growth rates

2014



Glyricidia established creating shade and ample mulching material for the beds

2014



Change in layouts (more curves) and denser mixed planting confuses most insects

2014



Taller perennials create a cooler microclimate that allows leafy vegetables to thrive

2015



Plant yields increase with virtually no problems with insects, soil's water retention is enhanced

2015



By year 4, what started as just 8 inches of soil is supporting a small food forest

**Before vs After**



Green Essentials (Karan & Yogita)  
99606-43245 (Yogita)  
[www.greenessentials.in](http://www.greenessentials.in)  
[yogita@greenessentials.in](mailto:yogita@greenessentials.in)



## Guidelines for making the PPT:

1. Follow the sample ppt and do not exceed number of slides (20).
  2. Ensure that final ppt does not exceed the size of 10-14 MB.
  3. Use only one or two line descriptions under each picture.
  4. Make sure that the slides follow some order, and that they tell a logical and coherent story.
- Get the whole story first, and see how to best to tell it using pictures, and only then proceed to take the pictures. The ppt should flow in such a way that the audience understands the process from beginning to end.
5. Highlight the innovativeness of the farmer's approach to organic farming.
  6. Take clear pictures, they should not be blurry.
  7. Text should appear at the bottom of the slide as far as possible.
  8. You can put more than one picture in one slide, and make a collage, if you feel that it is necessary.

### Volunteers needed for the OWC

If any of you want to volunteer with OFAI in any capacity towards making the OWC a success, do get in touch with us either by email or post. We also require young, tech savvy volunteers to go out in their states and help farmers make presentations. If this is something that excites you, we will put you in touch with local farmers.

If you have any further queries with regards to the presentation please write to OFAI at [myofai@gmail.com](mailto:myofai@gmail.com).

You can also find and download the regional language presentations in Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Oriya, Bengali, Gujarati, and Malayalam on the OFAI website.



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## Subjects on which you can make presentations for the congress

### A. SEEDS AND BIODIVERSITY (INCLUDING FAUNA, WILD AND DOMESTICATED)

1. Conservation of indigenous seed
2. Working with Open Pollinated (OP) seed
3. Seed treatments and management solutions
4. Seed storage systems – traditional and new
5. Maintaining village level seed banks
6. Successful low-cost seed conservation
7. Maintaining seed diversity
8. Maintaining / Enhancing soil bacteria diversity
9. Wilderness areas in organic fields
10. Livestock: working with indigenous species
11. Managing troublesome animals and wildlife-farmer conflicts
12. Fodder and forage farming – traditional fodder, forage and improved varieties on organic farms

### B. SOIL FERTILITY AND HEALTH, SOIL LIFE AND PLANT HEALTH

1. Mulching methods
2. Conserving, enhancing and maintaining beneficial soil bacteria
3. Dealing with insect imbalances
4. Using beneficial insects and organisms
5. Termites for organic farmers
6. Earthworms, vermiculture and vermiwash
7. Rehabilitating soils after chemical farming
8. Cover crops and green manure crops
9. Forestry principles for organic farms
10. Organic horticulture and floriculture
11. Soil nutrient preps

12. Organic dairy production (indigenous cattle and buffalo, plus goat farming)
13. Organic poultry production (indigenous chicken and duck)
14. Restoring the bee and frog to organic agriculture
15. Small equipments for small organic farmers
16. Fish production and integrated farming
17. Planning organic farms for water conservation
18. Reducing water usage for intensive cropping
19. General water conservation and use
20. Building overall farm ecology

### C. ECOLOGICAL FARMING PRACTICES AND SYSTEMS

1. Biodynamic Agriculture
2. Permaculture
3. Organic farming
4. Zero budget farming
5. No tillage agriculture
6. Diversity of SRI techniques
7. Homa Organic Farming
8. Biodiversity-based farming
9. Holistic Approaches to Farm Workers on Organic Farms
10. Natural Farming
11. Insights of Traditional Agriculture
12. Non-conventional crops and wild produce
13. Non-Pesticidal Management (NPM)
14. Insect repellents and traps
15. Maintaining balance sheets (economic inputs)
16. Product harvest and storage
17. Food processing, quality assurance guarantees and upscaling (organic jams, pickles, etc)
18. Education of children and complete organic life styles

**Please note: The above topics are only illustrative of the many presentations topics that can be used. Feel free to talk about new and innovative organic practices that you use. Write to OFAI with your proposed presentation ideas and we will get back to you with feedback and help.**

# OFAI's 5th Biennial Convention

*More than 2,000 registered delegates came to Chandigarh*



For the first time, several organisations came to join OFAI in organising the event. These included ASHA, NITTR and the Kheti Virasat Mission.

The 5th National Organic Farming Convention was the largest congregation of organic farmers anywhere ever in the world. This Convention was mostly crowd-funded, with participants themselves contributing nearly one-fourth of the financial requirement, with others like the Government of Haryana, Government of Punjab, Government of India (National Centre for Organic Farming), Chandigarh administration in addition to NABARD stepping forward to support this.

The convention also attracted extensive media attention and coverage. The special features of this year convention included:

**Farmer-to-Farmer sharing, learning and dialogue:** Group discussions, workshops, live demonstrations and other programs for exchange of knowledge and solidarity-building were an important feature of this Convention. These were augmented by the technical expertise of NITTR through live transmission and interactions with farmers and scientists at selected 'centres' around the country.

**Live demonstrations:** Special agricultural plots were prepared around Chandigarh by Dr Sarvadaman Patel, President of OFAI, who is a pioneering organic farmer. Other farmers and scientists demonstrated their skills, knowledge and innovations with ecological practices & products.

**Scientific Conference on 'Mainstreaming Agro-Ecology':** The Indian Society for Agro-Ecology along with the Centre for Sustainable Agriculture held a Scientific Conference which included



*Biodiversity on Display at Chandigarh*

presentation of the research papers by scientists and researchers in the field of sustainable agriculture.

**Policy debates:** As part of its technical deliberations, the Convention hosted debates for better policy formulation on a variety of themes like seeds, millets, certification, marketing, organic farming policies, and promotion of bio-diversity conservation.

**Exhibition for innovations:** An exhibition was set up to make citizens aware of the need for organic farming, various organic practices, inputs, machinery and innovations from farmers and entrepreneurs.

**Kisan Haat:** The Kisan Haat was a key attraction for the tri-city consumers to interact and procure authentic organic farm produce directly from farmers. It also opened up marketing opportunities for organic producers from the region and organic farmers from other parts of the country.

**Biodiversity festival:** The success of organic farming depends on the preservation and protection of bio-diversity. A number of farmers and organizations working for the agro-diversity conservation and revival displayed India's rich crop bio-diversity. This festival was led by Sahaja Samrudha. Similarly, uncultivated foods were on display, led by Living Farms.

**Organic food festival:** The delegates as well as general public experienced a first-of-its-kind organic and traditional food festival to enable them to reconnect with the healthy food traditions of India.

**Urban gardening workshops:** Workshops were organized for people to



Smt. Maneka Gandhi, Minister for Women and Child Development, and a fervent organic farming supporter, participated for a few hours in the Convention and released a copy of OFAI's new Organic Seed Sourcebook prepared by Shamika Mone

take up kitchen gardening based on organic principles.

**Cultural programmes:** Cultural programmes were organised which included the famous singer Rabbi Shergill performing on the opening day of the Convention.

**Publications:** Books and CDs/DVDs were launched, displayed and sold.

Many parallel sessions were organised each day, broken up into technical and policy-level themes - Organic Farming Policies & Implementation, Agro-Toxins and Environmental Health, Adivasi Agriculture, Plant Protection, Water, GMOs and Organic Farming, Biodiversity and Crop Planning, Soil, Organic Certification and Marketing, Seed Sovereignty, Livestock especially Indigenous Breeds, Women in Organic Agriculture, Smallholders and Organic Farming, Organic farming in School Education, and Crop Planning & Innovative Practices, so that all delegates could choose a topic of their interest and join a discussion on the same, for learning, for voicing their views and experience and for policy influencing.

Shri Manohar Lal Khattar, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Govt of Haryana said about the occasion, "I am happy to have people from all parts of the country here today. We have tried to create a few opportunities and have in the process also created a few challenges for ourselves. Of the issues that we have created for ourselves, one is the suffocation of the very soil. Organic farming is a solution to this problem. We need to ensure that organic farming is being promoted in Haryana. We want to get at least 10 percent of all our land under organic farming each year. Perhaps, it will be possible for us to do it in phases. Till now, our testing labs have only been testing the soil. I have asked

for the produce to also be tested and for us to have the capacity to do so. This will ensure that the organic food is labeled and through this we would be able to provide better returns to our farmers.

We are creating facilities to produce good compost and also tying them up with our solid waste management programmes. We will ensure that we make a 'Jaivik Kheti' policy in this state. We will ensure that we foster and facilitate the local varieties of the cattle. We are looking at traditional breeds of cattle to provide better returns to the farmers."

Shri Om Prakash Dhankar, Minister for Agriculture, Govt of Haryana added that, "The Chief Minister is himself a farmer who is sensitive to the issues of farmers. I have known Shri Umendra for three decades. In 2005, we organized a convention for farmers here and did a review of the four decades of Green Revolution. The situation of our farming was very different before 1965. We got new fertilisers followed by high yielding varieties and then came the pesticides. We could get many technologies and were able to provide food to the nation, but the by-product of this has been the cancer and other forms of illness. Today, even our elite farmers have stopped eating what they grow and instead consume food from other parts of the country where there is relatively lower usage of chemicals. Wherever there is a high usage of Bt, there is also a large increase in suicide rate.

When I got visitors from Monsanto, I told them that we feed cotton oilcake to our buffaloes and this has an effect on our milk. I asked them if they have studied the impact of this. They haven't done any such study so far. I had their representatives meet me again but there was no response from them.

We need to advance, but, we need to know that the advancement and progress is not about reaching a position where we are facing destruction. Organic farming is not about learning anything new; it is about stopping all those things that we are doing which are destructive. If we can ensure that the farmer gets good returns, then we can make him adopt these ideas.

Today, the governments pay heed to the market forces when they are organised. So, we too need to get organised. As an Agriculture Minister, my biggest concern is how to organize the market for farmers. This is the challenge I face every day. When the farmers can directly reach the consumers and ensure their command and influence in the market, we will be able to do something serious."

**For detailed reports including individual event reports like seed festival report, declarations by the organic farming community and scientists, discussions in each sessions along with the entire fund mobilisation, please visit the website link.**

**[https://kavithakuruganti.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/5th-national-organic-farming-convention\\_report-oct2015-for-uploading5.pdf](https://kavithakuruganti.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/5th-national-organic-farming-convention_report-oct2015-for-uploading5.pdf)**

# IN FOND MEMORY

India's organic farming movement loses three great organic farming pioneers in the brief span of a few months. Not a nice thing to happen. But the good news is many young people are moving in with great enthusiasm to take their place.

**D D BHARAMADOUDRA**



A native of Yalavatti village in Shirahatti taluk of Gadag district, D.D. Bharamagoudra was a pioneer in initiating organic farming in rain-fed areas and also motivated many to follow him.

He was the first president of the Organic Farming Association of India, and served the association for two terms. He was also a respected member of the Organic Farming Mission set up by the BJP government in the State.

He was also honoured with 'Karnataka Rajyotsava' award and was known as a resource person on organic farming.

Apart from being a pioneer in growing cotton and chillis under organic farming in rain-fed areas, he had also worked towards preserving native varieties of seeds.

A few years ago, DD, as he was popularly known, found he had a serious heart problem. He submitted to a heart operation in Bangalore. He came out of it and soon gathered his strength. Very soon, he was back again at his favourite work: travelling, meeting farmers, advising those who wished to move out of chemical farming.

He had just returned from a family outing abroad, when the call came.

**BHASKER SAVE**



Bhaskarbhai Save, aged 93, left this world on Oct 24, 2015. Born on 27th January, 1922, Bhaskar Save inspired and mentored 3 generations of organic farmers. Masanobu Fukuoka, the legendary Japanese natural farmer, described Save's farm as "the best in the world, even better than my own farm!" It is a veritable food forest and a net supplier of water, energy and fertility to the local ecosystem, rather than a net consumer.

In 2010, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) – the world-wide umbrella body of organic farmers and movements – honoured Save with the 'One World Award for Lifetime Achievement'. Its jury declared, "He is one of the most outstanding personalities in the organic world."

Save's way of farming and teachings were rooted in his deep understanding of the symbiotic relationships in nature, which he was ever happy to share freely and enthusiastically with anyone interested. The farm yield – in all aspects of total quantity, nutritional quality, taste, biological diversity, ecological sustainability, water conservation, energy efficiency, and economic profitability – is superior to any farm using chemicals, while costs (mainly labour for harvesting) are minimal, and external inputs almost zero.

Since 2014, a residential Natural Farming Learning Centre ([www.bhaskarsavenftc.in](http://www.bhaskarsavenftc.in)) has been offering 6 day long introductory courses (in Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati & English) at Bhaskar Save's farm.

- Bharat Mansata

**O.P. RUPELA**



There are hardly any words to describe the grief and sense of loss that the entire community of organic farming/ecological agriculture movement in India is experiencing after hearing the news of the sudden and tragic demise of Dr O P Rupela, a friend and guide to hundreds in the movement.

We remember him as a strong supporter in most of our endeavours. Whether it was a high-profile conference or a closed door lobbying meeting, or action research in farmers' fields or reviewing a book being prepared, or giving his inputs in designing and implementation of a research study, or training a group of farmers or NGO frontline workers, there was not a single time when Dr Rupela turned down any request.

As a scientist, he was that rare breed who had enormous humility and ability to learn from every situation – he would keep telling again and again unhesitatingly in all fora that farmers like Subhash Sharma are his "Gurus". His readiness in admitting that he did not know something, his eagerness to learn new things and his amazing humility with regard to the enormous knowledge that he carried are rarities amongst human beings, leave alone scientists.

He will continue to be our guide and inspiration in our work, and we hope to imbibe his values so that we may fulfill our collective dream of ecological agriculture in India, led by empowered farmers. Our greatest tribute to him would be by taking forward the mission with strength, and we need to do so.

- Kavitha Kuruganti