

Agriculture is for our life

“Agriculture is for our life and going to school and college is to improve our knowledge” are the words of my father which inspired me to stay in agriculture. I have finished my Master degree in Business Administration and am into farming for the last eight years.

In 2002, when I was 22 years, I was inspired by Dr. Nammalvar, the legendary organic farmer in Tamil Nadu, who had addressed out villagers about the need for organic farming and environmental preservation. I then started collecting more information about organic farming – from family members, elderly people in my village and from books. I also attended trainings at Kolunji ecological farm of KUDUMBAM. I started applying those principles and gradually converted my land from chemical to organic. Now I am cultivating organic paddy, sugarcane, groundnut, pulses, and millets.

The success behind my farming is that I am making a crop calendar depending upon the monsoon and climatic condition for doing the farming activities. I split the land and utilize it according to the soil type and water resource. I apply enriched farmyard manure. I also cultivate Daincha (green manure) and incorporate it into the field. I use bio-control agents and herbal decoction for pest control. I prepare panchagavya as a growth promoter. I visit and work everyday in the field. In sugarcane field, I am cultivating sugarcane as well as Daincha as a green manure. I cultivate Daincha and legume crops like cowpea, black gram, etc. on the rows. I recycle the sugarcane leaves by making compost and applying this compost during 70- 90 days. I get a yield of more than 51 tones/ acre.

I would like to bring up my son as a farmer.

I am happy that my brother Mr. Vijay Kumar is also into the field of agriculture. Unhappy with chemical farming he attended several trainings on organic farming from Kudumbam, Government of India and Parry Sugar Mills. It has presently established a bio-control lab and producing trichogramma egg parasite cards. He now educates the farmers how to control expenses during cultivation. Now Parry Company buys the card from Vijay Kumar and supplies it to the sugarcane farmers in this area. He earns around Rs.15,000/- per month.

Majority of the people living in my village - Kovil veerakudi depend on agriculture. In spite of that, the youngsters are no more interested to take up farming as a profession. They see farming as a non-remunerative choice and migrate to nearby urban centers but do not succeed there as well. Soon they return back to the village with a lot of behavioural changes, roaming around lazily



Aravindan and Vijayakumar - leading by example

in the village. Presently farming is very hard because farmers spend a lot of money for buying seeds, chemical fertilizers, Pesticides. They borrow money from the money lenders but are unable to repay back.

The future of farming is a question. But I also see some positive signs for a bright future for farming. My village already has a youth club and functions well. Besides farming, youth engage in social works like cleaning of roads, school premises, health camps, etc.

We have an organic farmers club in my village and we are planning to produce bio- fertilizers like Azospirillum, Rhizobium, pseudomonas, trichogramme virudi etc. While these are some small initiatives at the ground level, at a higher level the government should also encourage the youth by supporting them and introducing new schemes for young farmers. They should motivate, recognise, and appreciate the youth to pull them towards agriculture by schemes and trainings.

“You also must do agriculture like Aravindan”. When I hear these words from other farmers in the village I feel very proud to be a farmer. For many parents in the village, myself and my brother are role models of the youth. As a farmer, I am very happy because I am supplying grains for my nation and I am not working against the environment. I would like to bring up my son as a farmer.

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This article was prepared based on the interactions with the farmers by Mrs Pangayavalli, Kudumbam, Tiruchi.