

Proceedings of the First Meeting of the Task Force on Organic farming and non -chemical farming held on 09.07.2015 under the chairmanship of Dr. A.K. Singh, Vice Chancellor, Rajmata.....Gwalior in Committee Room No III, NAAS, NASC, Todapur, New Delhi.

List of participants is annexed.

At the outset, Dr. Vandana Dwivedi, Additional Commissioner (INM) DAC, New Delhi being the Nodal officer of the Task Force, welcomed the participants and with the approval of the chairman briefly informed the genesis of the Task Force and described the terms of references set for the Task Force. She also mentioned that PMO asked that the interim report of the Task Force has to be submitted by November, 2015 and final report by December, 2015. She also informed that the Task Force may co-opt need-based official/non-official experts/representatives of any organization, and may also examine and address any other issues which are important but are not specifically spelt out in the ToRs. The Task Force may devise its own procedures for conducting its business/ meetings. Reimbursement of TA/DA to the non-official members in connection with the meetings of the Task Force will be made by DAC, MoA as per the rules and as admissible under SR 190(a). Members were informed that, while availing air travel, they have to travel essentially by Air India flights as per the policy of GOI. The Task Force will be serviced by the INM Division, DAC, MoA, New Delhi. Thereafter she requested Chairman to conduct the proceedings.

2. Dr. A.K. Singh, Vice-Chancellor, RVSKV and Chairman, welcomed the members of Task Force and introduced himself to the committee and asked the participants to introduce themselves. Chairperson sought the willingness of members for coordinating the activities of Task Force as Dr. B. Mohan Kumar showed his inability to work as Member Secretary of the Task Force. ADC (INM) replied that Dr. Ravi Shankar, Sr. Scientist, IIFSR, who helped in compilation of Base Paper on Organic Farming, may be asked to assist the Task Force as Member Secretary.

3. Thereafter, the Chairman made a brief presentation on the specific ToRs set for the Task Force, wherein he focused on current status of Organic Farming in India, ICAR Network Project on Organic Farming; irrigated, rain-fed and others aspects, the list of states having Organic Policy in place and States converted completely Organic. Director, NCOF, replied 13 states are having Organic Policy and 4 states are completely Organic i.e. Sikkim, Nagaland, Mizoram and Uttarakhand. Further he observed that Uttarakhand has good market system whereas Sikkim (going to be fully organic by December, 2015) totally lacks the market infrastructure/facilities. Chairperson said that North Eastern Region has high potential for carrying out Organic Farming. Further he desired that the concerned State Govt. may be asked as to how they are going to implement organic policy. Chairperson wanted that a line of action should be framed by October, 2015.

4. Dr. O.P. Rupela said that the Task Force should have a Brain Storming; and information has to be collected on area under organic certification, organic product market, and publicity of organic farming. Organic farming should emerge as new stream of agriculture. He explained the activities of Non Pest Management (NPM) and Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (CSA) who were successful in controlling red caterpillar by Community Borne Fire Action, which attracted the attention of the Government of A.P. Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) is acting at Greater Pace through NPM by reducing the cost of production, with high yield and no land mortgage. Later the CSA is converted to community

managed sustainable agriculture (CMSA) with 35 lakh acres of land. He added that aerobic composting (NADEP) would be a better composting process, as the quality of compost should not be judged only by testing NPK but considering Biological Enzymes, Microbial Population etc. Dr. O.P. Rupela proposed to visit SERP and other models to learn more about them.

5. AA. Sh. Ananda suggested that the title of the Task Force should be Organic Farming or Non-Chemical Farming rather than Organic Farming and Non-Chemical Farming.

6. Shri. Umendra Dutt suggested that woman members should also be co-opted as members of the Task Force (like Ms. Niranjana, Chetna Vikash, members of National high power committee for woman empowerment). Director, NCOF suggested to visit the Good Agriculture Practice (GAP) areas. In order to service the Task Force smoothly recruitment of a Research Assistance should be done. Chairperson said that APEDA may be asked to deliver a lecture on export market status of Organic Products and shortcomings if any should be sought. It was thought that the discussion of the Task Force should reach common man.

7. ADC(INM) informed the members about the government initiatives to promote Organic Farming and an elaborate scheme named Paramparogat Krishi Vikas Yojana under NMSA with annual allocation of Rs 300 crore for the year 2015-16 is being implemented in a cluster mode. Members were of the view that opinion of farmers should be taken about Organic Farming.

8. Dr. O.P. Rupela told that in Andhra Pradesh, Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) initiated Community Managed Sustainable Agriculture (CMSA) in 2004 as part of its mandate to eradicate poverty and to improve livelihoods of the rural poor. CMSA was meant to support the poor farmers to adopt sustainable agriculture practices, to reduce the costs of cultivation and increase net incomes. The CMSA succeeded in running the programme, routing money to Organic Farming, and created Organic Farming Associations for implementation.

9. AA. Sh. Ananda told that Taluka officer or Nodal officer should be appointed to look after the Organic Farming Association. The farmers of Organic Farming Association should use all methods of Organic Farming as suggested by ICAR. He told that he is going to present a simple method for direct transfer of cash from Central Government legally. Director, NCOF replied that DTC mode is being executed in Paramparogat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY). He also suggested that the Task Force report should be submitted to Hon'ble Prime Minister and unveiled on December 23, 2015 being Kisan Divas.

10. Chairperson felt that a website on Task Force should be designed immediately and all information relevant to organic farming upload on it. Further he told may be called as an invitee to the National Consultation..

11. Dr. B. Mohan Kumar said that two principal challenges exist in the context of organic farming i.e. (i) the requirement of organic materials to supply nutrients on pro-rata basis is quite high, i.e., high volumes of organic materials are required to meet the nutrient demand for organic production. Hence, through a combination of sources, the nutrient demand can be satisfied and cropping system approach involving green manures and leguminous crops should be focused (ii) Yield reduction is observed quite often when one shifts to Organic Farming from conventional farming (chemical farming). It may take up to seven or eight years to stabilize production, during which period compensation may be given to the farmers

needs. Director told that Goshala, Pressmud will address the Organic Manure requirement (7 Million MT Organic Manure is required).

12. Package of Practices should be prepared as the some of the extant recommendations do not reflect the exact Organic Farming procedures. Further, members said that APEDA has no export policy.

13. Organic Farming will be best practiced if vendor system is implemented in the States, as NHM did not achieve its objectives and a lot of revenue is being wasted.

14. ADC (INM)opined that it would be in the interest of organic growers,if the interview of the special invitees is telecast by DD-Kisan Channel during the National Consultation. Director, NCOF suggested for callingthe traders.

15. Dr. Rupela opined that the nutritional value of Organic Produce should be checked for fixed parameters. Parameters for analysis of soil health should be given in terms of Organic Carbon percentage, available NPK, soil microbes, microbial enzymes etc. Dr. Rupela and Sh. Ananda suggested enhancing on-farm input production and encouraging biomass by plantation.

16. Chairperson suggested that use of 25% Organic Manures could be made mandatory as a recommendation in Soil Health Card.

17. Shri. Umendra Dutt suggested that yield reduction in Organic Farms should be addressed by farmers and experts, and strategy of Zero pesticide usage should be followed. He also observed that yield of Organic Crops found to be higher with some farmers, and suggested that the varieties and management practices of those farmers should be popularized.

18. Dr. B. Mohan Kumar said that Organic Products may have high nutritional value in terms of proteins, essential fatty acids, anti-oxidants etc. However, some findings indicate that no significant difference is observed between Organic produce and conventional produce. Further, Organic Farming should be carried out in spices, Organic Milk production etc.He also mentioned that a plant breeding strategy has to be put in place as most of the varieties available in market are suitable for input intensive production systems. Varieties suitable for low input conditions should be developed.

19. Director, NCOF suggested that mono-cropping does not benefit Organic Farming so mixed cropping should be encouraged. Progressive Farmers' list should be uploaded on the Task Force website. Director, NCOF proposed for Organic Seed Bank.

20. Shri. Umendra Dutt enquired that how parallel farming could be justified under PKVY. Director, NCOF replied that subsidy under PKVY will be available only for **one acre land for Organic Farming**. He also mentioned that first preference should be given to local Organic Market, later on for export of Organic Product as there are some reports that have indicated and male fertility decrease in India.

21. AA. Sh. Ananda told that the pace of expansion is very slow. Farmers should visit the Organic Fields and should also be provided marketing facilities. He further told that farmers should be brought emotionally to Organic Farming owing to their spiritual attachment to the soil.

22. Chairperson asked that database of Organic Farmers should be prepared showing data on inputs, area etc. National Consultation- a two day programme has to be organized on 31 August to 01

September, 2015 inviting 50-60 members comprising Organic Farmers, marketing personnel/agencies and other stakeholders.

23. Shri. Ananda desired that a presentation has to be made by NCOF on various Models for Organic Farming, asking export policies from APEDA incorporating opinions of farmers.State Organic Policies should be sought for appraisal of members of Task Force.Lectures byspecial invitees namely Sh. Anantu, Sh. Kapil Shah, Ms. Kavitha_Kurganti, and Dr. Raidu_will be arranged during second meeting scheduled on 30th July,2015.

Meeting ended with Vote of thanks to the chair.
