Dear Stakeholders,

We are pleased to welcome you all to the 3rd quarterly issue of “Sustainable Soy News” from the National Platform for Sustainable Soy. Many thanks to all of you for the great response on the second edition of “Sustainable Soy News”.

This issue of “Sustainable Soy News” is covering about the field experiences of Farmer Support Program (FSP) of 2014 soy crop season; the program is promoting sustainable agricultural practices and increasing adoption of sustainable practices through lead farmers, farmer field school approach, sustainability certifications and promoting Farmer Producer Companies (FPOs) for backward and forward linkages etc.

Gender balancing has also become a concern in agriculture and as women have unequal access to resource, their behaviours are conditioned by prevailing norms and belief, and their contributions to decision making process in often limited. Solidaridad has taken up steps through organizing trainings to create an environment of gender sensitivity in agriculture.

Agriculture is the sector that is the biggest user of water followed by domestic and industrial sector in India. India has 18% of the world’s population but has only 4% of total usable water resources. Sustainability of natural resources is one of the important factor for sustainability of agriculture and a strategic multidisciplinary approach is required for increasing water use efficiency and reducing water footprints; hence Solidaridad and Hindustan Unilever Foundation (HUF) are jointly implementing program for water efficiency in agriculture and aiming to reduce water footprints so in continuation to this and to engage researchers, academicians and universities a National Conference on Sustainable Water Management was supported by Solidaridad and HUF, which was organized Rani Durgawati University, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, India.

Apart from this the current edition contains latest news and articles from Government, Agriculture universities, financial and collateral management agencies and some success stories from the field of sustainable soy in India. We hope to maintain this upward momentum with quality information and updates. We are indeed grateful for your contribution to making this platform efficient and dynamic.

This publication mainly presents the facts on the different standards and does not express any preferences. We do encourage all of you to try your utmost best to enrich the forthcoming Newsletter of National Platform for Sustainable Soy by contributing articles, success stories and case studies etc.
With the aim to ensure sustainability of soybean in India, the Farmer Support Program (FSP) initiated in 2013. Programme is India’s biggest sustainability certification program which is being implemented by Solidaridad and 7 partner NGOs (ASA, ACCESS, GVT, IGS, CARD, SRIJAN and VRUTTI) in 24 Districts of 3 major soybean growing states of India (Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan). The program plans to directly reach 77,000 small farmers and around 1,10,000 hectares of soy farm in three years. Program focuses on sustainable and efficient use of available natural resources, RTRS, improving soil fertility, market linkage for sustainable soy and reducing the cost of cultivation by judicious use of agricultural inputs and promotion of sustainable and eco-friendly agricultural practices through creation of farmers led agriculture extension systems under social and environmentally sustainable management model. Program has currently achieved an outreach of 74,161 farmers in 80,715 hectares of soy farm lands. Project has designed not only to demonstrate better crop management practices to the farmer by conducting field demonstration but also ensure availability of suitable and advance agriculture information amongst project farmers through strengthening of farmers led local agriculture extension systems in form of Farmers Field School and Lead farmers. Apart from this ICT is also introduced to cover a mass instantly through information, awareness about pest and disease, preventive measures, weather information and market prices through customized IVRS and SMS. Also to measure soy yields and analyse the impact of package of technology a scientific base Mobile App is developed and introduced in field.

**Sustainable Practices:**

The program does extension of sustainable farming practices and RTRS principles which are low chemical intensive, cost effective and environmental friendly apart from this it includes ensuring that proper wages are paid, no banned chemicals are used and no minors are employed. To build capacity for sustainability certification, an internal control system (ICS) tracks its adoption under five broad parameters across 96 sub-heads. For training farmers on sustainability principles 24 trained ICS teams has been appointed in 24 Districts in all three states.

As an impact of extension activities program farmers have started adopting the sustainable agricultural practices. The adoption percentages of these practices has increased as compared to the previous years.

The project farmers were verified through internal audits done by ICS at filed for adoption of sustainability criteria, and 59,629 farmers are ready for the external audits for certifications. As there is no current demand for RTRS credits in market and certification requires cost so they are not going for external audit.
As a direct result of adoption of sustainable practices project farmers are able to get average 10.5% increased yield as compared to state averages (based on SOPA estimate, 2014) and reduced the cost of cultivation by saving the costs of seeds, chemical pesticides, fertilizers and water. Also these practices are leading to create an environment for sustainable development. The same practices are being adopted by the farmers in other food crops like maize, wheat, pulses and paddy etc. thus contributing towards food security.

Farm Evangelist: Lead farmers:
Informal experimentation and innovation in agriculture have always taken place driven by creativity, necessity and opportunity. Farmers are a rich source of indigenous knowledge and practice, hence strategy of building lead farmers adopted in the program and these lead farmers adopts all recommended practices in their farms and disseminate knowledge among other farmers. Program has developed 1987 lead farmers and these lead farmers are able to achieve better yields by adopting sustainable practices. Now they are training to other farmers in their society.

Backward and Forward linkages with Farmer Producer Companies (FPOs):
Farmers groups are organized in the form of farmer producer companies (FPOs) and under the program currently 28 farmer producer companies (FPOs) has been formed. These FPOs are producing quality seeds, aggregating quality agri-inputs and proving it to farmers at reasonable prices. FPOs also started facilitating market and credit linkages for its members. As farmers are organized hence it given them advantage of power to bargain with market. Like one of promoted FPC under the program Samarth Kisan Producer Company Ltd. is emerging out as a role model company for other producer companies, it is working with 10,000 farmers and producing and processing quality seeds and supplying it to local farmers as well as to other FPOs and market. As there is huge potential in soybean for delivering high quality protein rich and affordable food product hence Samarth is also in position to start processing and marketing of protein rich nutritional soy products like soy flour, tofu and soy milk etc.

New Soybean Varieties Developed by JNKVV, Jabalpur

**JS 20-29**: It is an early variety, matures in 95 days. It possesses high yielding potential of 25-30 q/ha. It is categorized as multiple resistant for biotic stresses like yellow mosaic virus, charcoal rot, blights, bacterial pustules, leaf spots, stem fly, stem borers and defoliators. It possesses excellent germination and longevity. It is most suitable for 0.45 million plant population. Being an early genotype it is suitable for double cropping rainfed situation. It has semi erect growth habit suitable for inter cropping.

**JS 20-34**: It is an extra early variety matures in 87 days. It has high yielding potential (22-25 q/ha). It is a multiple resistant variety, showing resistance against charcoal rot, blights, bacterial pustules, leaf spots, stem fly, stem borers and defoliators. It is most suitable for low and medium rain fall, light to medium soils, upland conditions, increasing cropping intensity. It has erect growth habit suitable for intercropping. It possesses excellent germination and longevity.

Contributed by: Dr. A. N. Shrivastava, Soybean Breeder, Principal Scientist, Department of Plant Breeding and Genetics, J.N.K.V.V., Jabalpur
India has 18% of the world’s population but has only 4% of total usable water resources. Water scarcity affects all social and economic sectors and threatens the sustainability of the natural resources base. Addressing water scarcity requires a participatory and multidisciplinary approach to managing water resources in order to maximize economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems. There is increasing gap between irrigation potential created (IPC) and irrigation potential utilized (IPU) is substantial and growing. Water efficiency in agriculture can be achieved by improving water productivity, reducing evaporation-transpiration loss, developing water footprint and participatory management of water at end-user levels.

**About HUF-Solidaridad Water Efficiency Program:**

A partnership program of Hindustan Unilever Foundation (HUF) and Solidaridad “Water Efficiency and sustainability in Agri Supply Chain” initiated with the objective to enhance water efficiency by promoting certain water use efficiency farm techniques, stakeholders’ engagement and policy advocacy. It is a plug in program in Solidarodad’s four major commodity programs soy, sugarcane, cotton and tea covering more than 627,880 farmers and farm workers including around 1.6 million family members associated with selected crops on efficient water uses. In order to develop an accurate measurement of water use through a credible water foot-printing exercise across the select water commodities and large scale adaption of water saving mechanisms with interventions program covers. Program is spread across 2500 villages within 38 districts and 10 states of India; targeting to save cumulatively 0.4 to 1 trillion litres of water by the end of 2016.

The collaborative nature of this program sees the engagement of multiple actors in the private sector and their supply chains, producer groups, NGOs and others in Hindustan Unilever Foundation’s (HUF) journey on “Water for Public Good” in India. It weaves water as a common wave across the ongoing initiatives of Solidaridad and leverages on the existing networks and resources to enhance social return on investment for all the stakeholders. Both Solidaridad and HUF believe that the programme has the potential to go beyond the value chain approach and enthuse business to invest on issues like water management in the societies they operate. Both Solidaridad and HUF believe the programme would be able to move forward with the following shared agenda:

a. Focus on the demand side water management in agriculture and has the ambition to collaboratively look at value chain of individual businesses for large scale impact,

b. Building the capacity of smallholders, workers as well as communities

c. Involve smallholders, workers and businesses to join water platforms and enable them to engage on policy dialogues around water management in agriculture in select crops

d. The programme seeks to clearly to demonstrate success through measurement of impact by independent third party assessment.

**National Conference on Sustainable Water Resources Management:**

In continuation to this and pitching for a strategic focus on water efficiency; Solidaridad SSEA and Hindustan Unilever Foundation (HUF) jointly supported and facilitated “National Conference on Sustainable Water Resources Management. The objective of conference was to bring together Academicians, Scientists, Researchers, Managers, Administrators, Engineers, NGOs, Law Experts and those interested in Water Resources Management to exchange and share their experiences and research results about all aspects of Sustainable Water Resources Management.

Dr. O.P. Joshi one of the eminent scientist assisted and represented the Solidaridad along with Solidaridad team and a brief presentation was presented on the experiences of Solidaridad and HUF water program. The presentation shared the experience of water program which is for reducing water footprints in 4 focused commodities that are sugarcane, soy, tea and cotton. This conference has also invited research papers and updates happening in country in sustainable water management these all published a souvenir as a resource material for references and knowledge building. This paves the ways for network building and a long term associations for building on the concept of “Agriculture Water Resource Center” which is to be facilitated by Solidaridad along with the panel of experts and supported by Hindustan Unilever Foundation (HUF) under the journey of “Water for Public Good” in India.
Solidaridad-Samarth Organizes—Gender Equity Training in Sustainable Soy

The developing countries are dependent on agriculture for livelihood and food security. Agriculture needs manpower, if the manpower split into gender wise, amazing fact is that the women contribution is greater or equal to men. Nearly 70% of Indian rural women are employed in agriculture and they are responsible for 60-80 percent of food production through involvement in cultivation, livestock and other allied activities. Apart from this generally in conventional definition of “FARMER” men are defined as farmers, in fact the women also equally involved in agriculture in all phases.

Need of Gender Equity for sustainability:

There are various socio-economic, policy and technological barriers like access to resources, less awareness and limited access to innovative technologies and socio-cultural issues which creates barriers in women’s role in agricultural especially in terms of decision-making. As gender equity plays an important role in sustainability and women should be empowered by creating an environment of sensitizing society, building certain skills, equity in agricultural decision making etc. Gender equality can lead to productivity gains, that women’s increased control of household resources can improve outcomes for the next generation, and that empowering women as economic, social, and political actors can result in more representative decision-making.

National Platform for Sustainable Soy (NPSS) promotes sustainable soy practices; gender equality in sustainable soy is one of the important component of the sustainability which advocates and promotes gender equality through promoting 4 major principles;

- a. Capacity building
- b. Promoting women friendly technologies
- c. Enhancing equal decision making
- d. Equal wage rates for agricultural labour

So to promote gender equality and sensitizing field extension workers Solidaridad organized a one day training program “Training of Trainers (TOT) on Gender Issues” on 6th February, 2015 at the Agar-Malwa District of Madhya Pradesh, India; where Solidaridad is supporting Samarth Kisan Producer Company Ltd. for promoting sustainable soy. The objective of training was to prepare a cadre of trainers for training local community. The participants of training was 35 service providers who implement the program at field.

TAAL (Towards Action And Learning) which is a resource organization based at Bhopal has facilitated this training. Key-processes followed for training were: general perception about gender, group exercises organized for brainstorming, mapping was done to map out the role of women in agriculture and games were organized for effective learning. During the training it was coming out that women’s contribution in agriculture, when measured in number of tasks performed is greater than men. Men are mostly involved in mechanical activities and women are involved labour intensive activities. Women shared that there are issues of lacking in certain skills so if they are trained about those skills then they can perform the activities which are currently being performed by men. There were other issues also discussed like women lacks in technical knowledge hence their access to agricultural inputs and decision making is limited. If there will be the gender equity in agriculture then productivity can also be increased in sustainable way. As new knowledge on the role of gender in sustainable soy emerges, can be used for improving outcomes and long term impacts. The trained trainers will be engaged with the community to build a strong evidence base on gender in agriculture.
Enhancing Industry Support for Sustainable Soy through Vippy’s Agri-development initiative

Vippy Industries manufacturers and process Soy products for last 41 years and has been a pioneer organisation to support and motivate sustainability efforts taken for improvement of social, economic and environmental cause. At farming level as farmers are our primary suppliers of requirement of soybean for manufacturing and processing of various products as responsible and dedicated partner we are always front runner is supporting sustainable initiative at farming level with soybean farmers. The Agri-development project aimed at improving standard of living of small and marginal soybean growing farmers by enabling them self-reliant through organizing them, providing trainings, agronomic support, assisting adoption of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and providing market linkages and on the other hand to support environmental sustainability. We initiated Agri-development project form Kharif season 2014 and started working with 3500 soy farmers of Dewas District of Madhya Pradesh, India with farm level sustainability in soybean and market linkages. We provided trainings to farmers about the Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and also promoted the sustainability principles. We also initiated a market linkage facility for farmers and established 3 soy procurement centres. Out of 3 procurement centres 2 were managed by Farmer Producer Companies (FPOs). These procurement centres were established with the objective to ensure transparent practices and fair prices to farmers and on the other hand for industry like us it would provide availability of quality soy and would build better relations with farmers. While promoting market linkage initiative we experienced certain challenges like issue of soy quality from farmers, transportation issues with small farmers, limited working capital availability with Farmer Producer Companies and legal formalities like getting APMC licences etc. so keeping these challenges in mind we will be well prepared for coming season. National Platform for Sustainable Soy as a facilitator and knowledge resource centre is engaged with us to create a strong base with farmers and to support sustainability in soy and jointly we will find ways to mitigate the challenges. Contributed by: Mr. Praneet Mutha, Director, Vippy Industries Ltd. Dewas, Madhya Pradesh. India

Enhancing capacities of FPCs and Financial Linkages

FWWB, India was established in 1981 as an affiliate of Women’s World Banking, a global network created to focus on the need for women’s direct access to financial services and recognizing women’s role in building a nation’s economy. In the last two decades, FWBB combined its loans with technical assistance to ensure sustainable growth of more than 300 Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) with technical assistance and nearly 200 with loan support. FWWB has been providing capacity building support to MFIs that includes operational support in the initial years for start-ups, training by in-house teams and external resources, exposure visits to best practices, etc.

In 2010, FWBB hived-off its microfinance activity to Ananya Finance for Inclusive Growth (AFIG) Pvt. Ltd. Post-microfinance activity, FWBB continues to work in the areas of livelihood promotion either through community based organizations or producer groups, especially financing Farmer Producer Organizations.

Till date, FWBB has provided collateral free loans to around 45 FPCs which are involved in varied activities across India. Financing activity is well supported by capacity building support. Out of existing 35 FPCs, 16 are in Madhya Pradesh involved in sustainable soy production. Looking into the success of FPC financing, separate vertical is created in Ananya Finance to provide funds at commercial rate and cash credit facility through banks to matured and progressive FPCs. In FY 2014-15, FWBB has disbursed INR 100 Mn to FPCs and Ananya provided cash credit facility to three FPCs through one of the fastest growing nationalized bank. Rate of Interest (ROI) may vary from FPC to FPC depending on the growth trajectory and due-diligence carried out by team.

Contributed by: Mr. Sharad Verma, Program Manager, FWWB-I, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India For more details please visit http://fwwbindia.org.
**Vegetable Soybean: AVRDC - The World Vegetable Center**

Vegetable soybean is popularly known as edamame in Japan, maodou in China and green soybean in North America. The immature pods are boiled and the seeds extracted as a highly nutritious snack food. Demand is increasing as vegetable soybean gains recognition for its nutritional value, paving the way for the expansion of the crop in developing and developed countries. China, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam are the major vegetable soybean producing countries. AVRDC – The World Vegetable Center has played a pivotal role in promoting vegetable soybean through the development of improved lines. Provision of sufficient quantities of quality seed to farmers, adoption of integrated pest and disease management practices, and development of recipes for local tastes would further expand the production and consumption of this nutritious crop.

**Nutritional importance:**

Vegetable soybeans are rich in protein (13 %), cholesterol-free oil (5.7 %), phosphorus (158 mg/100 g), calcium (78 mg/100 g), vitamin B1 (0.4 mg/100 g) and B2 (0.17 mg/100 g). They also contain isoflavones and vitamin E (Shanmugasundaram and Yan 1999). The trypsin inhibitor activity in vegetable soybean is lower than in grain soybean. Pod and green bean appearance, taste, flavor, texture, and nutritional value, in that order, are the five most important quality requirements for vegetable soybean (Masuda, 1991).

**Seed production:**

One of the major challenges in promotion of a new crop is to provide sufficient quantities of seed of improved cultivars to farmers. In India, vegetable soybean cultivar ‘Swarna Vasundhra’ (GC89009-1-1-2) was released in 2008 by the Central Variety Release Committee (CVRC) of the Government of India. This is an elite germplasm line (EC 384907) introduced from AVRDC, Taiwan and recommended for release and cultivation in Jharkhand and Bihar in the kharif season.

‘Swarna Vasundhra’ has been the mainstay of the crop’s expansion in India to date. Thanks to the efforts of an AVRDC-Sir Ratan Tata Trust project, seed of this cultivar has been produced by more than 300 farmers in the state of Jharkhand and is helping to meet local demand for seed. The main need now is to increase vegetable soybean production to a level beyond that which can be absorbed by local markets, and to promote it in other parts of India to create a strong and permanent demand for this new crop (Nair et al., 2013).

This has been successfully accomplished in the state of Jharkhand in India, where tribal communities have started to consume vegetable soybean as a substitute for garden pea (Pisum sativum) and also have developed their own recipes.

Contributed by: Dr. Ramakrishnan M. Nair Vegetable Breeder - Legumes AVRDC - The World Vegetable Center Regional Center for South Asia ICRISAT Campus, Patancheru 502 324 Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. (Extracted from the proceeding of International Soy Conference and Society for Soybean Research and Development, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India).

**Working towards sustainable Soy FPOs in Maharashtra**

Over the last two decades, the Dilasa Group, based out of Aurangabad, has been working with the rural communes of Maharashtra towards the development of sustainable livelihoods. With the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation deciding to observe the calendar year 2014 as “Year of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)”, Dilasa has initiated the mobilization of more than 35000 farmers and their aggregation into FPOs across several districts in Maharashtra. Dilasa is working towards the formation of more than 100 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) in Maharashtra. Dilasa is working towards the formation of more than 100 Farmer Producer Organizations in Maharashtra, around 50% of them being predominantly soybean producers. In fact, Maharashtra is the second highest producer of soybeans in the country after Madhya Pradesh with a production of 48.565 Lakh MT in the Kharif season of 2013. There is definitely a strong need to help the soy farmers develop sustainable practices of soy production as well as help them improve the marketability of their soy produce. Sustainability is sure to bring a promising future for soy producers in Maharashtra.

Contributed by: Ms. Ishita Meshram, Dy. Project Coordinator, Dilasa Janvikas Pratishthhan,Auranagabad, Maharashtra, India
"An amalgamated FPO for FPOs in Rajasthan"

In order to significantly improve the terms of smallholders’ access to the market and strengthen their position in value chains, it is gradually being realized that if aggregated, small producers can easily bargain for better prices, both, while buying inputs and while selling their produce. This belief has led to the concept of establishing crop specific “Farmers’ Producer Organizations – FPOs” with Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC – GoI) as the lead FPO Promoting Agency in the Country.

In order to leverage the collective bargaining power of the producer organizations, it is required not only to work directly with the Small and Marginal Farmers and their institutions but also to work with FPOs and their promoting organizations for creating an enabling environment for smooth functioning of the producer organizations and help in overcoming impediments that they face on day to day basis.

Around 60 FPOs are already being promoted in the state of Rajasthan with support from various Promoting Organizations. A State level consortium i.e. “The Rajasthan State FPO Forum” is functioning since 2013 to bolster the FPO Promotion environment in the State with support from SFAC GoI and ACCESS Development Services as the Lead Resource agency. Six NGO partners and FPO representatives in the state are its active members. The forum since its inception has organized various awareness workshops with stakeholders like FPO members, officials from Dept. of Agriculture/Rural Development/ NABARD/ Banking institutions/ Procurement and facilitation agencies for increasing access to Finance, Technology, Markets and Govt. schemes for the members.

With its policy advocacy initiatives in 2014, the forum was able to facilitate waiver of mandi security fees worth INR 1,90,000 per FPO. Seven of these FPOs participated in direct bulk procurement of Black Gram at MSP price of Rs 3100 whereas the market price was prevailing around INR 2600 per quintal. This resulted in a cumulative procurement of 7530 MT of Black Gram worth INR 23.34 Crores generating an additional revenue of 1% for the FPOs as commission. The Forum has also facilitated input linkages with Indian Potash Ltd. for facilitating availability of quality agri inputs for the FPO members.

This initial success has motivated FPO members to form a State level amalgamated Producer Organization which would further take charge of access to technology, finance, markets and Govt. schemes for its member FPOs. A State level company namely “All Rajasthan Small Farmer Agri Producer Company Ltd.” is thus registered in Feb 2015 and 30 FPOs have already taken equity ranging from INR 1000 to INR 10,000 and more FPOs are to follow.

As National Platform for Sustainable Soy is focused on sustainability in soy sector through facilitating knowledge and partnerships for farm sustainability, market facilitation, sustainability certifications etc. thus the Rajasthan state forum as stakeholder may facilitate in procurement and farm sustainability issues of soy in coming years in Rajasthan.

Contributed by: Shubhendu Dash | State Technical Adviser and Convener Rajasthan State FPO Forum |Jaipur (Rajasthan)

Madhya Pradesh will introduce sample-based auction of soybean in mandis

Madhya Pradesh has been the biggest producer of soybean in India and in kharif 2014 total soybean production was 60.249 lac million ton as per SOPA estimates. Madhya Pradesh Government has planned to pilot sample based auction system for soybean and it will be done at Ujjain mandi. Based on the success it will be replicated to other 10 mandis. This system will bring transparency in selling of soybean and also ensure quality. As soybean’s industrial standards follow fair average quality for soybean which are broadly based on moisture availability, damaged grains and foreign material. This system will also encourage farmers to produce fair average quality and for traders and processing plants assurance of quality. We have introduced one session of sample-based auction at all A-class mandis of the Ujjain division,” says Ravindra Pastor, commissioner of Ujjain division. He also added that “The traditional auction system will also continue at all mandis”.

In current process of sampling in mandis trader samples the commodity by taking a certain quantity from each lot of farmers, this practice increase in wastages by spilling the commodity in the mandi premises but in sample based auction, farmers have to place the samples of commodity at a designated place where there will be a committee. By this way all traders need not to roam around each lot in mandi premises and also farmers will have an option to fix a minimum price for his commodity. Then the auction will be begin from that fixed price, all farmers are required to get themselves registered to go through the sample-based auction and it will be an option available to them.
An effective tool to take on distress selling of farmers

A farmer, especially small and marginal, normally does not get the benefit of the upside in price for his produce. He is almost always forced to sell his produce soon after harvest when the prices are at the lowest. The proceeds from this sale are used for repayment of high-cost informal debts and/or on the preparation of the next crop. This practice of distress selling has been one of the most significant contributors to the exploitation of small farmers. It has not only kept them entrenched in the vicious cycle of high-cost debt but has also never allowed them a fair share of the consumer price for their produce.

Arya Collateral Warehousing Services, a specialized Agriculture supply chain and commodity management Company, has used a traditional yet effective method to counter this challenge of distress selling for small and marginal farmers. ARYA through its associations with Banks, Large Commodity Companies and Commodity Exchanges endeavors to enhance the farmers’ realization for their produce. Post harvest, the model provides farmers with an option to either sell on an efficient platform or hold the commodity in a warehouse approved and managed by ARYA till they realize a better price. The sale happens through a partner spot exchange or directly to an Agri-Corporate. In case, the farmer decides to store the commodity, ARYA arranges for finance from Banks at reasonable rates of Interest against the security of his produce. The presence of the Spot Exchange and the Corporate ensures better Price Discovery for the farmer. When the farmer decides to sell his produce subsequently, his loan is liquidated and the upside is available to the farmer as his gain after adjusting the costs. For better efficiency, ARYA works with Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) for aggregation of farmers and pooling of produce.

The diagram below explains the structure in detail:

Soybean farmers can benefit significantly from this model as there normally exists a large difference between the prices at the time of harvest and that after about 5-6 months. The model has been successfully implemented for small-holder farmers of Soybean in Rajasthan and has ensured significant benefits to farmers both in terms of price realization and reduction of cost of credit. Further, the initiative also increased the salience of farmer members to the FPO and ensured larger participation in the sustainable soya program of the Organisation. ARYA is currently in the process of implementing the model in other geographies including Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.

Contributed by : Mr. Prasanna Rao, Managing Director, Arya Collateral Warehousing Services (P) Ltd., Mumbai
Sustainable Soy: News and Updates

**RTRS is Way to Educate Farmers about Good Agriculture Practices**

Since last three decades MANAVLOK has been implemented several project/activities for the empowerment; economically and socially of rural population especially the marginal peasants, landless laborer and women in Marathwada Region of Maharashtra state. The economy of the entire region is agricultural. The region has scarcity of water and famine due to drought. The rainfall in the region across is scanty and erratic. Last year the region received 300mm to 400mm of rainfall which is the 50% of the average rainfall.

MANAVLOK initiated many projects for farmers to uplift their socio-economic and formed Krushak Panchayat (Farmers’ Club) during 1983. This Krushak Panchayat has changed into SHGs during 2006; presently there are 175 SHGs with 3000 members from 125 villages. For these Krushak Panchayat/SHGs member we created awareness and given training on agriculture development (which is related to GAP), watershed development (community-wells, check-dams, CCT, compartment bunding, land renovation, plantation, borewels, bio-gas), sanitation, government schemes, etc.

During 2014, ADM Care, USA had donated us agricultural Equipments (Tractor, Cultivator, Rotavator, Land Leveler, Harvester, etc) for the project “Farm Mechanization” to help the poor farmers. Simultaneously, we came to know about RTRS (Round Table on Responsible Soy) from ADM Agro Industries India Pvt. Ltd. while sharing about developmental activities. Manavlok found it very interesting of RTRS’ Principles even though it was not very new thing for us. With the objectives of enhancing the knowledge of farmers about GAP (Good Agriculture Practices), producing quality agriculture products and promote direct benefits system for farmers. Manavlok had implemented RTRS Programme with the financial support of ADM Agro Industries India Pvt. Ltd. for two months (May-June 2014). Solidaridad and National Platform for Sustainable Soy provided us trainings and guidance about the RTRS and sustainability as knowledge partner. We assisted the farmers to enroll/apply for RTRS program through application form comprise with consent to follow the RTRS Principles and we received 5740 farmers’ application forms covering 11237 hectares of soybean crop area from 56 selected villages of Ambajogai Taluka and Kej Taluka.

We take into very serious term about the consumption of water by sugarcane factories and sugarcane farm in drought prone area. Sugarcane crop consumes huge water where the water consumption of 1 hectare of sugarcane farm is equal to the water consumption of 5 to 10 hectares of other crops (For one hectare of sugarcane farm the amount of water consumption is 2,50,00,000 liters as minimum requirement). As per official record there is 2,30,530 hectares of sugarcane farm in Marathwada region. Cutting down to 50% area of sugarcane farm will improve the drought situation into 5 times and it will make available of water for drinking and Rabi Crop. We strongly disagree of growing Sugarcane, Banana, and Grapes in drought prone area which consume huge water. Growing Sugarcane, Banana, and Grapes in drought prone area is not at all a Good Agriculture Practice (GAP). To convince both the government and farmers about a suitable crop pattern of drought prone area to be cultivated is a huge challenge. However, Implementing RTRS Project will help to reduce sugarcane growing and prevent drought situation in Marathwada region. Soy is merely a suitable crop for drought prone area because it does not need water as much as required by Sugarcane, Banana, and Grapes. As far as RTRS Principles concerned GAP is defined as agriculture without disturbing the environment and self. Therefore RTRS project can be an innovative replicable model of drought prevention and adaptation of good agriculture practices among farmers in Marathwada region.

Contributed by : Mr. Aniket D. Lohiya, Secretary, Manavlok, Ambajogai, Maharashtra
Sustainable Soy: Success story

More than Double Yields of Soy by Sustainable Soy Practices

Samarth Kisan Producer Company is implementing FSP program in Agar-Malwa district with 4,500 farmers and promoting sustainable soy practices. Jagdish Gurjar belongs to Village Kundla and Block Agar of Agar-Malwa District. He is a lead farmer under the sustainable soy program. He does farming in 1 acres of land and before joining the project he was able to get average soybean yields about 3-3.5 quintals per acre that was hardly for subsistence. After joining the sustainable soy program he got trainings and exposures on sustainable soy practices. He applied his learnings about the sustainable and climate smart agricultural practices in his small piece of land. He adopted all recommended practices of sustainable soy. Experiencing the previous negative effects of climate in soybean he also adopted certain innovative practices as sowing on ridges, because of this technology it retained soil moisture and maintained optimum healthy plant population.

Therefore adoption of sustainable practices resulted his average soybean yields of 12 quintals per acre as compare with the 5.6 quintals per acre of District average yields. By this way he got more than the double yields. He started applying his learning into other crops also.

He has also earned social value in society in terms of respect from society as now he provides trainings to other farmers of his village and nearby.

Bio Pesticide: A replacement to chemicals

Centre of Advanced Research & Development (CARD) is implementing Farmer support programme in 4 district of Madhya Pradesh. Under this various training programmes are being organised by the project team to orient the farmers towards sustainable cropping practices for Soybean.

Hakam Sing Anjana is a lead farmer of village Dhabla Hurdu, in Ujjain District. His total land is 2.50 Ha. He got training on Bio pesticide called Amrit Pani preparation from project team members and after this he decided to take a trial of the same in his field. He tried it in one part of his land and in rest he adopted traditional practices.

Shri Hakam Singh told that he prepared and applied the Amrit Pani in 1 Ha. Land and applied the chemical pesticide on remaining 1.5 ha. land. According to him no pest attack was witnessed in the area kept under Amrit pani whereas he observed pest attack in the remaining area even after the use of chemical pesticides. He spent around 2200 rupees on the spray of chemical pesticide whereas the expenditure of Amrit Pani was much less as rupees two hundred. He also claimed increased production as 2 quintals/ha. from the land where he applied the Amrit Pani. Further he told that preparation of Amrit Pani is very easy and it requires materials that are easily available at farmer’s home and within a duration of 10-12 days it becomes ready to apply in the field. According to farmer its spray on soil improves the health & fertility of soil.

According Sri Hakam Singh, by observing the results of Amrit Pani other farmers also approached him and he facilitated the preparation of Amrit Pani with them and now they are also adopting it.
The Round Table on Responsible Soy (RTRS) is a multi-stakeholder initiative created in 2006 which aims to facilitate a global dialogue on soy production that is economically viable, socially equitable and environmentally sound. It provides stakeholders and interested parties – producers, social organizations and business and industry - with the opportunity to jointly develop global solutions leading to responsible soy production.

RTRS is established with the following objectives:

- Facilitate a global dialogue on soy that is economically viable, socially equitable and environmentally sound.
- Reach consensus among key stakeholders and players linked to the soy industry.
- Act as Forum to develop and promote a standard of sustainability for the production, processing, trading and use of soy.
- Act as an internationally recognized forum for the monitoring of global soy production in terms of sustainability.
- Mobilize diverse sectors interested in participating in the Round Table process.

RTRS’ 10th Annual Conference RT10:

The Round Table on Responsible Soy is celebrating 10 years of hard work towards more sustainable practices in the soy value chain. This first decade has brought great success and promises to deliver even more outcomes as RTRS get in the “Road To 10 Million”, following the goal of 10 million tonnes of responsible soy sold by 2017.

The Responsible Soy International Conference held every year reuniting around 300 stakeholders of the soy value chain around the world. RTRS’ Annual Conference will be back in Europe in 2015 for its 10th edition. The event will welcome the most important stakeholders from all over the world to open the debate on responsible soy production and its role and opportunities in the market nowadays. The RT10 will be held in Brussels, Belgium on May 19 & 20, 2015, after a successful RT9 in Brazil, and will combine the most respected speakers, social events and networking during two fruitful days.

For more details please visit: http://www.responsiblesoy.org

Small Yet Sustainable

The story of sustainable soy program published in Business World issue of December, 2014. It says about the success and future prospects of sustainable soy program of India which is being promoted by Solidaridad in partnership with stakeholders like NGOs, produce organizations, industries, research institutions and certification industries etc. The key highlights are

- Farmers in India’s soy belt are betting on global certification to increase productivity and cash in on the responsible-sourcing market
- European companies are now increasingly looking to India for GM-free soy
- Ruchi Soya, the country’s largest soy food maker supporting sustainable soy

For more details please visit link http://www.businessworld.in/news/economy/agriculture/small-yet-sustainable.

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