

Conversation with Nammalvar [Aug 14, 2008]

Q. About future work. What Nammalvar plans to do in the coming months.

- Agriculture crisis situation is very serious.
- We are campaigning and training the trainers.
- Creation of training & educating materials is very important in the near future.
- Currently 65 ecological centers in TN. Wants to promote more.
- Want to set up 1000 training centers all over Tamil Nadu in the next 3 years. Also extend to Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.
- Plan to work in the low-rainfall areas on TN: Thiruvallur, southern part of Erode and Dindigul and part of Cuddalore.

Q. More about his plans for promoting Integrated Pest Management in Cauvery River Basin (mentioned in Project Proposal).

- Cauvery Delta produces the maximum amount of Rice in TN.
- Even though Rice is the staple food here, farmers are still in debt.
- Knowledge of Pest Management is very limited here.
- Need to conduct continuous training programs for the farmers.
- Currently lacking some instruments and preparation materials.
- Meetings are going on, but monetary support from Austin is required to proceed.

Q. Where he is based.

- Travelling most of the time throughout South India (mostly TN).
- Spend 3 days every month in Trichy
- Will be spending more time in Cuddalore where we are setting up a training center
- Will be visiting Bharati Trust in Thiruvallur frequently

Q. Is the support needed for his family as well?

- Support for family is not required. Family is not dependent on Nammalvar, or on this Fellowship

Q. On the role of Murali, for whom a monthly stipend has been requested.

- Murali communicates with everyone through email/phone and helps with interlinking all programs and elements
- He is a software engineer by training, but works with Nammalvarji and has no other source of income

Q. Topics he plans to publish on.

- a) Madagascar method of growing rice - This method produces 2-3 times the yield of rice.
- b) Biomass and Green-leaf manure - This is available everywhere, but not used.
- c) Amruthapaani
- d) Herbal Pest Repellant
- e) Panchagavya
- f) Vermi-compost
- g) Herbal tea preparation. This works as growth promoter
- h) egg juice [the concoction with the lime and the fermenting]
- i) Navadanya - Mixture crop-pattern ensures fixed amount of income
- j) Mulching - Important organic farming practice used world-over.
- k) Double-Digging - Improves fertility of soil.
- l) Azola - Algae used in cattle-breeding and weed-control in paddy fields
- m) Crop Rotation
- n) Honey-bee rearing
- o) Mushroom Cultivation
- p) Fish culture
- q) Rain-water Harvesting

Q. Who will this material be given to? And published in which languages?

- This material is meant both for trainers and farmers
- Free for farmers, but NGO's can get it for a small fee
- Publish first in Tamil, then English, then in Kannada and Telugu and other languages
- Enough material is already available for these, as he teaches this on a daily basis. Needs to publish.