Namma Nellu

Activities

April 2025- March 2026

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CIKS

NAMMA NELLU

SNAPSHOT 2025-2026

178

Traditional rice varieties conserved in 1.45 acres

6.05 acres

Seed production of 5 traditional rice varieties at CIKS–TRC

2.43 MT

Seeds of 16 traditional rice varieties were distributed to 113 farmers in Tiruvannamalai, Mayiladuthurai and Nagapattinam Districts covering 162 acres for seed.

20.099 MT

Seeds of 9 traditional rice varieties have been procured

20,000

acres of traditional rice varieties cultivated by CIKS-supported farmers across 8 districts of Tamil Nadu, scaling agro-biodiversity and resilient farming

525

Farmers trained on traditional rice cultivation by CIKS through 21 sessions

75

Participants joined Adiperukku celebration—including organic farmers, FPC members, traders, and media representatives

8

Participated in exhibitions and seed festivals

SNAPSHOT 2025-2026

61 Training sessions were conducted for Joint Liability Group (JLG) members on value-added products from Traditional Rice Varieties.

30 MT

Marketing linkages for 6 certified organic traditional rice varieties, connecting farmers to premium markets.

162

Traditional rice variety samples prepared for nutritional analysis, advancing research on indigenous rice health benefits.

3000 **acres**

Field visits conducted to certified organic TRV cultivation in *Mayiladuthurai, Thanjavur, Ramanathapuram, & Tenkasi*

24 Agronomic characteristics documented for 178 traditional rice varieties, enriching the conservation database

5

Vrkshayurveda experiments to enhance traditional rice varieties yields, and manage pests and diseases

7

Experiments to extend traditional rice varieties seed germination viability

334

Students attended a lecture on organic farming, traditional rice varieties, biopesticides, and the role of traditional paddy in climate resilience, sharing real-world experiences from West Bengal and Tamil Nadu

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NAMMA NELLU

ABOUT NAMMA NELLU

Namma Nellu is an initiative of the Centre for Indian Knowledge Systems (CIKS) dedicated to the conservation, documentation and scaling up of cultivation of Traditional Rice Varieties (TRVs) in Tamil Nadu.

Vision: Conserving agro biodiversity for food and nutritional security for all

Mission

- Conserve, cultivate and promote at least 100 Traditional Rice Varieties (TRVs) of Tamil Nadu known for their nutritional and therapeutic value.
- Ensure decentralized access to quality germplasm of these varieties.
- Establish a strong network to support preservation, cultivation and marketing efforts.

1. CONSERVATION, DOCUMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE OF TRVs AT THE CIKS TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES CENTRE (TRC)

1.1 TRVs Conservation at the CIKS TRC during *Samba* 2025

The *Samba* season refers to the major paddy cultivation season in Tamil Nadu, typically commencing in August and continuing until January. During the *Samba* season of 2025, 178 Traditional Rice Varieties (TRVs) were systematically conserved, including five newly collected TRVs—*Rajamudi, Rathanachudi, Kempu Sanna, Kempu Mundga* and *Siddasanna*—over an area of 1.45 acres at the CIKS experimental farm in Sukkankollai. Cultivation was carried out in three batches following the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) method. The following activities were undertaken:

TRV Conservation Nursery

Detailed planning of the varieties to be planted was carried out, including the selection of varieties and their spatial distribution. Seed germination tests were conducted. The seeds were thoroughly cleaned and all admixtures were removed. The seeds were treated organically and soaked before raising the nursery. The nursery was raised with great care and name boards were placed for each variety. The main field was prepared by *in situ* ploughing of the already cultivated green manure, collection and application of green leaf manure,

repeated ploughing as required, plastering and levelling. The seedlings were transplanted into the main field with proper name boards and gap filling was carried out wherever necessary.

Azolla (an aquatic plant that helps fix atmospheric nitrogen in the soil) was applied 10 days after transplanting. Weeding was carried out three times using a cono weeder and once manually. Organic manures were applied twice. Vermicompost and neem seed powder were mixed in a 5:1 ratio. Foliar spraying with organic growth regulators such as *panchagavyam* and humic acid was also undertaken.

Non-chemical pest control measures were adopted, including the use of bird perches, light traps, yellow sticky traps, pheromone traps, neem cake bags at the entrance of irrigation channels, *ooral panai* with odour extract and foliar spraying of neem seed powder extract mixed with chilli powder extract.

Cono Weeding in TRVs field

Roguing operations (removal of off-types and diseased plants) were carried out five times to maintain genetic purity. Measures were also taken to prevent wild pig attacks and ensure proper water management. Field bund cleaning was undertaken as required. Crop protection measures such as LED colour lights, tube lights, focus lights, audio systems with deterrent noises, cracker bursting, GI wire fencing and manual monitoring were implemented to protect the crops from wild pigs, parrots and sparrows. After harvesting, threshing and winnowing, proper storage conditions and moisture content were ensured. The seeds were stored in gunny bags treated with neem cake extract to prevent pest infestation.

The bags were stacked and spaced as per standard protocol and fumigated regularly with herbal pest control agents. The seeds are now ready for the forthcoming year's conservation activities and are currently stored in the seed storage godown. Measures have been initiated to protect the stored seeds from pests, including the use of light traps, neem, *pungam* and *notchi* leaves, as well as UV insect traps. Documentation of 24 agronomic characteristics for each variety has been completed.

TRVs Transplanting and Field Monitoring

2. SEED PRODUCTION AT THE CIKS TRC AND THROUGH OUR NETWORK OF FARMERS

Seeds used for seed production must be of good quality and sourced from authentic sources. They should be healthy and possess a high germination percentage.

TRVs Seed Cleaning

2.1 TRVs Seed Production during *Samba* 2025

Seed production for five TRVs was initiated over an area of 6.05 acres at the CIKS TRC, following the SRI method. Similar to TRVs conservation activities, the following steps were undertaken:

Detailed planning of the varieties to be planted was carried out, including selection of varieties, seasons, spatial distribution and distribution to farmers. Seed germination tests were conducted. The seeds were thoroughly cleaned and all admixtures were removed. The seeds were treated organically and soaked before raising the nursery. The nursery was raised with great care and name boards were placed for each variety. The main field was prepared by ploughing the already grown green manure, repeated ploughing as required, followed by plastering and levelling.

Navara Seedling plucking

The seedlings were transplanted to the main field with name boards and gap filling was carried out wherever necessary. Azolla (an aquatic plant that helps fix nitrogen in the soil) was applied 10 days after transplanting. Weeding was carried out three times using a cono weeder and once manually. Organic manures were applied twice. Vermicompost and neem seed powder were mixed in a 5:1 ratio. Foliar spraying with organic growth regulators such as *panchagavyam* and humic acid was also carried out. Non-chemical pest control measures were adopted, including the use of bird perches, light traps, yellow sticky traps, pheromone traps, neem cake bags at the entrance of irrigation channels, *ooral panai* with odour extract and foliar spraying of neem seed powder extract mixed with chilli powder extract.

Roguing operations (removal of off-types and diseased plants) were carried out five times to maintain genetic purity. Measures were also undertaken to prevent wild pig attacks and ensure proper water management. Field bund cleaning was carried out as and when required.

Roguing Operation in *Karungkuruvai*

Crop protection measures such as LED colour lights, tube lights, focus lights, audio systems with deterrent noises, cracker bursting, GI wire fencing and manual monitoring were implemented to protect the crops from wild pigs, parrots and sparrows.

After harvesting, threshing and winnowing, proper storage conditions and moisture content were ensured. The seeds were stored in gunny bags treated with neem cake extract to prevent pest attacks. The bags were stacked and spaced as per standard protocol and fumigated regularly with herbal pest control agents. The seeds are now ready for cultivation during the forthcoming year (2026-27) and are currently stored in the Seed storage godown.

***Thaniya Kuthir* for TRVs Seed Storage**

Measures have been initiated to protect the stored seeds from storage pests, including the use of light traps, neem*, pungam* and *notchi* leaves, as well as UV insect traps. Documentation of 24 agronomic characteristics of each variety has been completed.

2.2 Seed Production for TRVs during *Navarai* 2026

TRVs Nursery for Seed

During the *Navarai* 2026 season (February–May), as part of the seed production initiative, cultivation was undertaken for two traditional rice varieties (TRVs), namely *Navara* and *Rathasali*, over a total area of 7.5 acres. Of this, 0.5 acre was allocated for *Rathasali* and the remaining 7 acres for *Navara* cultivation. The following activities were undertaken up to March 2026: Detailed planning of the varieties to be cultivated was carried out, including selection of varieties, seasonal planning, spatial distribution, and distribution to farmers. Seed germination tests were conducted. The seeds were thoroughly cleaned, and all admixtures were removed. The seeds were organically treated with cow urine and soaked in water prior to nursery raising. *Navara* TRV nursery was raised carefully in three batches, while the *Rathasali* TRV nursery was raised in March. The main field was prepared through ploughing, incorporation of green leaf manure, repeated ploughing as required, followed by trimming, plastering of field bunds, and land levelling. The seedlings were transplanted in 1.72 acres of the main field using the modified SRI method.

2.3 Green Manure Seed production – Sunn hemp cultivation

To provide good-quality sunn hemp seeds for farmers involved in TRV cultivation, green manure seed production was initiated during the *Navarai* 2026 season through sunn hemp cultivation over an area of 0.25 acre. The crop is currently in the vegetative growth stage. To manage pod borer incidence, spraying was carried out using neem seed kernel extract (1 liter) mixed with 9 liters of water.

3. SEED GERMINATION ASSESSMENT AND VIABILITY EXPERIMENTS

3.1 Review of Seed Germination tests

TRV seed germination test at TRC

A detailed review of the seed germination tests conducted over the past years, along with the action plan for the current year, was carried out on 18 April 2025. As a follow-up to this review meeting, on 24 April 2025 (Thursday), Mr. Mahalinga Kannan, Assistant Director of Agriculture (Retd.), Seed Certification, visited the CIKS Technology Resource Centre (TRC) and conducted an in-depth review of the seed germination activities undertaken during the previous year, as well as the action plan for the current year. Based on his observations and evaluation, he provided valuable suggestions for improving and maintaining the germination levels of TRV seeds. His recommendations covered various aspects, including field practices, processing methods, storage techniques, equipment used, experimental procedures and methods of recording results.

3.2 Experiments to Prolong Seed Germination Viability

Experiments with 25 TRVs, harvested between November 2024 and March 2025, were initiated to assess storage methods for prolonging seed germination viability. The methods tested included storage in ash, mud pots, *dhaniya kuthir*, GrainPro bags, cocoon bags, vacuum-sealed packs, refrigeration and gunny bag storage. Twelve batches of germination tests were conducted between April 2025 and March 2026.

As of March 2026, seeds stored under refrigeration and vacuum-packed conditions have demonstrated significantly better germination rates compared to those stored using other methods, more than one year after harvest.

4. SCALING UP TRVs CULTIVATION, SEED PRODUCTION AND MARKETING.

4.1 Scaling up of production and facilitation of marketing through CIKS farmers' networks and partner agencies

With our support, farmers have begun cultivating TRVs on over 20,000 acres across the districts of Chengalpattu, Kancheepuram, Tiruvannamalai, Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Ramanathapuram and Pudukkottai. Orientation meetings and training sessions on TRVs cultivation and sustainable agricultural technologies have been conducted, covering all aspects from seed to harvest. Monitoring visits were carried out in farmers' fields and they were instructed to strictly follow organic production practices, including weeding, manuring and plant protection. Marketing linkages have been established with local rice mills, Farmer Producer Companies, local traders and private companies for the sale of TRV grains in bulk quantities. Similarly, marketing linkages have been created with local consumers for the sale of TRV rice and value-added products. Farmers have started marketing TRV grains as well as TRV rice and value-added products.

4.2 Seed Production in farmers' fields – *Samba* 2025

Additionally, 2.43 tons of seeds from 16 TRVs were distributed to 113 farmers across three districts in Tamil Nadu, covering 113 acres for seed production. Five tons of neem seed powder were provided as a manure and plant protection material. Monitoring visits were conducted to farmers' fields and they were instructed to strictly follow seed production practices, including roguing, weeding, manuring and plant protection. Farmers have begun harvesting and post-harvest processing. Procurement of TRV seeds from farmers has also commenced for distribution during the forthcoming season. As of 31st March 2026, 18.099 tons of TRV seeds from 9 TRVs have been procured.

4.3 Seed Production for TRVs during *Kuruvai* 2024

In *Mayiladuthurai* District, during the *Kuruvai* season (May–July), three Traditional Rice Varieties (TRVs) were cultivated on 14 acres for seed production. The seeds were procured, stored and planned for use in this year's seed production.

4.4 Seed Production of TRVs in Farmers' Fields through the Organic Cluster Programme – *Samba* 2025

Efforts have been initiated in to engage farmers in the Organic Certification Programme, which will certify their lands as organic after a mandatory three-year conversion period. As part of this initiative, 10 TRVs are under cultivation across 35 acres and have reached the harvesting stage. Field monitoring visits have been conducted on the farmers' fields. Nine varieties *Karuppu Kavuni*, *Seeraga Samba*, *Kattuyanam, Kaivari Samba, Kothamalli Samba, Kallimadaiyan, Ilupai Poo Samba, Kullakkar* and *Adukkunel* have been harvested by 14 farmers over a total area of 31 acres. As a next step, documents were collected from five farmers for registration with TNOCD to obtain organic certification for their land. To build the capacity of the staff, an online training programme on organic certification was conducted on 9th March 2026 for team members involved in the organic cluster and certification programme.

5. TRVs VALUE ADDED PRODUCTS PREPARATION

As a follow-up to the training programmes conducted over the past three months, women members of the Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) have prepared various items as part of the product standardization process, utilizing TRV rice, jaggery and other natural ingredients. After standardization, they have been actively involved in producing value-added products made from TRVs.

The standardized bakery products include:

- *Seeraga Samba* Shortbread
- *Mullan Kaima* Butter Bite
- *Karuppu Kavuni* Choco Delight
- *Thanga Samba* Vegan Delight

Additionally, they have developed a range of traditional and innovative snack varieties:

- *Ilai Vadagam*
- *Gongura Lavash*
- *Kachori Papdi*
- *Aval* Mixture
- *Moringa* Bites
- Curry, Coconut and Chilli Cookies

Preparation of Vadagam by JLG Women Members

Production of these value-added products is planned and executed based on order quantities. As of January 2026, they have produced and marketed over 1 ton of the above products. These efforts empower women by building skills in value addition, quality control and small-scale enterprise management, thereby creating pathways for sustainable income generation and diversifying livelihood opportunities.

6. VRKSHAYURVEDA EXPERIMENTS IN TRVs

To manage pests in TRV conservation and seed production fields, a mixture of *Arkam* was prepared, consisting of chilli, onion, turmeric and tender coconut. *Ksharam* prepared from various plants, including *Erukku, Adathoda*, Banana pseudo stem, Neem, Prosopis and Lantana, was sprayed to target pests such as leaf folders, leaf rollers, green plant hoppers and black bugs. This treatment was applied across several fields, including *Adukku Nel, Thenkaipoo Samba, Seeraga Samba* and *Vellai Milagu Samba* achieving 100% pest control within 4–5 days of spraying. Additionally, extracts of garlic, ginger and green chili were used to manage pests in TRV seed production fields, resulting in significant pest control.

Ksharam preparation at TRC

An experiment was also conducted to evaluate the effect of different biochar-based organic nutrient combinations on the yield performance of the *Seeraga Samba* Traditional Rice Variety. Biochar, when combined with various organic inputs namely neem seed powder, goat manure, farm yard manure, vermicompost, *panchakavyam*, is known to improve soil fertility, nutrient availability and crop productivity. This experiment aimed to compare

different combinations against a control treatment to identify the most effective practice for enhancing yield.

The results revealed significant variation in yield among the treatments. The highest yield (832 kg) was recorded where biochar was combined with neem seed powder and *Panchagavyam*. This improvement is likely attributed to enhanced soil health, pest suppression and better nutrient uptake due to the bioactive compounds present in neem.

In March 2026, a spray was applied in the *Navara* TRV fields at CIKS–TRC to manage stem borer and bacterial leaf blight incidence. The spray mixture consisted of neem seed kernel extract (1 litre per tank), *panchakavyam* (0.5 litre per tank), cow urine (0.5 litre per tank), vasambu arkam (25 ml per tank), coconut *arkam* (25 ml per tank), cow urine *arkam* (25 ml per tank), and chilli powder (50 g per tank). A total of 56 tanks were applied over 7 acres at a rate of 8 tanks per acre. Moderate control of both stem borer and bacterial leaf blight was observed.

7. NUTRITIONAL ANALYSIS OF TRVs

The following TRV rice samples were prepared for nutritional analysis and stored under vacuum packaging conditions. We plan to carry out the analysis over the course of the next one year.

S. No	Season	Number of Samples
1	*Samba* 2024	52
2	*Samba* 2025	51
3	Samples from Outside Farmers	18
4	Duplicate Samples	10
5	Organic Cluster Samples	31
	Total	**162**

Detailed analysis of the research is in progress.

8. EFFORTS ON CERTIFIED ORGANIC TRVs MARKETING WITH AKSHAYAKALPA ORGANICS

After detailed discussions with Akshayakalpa Organics, pilot marketing of 6 tons of certified organic TRVs rice from a total of 10 tons of certified organic grains was initiated by linking farmers and farmer institutions. Based on the positive outcomes of this pilot, plans have been made to market 80 tons of certified organic rice (from a total of 130 tons of certified organic grains) during the period from June 2026 to March 2027. In addition, efforts are planned to establish market linkages for TRV value-added products as well as other crops cultivated by the farmers.

Farm Visit to Akshayakalpa Organic

9. CAPACITY BUILDING FOR VARIOUS ACTIVITIES INCLUDING SUSTAINABLE CULTIVATION, SEED PRODUCTION, VALUE ADDITION AND INPUT PRODUCTION

CIKS has undertaken a wide range of capacity building initiatives to promote Traditional Rice Varieties (TRVs), sustainable agriculture practices and value-added enterprise development. Key activities during this period included the following:

9.1 Participation in District Climate Change Mission

CIKS participated in a one-day workshop on *Climate and Rural Women*, organized under the District Climate Change Mission in collaboration with the Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihood Mission (TNSRLM), Mayiladuthurai. The event was held on 20 May 2025 at the Conference Hall of Hotel Pam's, Mayiladuthurai. Mrs. Subhashini Sridhar, Programme Director, CIKS, shared insights on CIKS's experiences in TRV cultivation and green enterprise development.

9.2 *Adiperukku* Celebration at CIKS TRC

The *Adiperukku* Celebration was held on 3 August 2025 at the CIKS Technical Resource Centre, with 75 participants, including representatives from Akshayakalpa Organics, CIKS supporters, FPC members, organic farmers, traders and media representatives from *Pasumai Vikatan*.

The programme included traditional rituals such as ploughing, *Mulaipari* offerings and *Koozhvarthal* for the nursery preparation of 60 Traditional Rice Varieties (TRVs). Participants also learned about CIKS's work in TRV conservation, seed production, cultivation improvements, marketing, value addition and related publications.

9.3 Indian Folk Rice Conference 2026

A team of eight members from CIKS participated in the Indian Folk Rice Conference 2026, held at Pachaiyappa's College, Chennai.

The CIKS Director and Research Directors presented CIKS's efforts toward the revitalization of Traditional Rice Varieties (TRVs). CIKS also organized a display featuring selected TRV earheads, seeds, gift boxes, publications and related materials.

CIKS at Indian Folk Rice Conference

9.4 Training programme on Climate change and significance of traditional rice varieties

A one-day training programme on "Climate Change and the Significance of Traditional Rice Varieties" was organized by the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru College of Agriculture & Research Institute (PAJANCOA & RI), Karaikal, on 5th January 2026 at the Swami Dayananda Educational Trust (SDET) Farm, Manjakudi, Thiruvarur district.

The programme was attended by 169 final-year B.Sc. (Agriculture) students from PAJANCOA & RI and M.S. Swaminathan Agriculture College & Research Institute, Thanjavur, along with 65 final-year Arts and Science students from SDET.

The key topics covered included: Significance of traditional paddy varieties – agronomic features. Traditional paddy varieties as a solution to climate change (including experiences from West Bengal). Climate change and the role of traditional rice varieties – experiences from Tamil Nadu. From CIKS, Ms. Subhashini Sridhar participated as a resource person and delivered a session on "Significance of Traditional Paddy Varieties – Experiences from Tamil Nadu".

9.4 ASHA Kisan Swaraj Sammelan 2026 (Seed Festival)

Two members from CIKS participated in the ASHA Kisan Swaraj Sammelan 2026 (Seed

Festival), held in Mysore from February 27 to March 1, 2026. The event brought together farmers, seed savers, and researchers from across South India to promote seed sovereignty and agro-biodiversity. CIKS set up a stall displaying seeds of 30 traditional paddy varieties, CIKS publications, and traditional rice gift boxes. Rice-based cookies made from traditional varieties were distributed for tasting and received positive feedback. A large number of farmers visited the stall, expressed interest in purchasing traditional seeds and publications, and shared their contact details for future collaboration.

Farmers engaging at CIKS stall, Mysore

9.5 Visit to Certified Organic Farmers' Fields

A visit was conducted to the certified organic fields cultivating TRVs in the Mayiladuthurai, Thanjavur and Ramanathapuram districts from 21 to 24 December 2025. Varieties such as *Seeraga Samba*, *Karuppu Kavuni, Mappillai Samba, Thooyamalli, Kitchili Samba* and *Chithiraikar* are being grown over more than 3,000 acres, with crops at various stages of growth. The expected harvest is scheduled for February 2026.

9.6 Student Exposure Visits to CIKS- TRC

Ten two-days and three one day awareness programme on TRVs and sustainable agriculture were conducted at the CIKS -TRC during April to March 2026. A total of 95 students and 11 teachers from Sprouts Montessori participated, gaining exposure to organic farming practices, TRV conservation and value-addition initiatives. Through these initiatives, CIKS continues to play an active role in nurturing awareness among students and youth about traditional agriculture, ecological sustainability and the importance of conserving native rice diversity.

Sprouts school children's parents learning TRV

As an impact of this programme, and based on requests from the parents of the Sprouts children, a group of 27 members from 9 families (including 14 adults and 13 children) visited CIKS–TRC on 29th March 2026. During the visit, they actively participated in various activities such as TRV nursery raising, transplanting of TRV seedlings, manuring and weeding in the paddy fields, paddy milling, and bathing in the pump set area.

As part of the summer internship programme under the Department of Zoology, Poompuhar College, Sirkazhi, Mrs. Subhashini Sridhar and Mr. Rajesh from CIKS participated in a one-day awareness programme on organic farming, TRV cultivation and biopesticides on 29th May 2025. A total of 100 students, including postgraduate students, participated in the event.

An exposure visit on organic farming was organized at CIKS-TRC on 8th September 2025 for students from the Government Higher Secondary Schools of Anjur and Singaperumal Koil, Chengalpet District. The visit was facilitated by the Department of Agriculture under the ATMA scheme and provided students with practical insights into sustainable agriculture and TRV-based seed production systems. Through these initiatives, CIKS continues to play an active role in nurturing awareness among students and youth about traditional agriculture, ecological sustainability and the importance of conserving native rice diversity.

On November 26, 2025, a group of 10 final-year B.Sc. Agriculture (Honors) students from Bharat Institute of Higher Education and Research in Selaiyur, Tambaram, visited our CIKS-TRC. During their visit, they learned about various technologies related to TRVs, including seed selection, seed storage, seed germination, seed conservation techniques, seed production methods, manures for TRV cultivation and plant protection measures for TRVs.

6th and 7th grade students on sustainable agriculture exposure visit TRC

On December 19, 2025, a group of 34 students from the 6th and 7th grades, accompanied by 3 teachers from Bodhana Montessori School, visited CIKS-TRC. During the visit, the students were introduced to key topics such as soil formation and components, organic food production, insects, farm elements, the role of farm animals in agriculture, organic manures, organic plant protection methods, green manure seed sowing and related practices.

On 21st January 2026 a group of 40 students from the 7th grades, along with four teachers from Rishi Valley School, Madanapalli, Andra Pradesh, visited CIKS – TRC. The students were introduced to TRVs Seed bank, TRVs seed production fields, and raised vegetable garden.

9.6 Capacity building trainings for farmers

A one-day training and exposure visit was organized for farmers on October 5, 2025, at CIKS – TRC, *Sukkankollai*. The major topics covered included the importance of TRVs, TRV cultivation using the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) method, the use of organic manures in paddy cultivation, organic plant protection methods and the organic certification process. A total of 28 participants, including 2 women, attended the training. Additionally, on-farm demonstrations of TRV cultivation using the SRI method were also conducted.

Farmers' training at CIKS–TRC

A total of 26 farmers from the Cheyyar and Desur groups in Tiruvannamalai District were selected under the Organic Cluster and Organic Certification Programme, covering 72 acres. 4 training sessions were conducted to orient farmers on CIKS activities and organic certification procedures that included interactive discussion. Altogether, 46 farmers participated in these sessions.

9.7 Staff Capacity Building Training

A team of 10 members from CIKS - TRC visited the Department of Seed Certification and Seed Testing Laboratory, Kancheepuram on 20th May 2025. The team gained valuable knowledge on seed standards, testing methods and the use of equipment.

A three-member team from CIKS, comprising the Research Director, Programme Director and Programme Coordinator, undertook exposure visits to the Pudukkottai Organic Farmers Producer Company Limited (POFPCL) on 14th July and 8th August 2025. The team visited various facilities including the TRV value addition unit, TRV processing unit, godown, oil extraction unit and cold storage unit. Detailed discussions were held with the CEO, Directors and staff on potential collaboration opportunities for marketing certified organic Traditional Rice Varieties (TRVs).

State Seed Testing Laboratory, Kancheepuram

9.8 Training on Value-Added Products

A series of hands-on training sessions were conducted to strengthen the skills of women's groups and project staff in producing TRV based snacks and bakery products.

On 13th July 2025, the first session focused on the preparation of *Butter Murukku, Ellu Murukku* and *Ribbon Pakoda*. On 22nd July 2025, the second training covered preparation of

Moringa Bites, Gongura Lavash, Curry Coconut Chilli Triple Cookies, *Kachori Papdi* and *Aval Mixture*. Three JLG (Joint Liability Group) women members and four staff members participated. The session was facilitated by Ms. Poonam from Chennai. A refresher training held on 25th August 2025 focused on standardizing five key TRV-based products. By the end of the session, participants had prepared:

- *Moringa Bites*
- *Gongura Lavash*
- Curry Coconut Chilli Triple Cookies
- *Kachori Papdi*
- *Aval Mixture*

These trainings have strengthened participants technical capacities in value addition, quality consistency and small-scale enterprise management, contributing to the broader goal of promoting rural entrepreneurship and sustainable livelihoods**.**

10 EDUCATION EFFORTS, NETWORKING AND RAISING AWARENESS THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN EXPOS AND EXHIBITIONS AND HOSTING VISITORS

10.1 TRV Farmers in Social Media

CIKS, in collaboration with Akshayakalpa Organics and Sempulam Sustainable Solutions Private Limited, documented the experiences of nine farmers involved in TRV cultivation in the Tiruvannamalai district. These videos were shared as Instagram Reels on social media.

10.2 TRVs Seeds Display at Agri Expo

Fifteen TRV seeds were showcased at the Agri Expo cum Seminar held in Tiruvannamalai, organized by KVK (Krishi Vigyan Kendra), Kilnelli. The stall was visited by over 5,000 farmers.

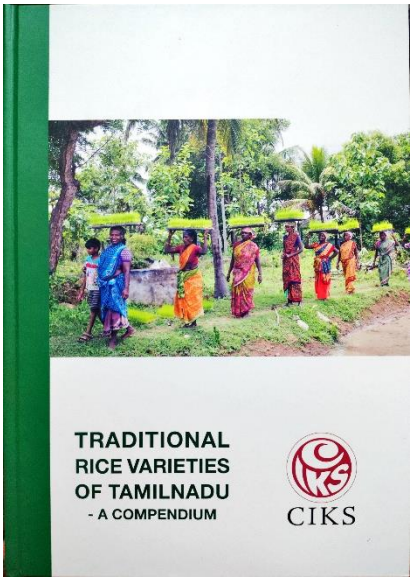
10.3 Honors and Awards

The Department of Climate Change and Environment, Government of Tamil Nadu has announced the Water Conservation Award to A6, *Kazhumalaiyaaru Pasanatharar Sabai,* located in *Agani* Village, *Mayiladuthurai* District. The award includes a cash prize of Rs. 1 lakh and an appreciation certificate. This Sabai was formed by CIKS as part of its initiative to scale up the cultivation of Traditional Rice Varieties (TRVs). CIKS has been actively working with Water User Associations in Mayiladuthurai District since 2009.

Ms. Subhashini with Chief Minister's Waterbody Conservator Award.

10.4 Dissemination of Publications on Traditional Rice Varieties

A total of 68 publications on Traditional Rice Varieties (TRVs) were distributed to farmers, students, NGOs, FPCs, and government officials. This includes 51 copies of the Tamil publication "*Tamilnattin Parampariya Nel Rakangkal – Oru Thakaval Kalanjiyam*" and 17 copies of the English publication "Traditional Rice Varieties of Tamil Nadu – A Compendium."



In addition, 537 soft copies of Traditional Rice Varieties of Tamil Nadu – A Source Book (Tamil and English) along with other TRV-related publications were downloaded from the CIKS and Namma Nellu websites by farmers, government officials, students, universities, FPOs, and other organizations.

11 ACTION PLAN FOR APRIL 2026 – MARCH 2027

The following key activities are planned for implementation in the upcoming year:

- Continuing ongoing initiatives in TRV seed conservation, TRV seed production, upscaling TRV cultivation, creation of marketing linkages, TRV documentation, TRV processing and value addition.
- Continuing research on TRVs Nutritional and Therapeutic Analysis.
- Conducting capacity-building training programme for farmers on TRV cultivation, TRV seed production and sustainable agricultural practices.
- Strengthening marketing linkages for certified organic TRVs and value-added products. Enhancing market linkages for certified organic TRVs, "In Conversion – Year 1" TRVs and related products.
- Organizing a press conference to raise awareness and promote TRVs among farmers and the general public.