

KISAAN RAJA

A unique demonstration-cum-exhibition

May 24th 2011 to 8th June 2011



PLASTINDIA PLASTICULTURE

Plastindia Foundation formed a separate committee – Plastindia Plasticulture Committee (PPC) - with a specific agenda and vision – “To create a platform across India, to conserve water, increase productivity, increase income and raise food security, through use of Micro Irrigation Systems in agriculture thereby conserving precious natural resources like water and encouraging the larger community of farmers to a healthier and wealthier living”.

PLASTICULTURE innovations create an impact on the yield of agricultural produce of India; enhancing the shelf life of yield; and are an integral part of the second green revolution in India leading to sustained promotion of plastics in the field of agriculture.

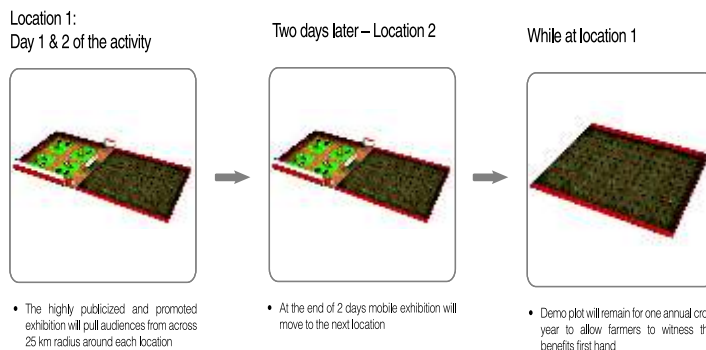
Plastindia Plasticulture Committee wanted to demonstrate and ultimately ensure Plasticulture Applications are seen on the field rather than limit itself to merely create awareness but. It was clear that unless natural resources like water are not conserved and used discretely, prosperity and agricultural productivity in terms of both yield and quality could not be achieved. Micro Irrigation or drip irrigation was chosen to be promoted as an activity in a very big way and activities to ensure deployment of drip intervention - more among the small and marginal farmers who constitute almost 75% of the farmers of the country with an average land holding of less than 3 acres.

KISAAN RAJA



One of the activities planned by PPC is KISAAN RAJA – is a unique activity where demonstration of micro irrigation would be seen right at the farmer’s doorstep. An entire district would be covered through such demo plots in each block of the district by selecting a village in each block. KISAAN RAJA would also have a mobile exhibition which would move across the blocks in the district. This exhibition was aimed to ensure that farmers can see, learn and access products, services and solutions that will allow farmers to increase their yield and at the same time conserve natural resources like water. Typically, the KISAAN RAJA model is the use of Micro irrigation in the form of a demonstration and how it can help you save precious natural resources like water at the farmers land. This demo site will be monitored for a whole crop year so that farmers from nearby villages can see for themselves the benefits of. The mobile exhibition of KISAAN RAJA would showcase other modern techniques of farming will be exhibited. Participants at the exhibition will gain direct access to the farmer as KISAAN RAJA takes you directly to the farmer’s doorstep!

THE BEGININGS



The KISAAN RAJA model was discussed with many likeminded bodies and like Micro Irrigation product manufacturers and NABARD. All saw merits in the model and NABARD in particular agreed to assist in implementing both through their network of Farmer Clubs and financially through on of their schemes.

The pilot project for KISAAN RAJA was then taken up at Jalna, The idea to promote micro irrigation and then to create farmer beneficiaries who would deploy them. Once there is a comprehensive list of farmer beneficiaries, who would be shortlisted through a pre-determined method, they would be eligible for loan under a program of NABARD – Umbrella Program for Natural Resource Management (UPNRM). NABARD gave their whole hearted support for this activity and the District Development Manager in Jalna ensured that the farmer clubs in the villages selected in each of the 8 blocks of Jalna promoted the event throughout the block.

KISAAN RAJA Exhibition

From August 2010, PPC has been holding meets with Farmer Clubs and together with their suggestions the pilot project was conducted in May/ June 2011. Extensive coverage of the entire district of Jalna, several meets with Farmer Club members, suggestions and guidance from the NABARD official ensured that the pilot project could be implemented at Jalna. Support from Micro Irrigation manufacturers was also a very welcome step in ensuring that the 16 day activity went off well.

KISAAN RAJA AT JALNA

Handbill distributed for the 16 day event

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एक अनोखे प्रात्यक्षिक आणि प्रदर्शन

शिक संस्थानचे जियंत प्रात्यक्षिक

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The District Collector was gracious enough to give a blanket permission for conducting the activity across the 8 blocks which ensured that the activity went across smoothly. 157 villages around the 8 blocks were visited for promotion and over 250 contact groups were formed during this promotion activity.

An inaugural function was held at Varudi village, Badnapur Taluka on 24th May 2011. District Collector, Mr Vilas Thakur was the Chief Guest President Plastindia Foundation, Mr Ashok Goel and Vice President Plastindia Foundation, Mr Bipin Shah attended the function. The demo plot at this venue also had 20% of the land covered with Mulch Film. A brief of the activity and its fall out was explained to villagers present. Mr Vilas Thakur in his speech spoke to the farmers present and advised them that they should consider themselves as business men where their fields was their business domain and modern agricultural practises – like drip irrigation which was being demonstrated alongside the exhibition should serve as a precursor to adopt to new technologies.

Chief Guest Shri Vilas Thakur – Jalna District Collector being presented a memento



Plastindia Foundation President, Shri Ashok Goel addressing the gathering



Collector at the Exhibition



KISAAN RAJA ON THE MOVE

From Varudi Kisaan Raja went on the move through the tough lanes and roads of Jalna to the farmer's field at the other 7 blocks in the district. The details of KISAAN RAJA during its 16 day journey were as follows:

Kissan Raja Road Map



Farmers gathering at Chandi Tombri



Sarpanch of Ghetuli welcoming Mr S.M. Khose, NABARD



Event and Demo Plots

The entrance gate being at Ghetuli



KISAAN RAJA Exhibition

The Plot installed at Meskheda



Farmer registrations at Hirwakabli



Demo Plot at Shrishti



FEEDBACK FROM FARMERS AND EXHIBITORS

For the exhibitors, it was a tough grind as the temperatures were soaring in Jalna and with the some villages located deep within the Taluka, the movement was tough. The villagers and especially the Farmer Club members covered an area of a radius of approximately 10 – 12 kms around their village to promote the event and ensure farmer participation from nearby villages.

The feedback from the NABARD official was very enthusiastic and all these inputs and learning from the pilot project have been considered seriously by the PPC for suitable modifications for the next event of KISAAN RAJA.

CONCLUSION

As a pilot project KISAAN RAJA did prove that the concept on paper could be implemented on the field. The success of the same would be a debate. However, if one were to consider the objective, then at Jalna, KISAAN RAJA has been very encouraging. Learning from Jalna is obvious – as it was a pilot project.

The next step is to ensure the implementation of Drip Irrigation through the UPNRM scheme. There is more than enough contact points to promote drip irrigation practice and also demonstrate them to vast farmer groups – especially marginal farmers. Now, after 2 months of the activity, there have been more than 550 farmers from villagers around the demo sites who have visited the demo plot.

The need is to put up a proper system for identification of farmer beneficiaries and making a serious attempt in breaking the entry barrier – both mental and financial among the marginal farmers to deploy drip irrigation in their field. This is the task on hand, and once accomplished, we can truly say KISAAN RAJA has done more than what was envisaged when the preliminary plan was being drafted.

Some learning on the exhibition front will also make KISAAN RAJA an enviable model in the advancement of modern agricultural practises – to ensure that both the yield and quality of produce among the marginal farmers improves manifold.