

Stakeholder Outreach Meeting

Tamil Nadu, India

16 June 2009

FARMERS

Stakeholder Outreach Meetings were held over three days in Tamil Nadu, India.

Twenty two farmers participated in this Stakeholder Outreach Meeting. The size of the farms ranged from 1 acre (small-scale) to 50 acres (large farm). In India, the practice is not to just cultivate sugarcane but multi-cropping such as rice, banana, mango, coconut, ginger-lily to name but a few.

At the meeting each farmer presented themselves and explained the size of their farm, crops they cultivate, type of irrigation practiced, educational background and involvement with the sugar industry.

BSI Executive, Natasha Schwarzbach, TWG Leader Peter Turner (Agronomy) and TWG leader Maryline Guiramand (Social); then presented the BSI and the Standard.

Below are the farmer's questions and observations.

BSI Standard recommends organic carbon requirement for soil. However availability of these organics manures is limited when compared to conventional chemical fertilizers.

What are the alternatives / enabling mechanisms to ensure organic manures are available to farmers?

In other sugar cane regions of the world, the area under cane farming is large and mechanization is prevalent resulting overall low cost of cultivation. In India farms are small in size and hence mechanization is difficult and the farmer mainly needs to depend on labor. Labor costs are prohibitively high which can result in a high cost of cultivation of cane.

How do we compete internationally?

What is the level playing field for an Indian small-scale farmer compared to large scale farmer in other parts of World?

Does the BSI have any initiative to address this plan?

BSI Standard does not see to address the problem of food security issues related to ethanol production.

In India, farmers are facing social security issues (social security means that farming is not respected as a profession). For example, a farmer will send their children to university to become engineers/ doctors / any other job other than farming. Another issue is that it is very difficult is to find a bride for the young farmer.

Does the BSI have any initiative to address the dignity of the farming profession?

As young people are not attracted to agriculture and in particular the farming side of agriculture it as well as farming laborers the question of child labour for farming activities is not evident - the average age of the present worker is above 30 years old.

What is the Role of BSI other than developing the Standards?

Does the BSI offer any advisory or technology / knowledge sharing role to enable Indian farmers to obtain new technologies / knowledge from other parts of the world?

In India the sugar is controlled through the essential commodities Act.

Are similar laws evident in other parts of the world?

How does the price for sugar in India compare with other parts of the world?

What is the cost of cane cultivation in other countries and what is the ratio of payment to the farmer vs the company on the sugar cost?

Is there any subsidies provided for sugarcane cultivation in other countries?

What are the pricing procedure and formula for cane payment to farmers in other countries?

In other parts of the world how is labor sourced?

Can the BSI recommend and ensure cane price uniformly for all the countries?

How many farmers per sugar factory are there in other countries?

PARTICIPANTS

Name	Address
Mrs. Tamil selvi	W/o Mr . Muthuveeran, Melapatti
Mrs.Prema	W/o Mr.Sathish, Valayapatti
Mrs. Sathya	W/o Mr.Mohan, Valayapatti
Mrs.S.Karthika	W/o Mr.Selvam, Melapatti
Mr.P.Kumar	Nandavanapallam
Mr.K.Anbalagan	Nachalur
Mr.P.Ashok Kumar	Hiranyamangalam
Mr.S.Karunakaran	Valyapatti
Mr.S.Prabhu	Hiranyamangalam
E.Venkatachalam	Panickampatti
Mr.Muthu	Semmedu
Mr.V.Thekkan	Kuppureddipatti
Mr.A.K. Ponnann	Kovilpatti
Mr.Muthuveeran	Melapatti
Mr.Kalyanaraman	Pudupatti
Mr.Elangovan	Enungur
Mr.Gopalakrishnan	Panickampatti
Mr.Mathivannan	Valyapatti
Mr.T.Rasu	Ayyermalai
Mr.M.C.Nagarajan	Mettumahadahanpuram
Mr.Sankar	Kadavoor
Mr.Rajaram.V	Mettumahadahanpuram