

Empowering Scheduled Caste Farmers with Sustainable Agricultural Practices- CPCRI and KVK Dakshina Kannada Collaborative Efforts

To uplift the socio-economic status and ensure sustainable livelihoods of Scheduled Caste (SC) farmers in the Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka, the ICAR-Central Plantation Crop Research Institute (CPCRI), Kasaragod, Kerala, in collaboration with the ICAR-Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Dakshina Kannada, implemented a series of innovative programmes under the Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP). Dr. Rajkumar, Senior Scientist (Nematology) and Nodal Officer of the SCSP Programme, successfully implemented the initiative at the grassroots level. Dr. T. J. Ramesha, Senior Scientist & Head, KVK, Dakshina Kannada, played a pivotal role in coordinating the programme across the district.

To operationalize this innovative initiative, seven neighbouring contiguous taluks—Sullia, Puttur, Kadaba, Ullal, Moodbidri, Bantwal, and Mulki—were selected with the support of the District Programme Manager of the Karnataka State Rural Livelihood Promotional Society (KSRLPS), a state-level poverty alleviation programme aimed at enhancing rural livelihoods.

At the village level, commodity interest groups were formed with the assistance of Community Resource Persons – Krishi Sakhis, under the guidance of Taluk Programme Managers of KSRLPS. These groups served as a foundation for targeted interventions.

Capacity Development Programmes

Shri Jayaram K. E., Project Director & Deputy Secretary, Zilla Panchayat, Sullia Taluk officially launched the programme in the district. SC farmers received in-depth technical guidance on-improved crop varieties, field preparation and planting techniques, manuring and fertilization practices, intercropping and mixed farming methods, integrated pest and disease management. Experts from various institutions and departments delivered these sessions. Seven training programmes were conducted across multiple locations, including Belthangady, Kaniyooru, Ramakunja, Kavalamudur, Mangalore, Aryapu, and Sullia Gram Panchayat.

Institutional Convergence

The initiative was successfully implemented through convergence with multiple institutions and departments, including Taluk Panchayats, Department of Agriculture, Department of Horticulture, Women and Child Welfare Department, and the Karnataka State Rural Livelihood Promotional Society (KSRLPS). This collaborative approach significantly amplified the programme's reach and impact.

Input Support

In addition to training, input support was provided to enhance field-level adoption. 5,000 high-yielding coconut saplings (var. West Coast Tall), procured from ICAR-CPCRI Regional Centre, Kidu (Karnataka), were distributed directly to 1657 SC farmers across the following villages and taluks:

Farmers during training on coconut cultivation-cum-seedling distribution at Sullia, Karnataka



Coconut saplings in households of SC farmers of Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka

(Source: ICAR- Central Planation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI), Kasaragod, Kerala)