

Asian Agri-History Foundation: Progress Report 2014

1. AAHF, which was established in 1994, completed 20 years of its activities in 2014. On 1 January 2014, **YL Nene** retired as Founder Chairman and **SN Nigam** took over as Chairman responding to the unanimous request of the Trustees. **YL Nene** continued his association with AAHF as Chairman Emeritus.

2. A new brochure on AAHF was prepared and is being circulated widely to promote the mission of AAHF and to enhance the corpus fund and journal subscription. During 2014, several individuals and two companies contributed to the corpus of the AAHF.

3. **OP Rupela**, former ICRISAT scientist, accepted the position of Honorary Public Relations Advisor replacing **DM Pawar**. We wish to put on records our appreciation to **DM Pawar** for his services rendered to the Foundation. **KL Sahrawat**, former ICRISAT scientist, accepted the position of Honorary Editor for Asian Agri-History journal.

4. Asian Agri-History journal:

- The number of subscribers to the journal in 2014 was 389 (Individuals 318; Institutions 71). Again we record our gratitude to **KK Ranade**, Director (Operations), IOT Engineers Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai for obtaining subscription of 100 persons.
- Thirty-three articles were published in Volume 18 of which 30 were from India

and one each from Australia, Thailand, and USA. Two book reviews were also published.

- Twenty-one papers in the series on “Probable agricultural biodiversity heritage sites in India” by **AK Singh** were published in Asian Agri-History journal starting in 2009 (Volume 13) and concluding in 2014 (Volume 18).
- The historicity of Kalanamak, an aromatic rice variety, was quoted in Asian Agri-History journal Volume 9, No. 3 in 2005 in the article “Rediscovering scented rice cultivar Kalanamak” by **US Singh** and coauthors. This information was useful as Kalanamak was awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag in September 2013 for its geographical status in Uttar Pradesh. Kalanamak grain has black husk and a mild salty taste. Known for its aroma and distinct taste, it is considered as one of the finest rice varieties in the international market. The article “GI tag awarded to Kalanamak rice” by **CS Reddy**, published in *Rice & Pesticides: News & Updates Around the World*, October 04, 2013, was reproduced in Asian Agri-History journal Volume 18, No. 1 in 2014. This article highlights information on Kalanamak published by the Foundation.
- 5. Krushak Ashram, a “cottage” for educated farmers, has been set up at Padali (Distt. Satara, Maharashtra) by **Srirang**

Supnekar, a progressive farmer, with the aim of getting farmers and farm scientists acquainted with agri-heritage of India so that the wisdom of our farmer-ancestors is integrated with modern farming practices. Focus is on ever-sustainable agriculture. **YL Nene** inaugurated the Krushak Ashram on 7 May 2014 in Pune and emphasized the need for deeper study of various texts on Vrikshayurveda and innovate practices to merge them with current practices. The “cottage” displays wall-paper size permanent posters, 53 each in English and Marathi. Contents are all based on AAHF’s classics published since 1996 (see photo below).

6. **SN Nigam** visited Siliguri on 31 May 2014 and discussed with **Vijay S Parmar**, Co-Chair of the AAHF West Bengal Chapter various matters related to AAHF including opportunities to raise funds from the tea industry.

7. **YL Nene** was interviewed by **Rambabu**, Journalist, *Sakshi* daily,



YL Nene surveying a book stall displaying agri-history publications. Behind Nene is Mrs Umashashi Bhalerao, who has translated most of AAHF bulletins in Marathi.

Hyderabad in May 2014. Following the publication of the interview in *Sakshi* on 9 October 2014, many people contacted and/or visited AAHF Office, appreciated AAHF activities, and purchased AAHF publications.

8. The National Conference on Innovation in Traditional Practices for Cultivation of Fruit, Vegetable, and Plantation Crops was held on 11–12 December 2014 in Goa. The Conference was organized by AAHF and its Chapters – Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal, in collaboration with ICAR Research Complex for Goa and Association for Coastal Agricultural Research (ACAR) and was sponsored by ICAR, New Delhi. The Conference served as a platform for exchange of innovative environment-friendly and resource-conserving technologies to promote sustainable agriculture. On this occasion, **K Salai Muthu** (Administrator and Finance Officer, AAHF) and **SK Khandelwal** (Secretary, Rajasthan Chapter of AAHF) were honored with the Trustees Medal for their dedicated services rendered to the Foundation.

9. A Meeting of AAHF Trustees was held on 12 December 2014 in Goa. **SN Nigam**, **YL Nene**, **MC Saxena**, **BL Agrawal**, and **Gajendra Singh** attended.

10. **SL Choudhary**, Honorary Secretary, AAHF, visited Siliguri and Darjeeling in West Bengal from 2 to 5 March 2014 to layout experiments on “Effect of smoke fumigation on tea bushes” in tea gardens of PC Mittal group, Longview Tea Estate, Tukvar Tea Estate, and Nagrifarm Tea Estate. The fumigation experiments were successful in containing insect pest damage

to tea bushes. The practice of fumigation is gaining acceptance among the tea estates. At the invitation of farmers of Jind (Haryana), **SL Choudhary** demonstrated from 25 to 27 March 2014 the method of preparation of *Kunapajala*. He also delivered a keynote lecture in a Seminar on *Goushalayein Aatmanibhar Ki Aur* organized on 12 October 2014 by Shri Hadoti Go-Seva Sansthan, Kota, Rajasthan. He visited Goa and Hyderabad in October and November 2014 to discuss logistics and program of the National Conference on Innovation in Traditional Practices for Cultivation of Fruit, Vegetable, and Plantation Crops. He was Convenor, Organizing Committee of the Conference.

11. The 3rd World Congress on Agro-forestry, co-hosted by ICAR, World Agro-forestry Centre, and the Indian Society of Agro-forestry, was held in February 2014 in New Delhi, India. In his inaugural speech, the **President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee** highly appreciated ancient scholar Surapala and his treatise on Vrikshayurveda, 'The Science of Plant Life'. He quoted from "Surapala's Vrikshayurveda" (Asian Agri-History Bulletin No. 1) published by AAHF in 1996. This bulletin includes the Sanskrit manuscript, English translation, and commentaries by experts. AAHF has also published the bulletin in Marathi and Hindi.

12. The website of the Foundation www.asianagrihistory.org is updated regularly. A large number of persons from all over the world contact AAHF each year seeking information on agricultural heritage of Asia.

13. During 2014, the following awards were conferred:

- Sipani Krishi Anusandhan Farm Award: Awarded to paper entitled "Indigenous knowledge of ethno-medicinal plants used by rural people in health care practices in Uttarakhand" authored by **Tara Negi** and **Dhriti Solanki** (Asian Agri-History 18(4):357–368). The Award carries a cash prize of ₹5000. In addition, each author receives a certificate.
- Dr KL Mehra Memorial Award: Awarded to paper entitled "Coconut – history, uses, and folklore" authored by **SC Ahuja**, **Siddharth Ahuja**, and **Uma Ahuja** (Asian Agri-History 18(3):221–248). The Award carries a cash prize of ₹5000. In addition, each author receives a certificate.
- The Falvey Award: Awarded to paper entitled "The bovine hide industry in Thailand" by **Pakapun Skunmun** (Asian Agri-History 18(2):153–166). The Award consists of a cash prize of ₹10000 and a certificate to the author.

14. All Honorary Advisors, Honorary Editors, members of International Advisory Board and others, helped the Foundation, as and when needed, in fulfilling its mission and objectives. We especially acknowledge **SM Sinha** (Honorary Advisor, Art and Printing), **Ch Vengala Reddy** (Consultant-Production) and **S Vijay Ramchander** (Honorary Editor) for their help. The Foundation staff, **Sheila Vijayakumar** (Managing Editor), **K Salai Muthu** (Administrator and Finance Officer),

Y Prasanthi (Administrative Assistant), **SV Raghav Rao** (Finance-Audit), and **D Surya Prakash** (Office Facility Manager) served the Foundation with hard work and dedication.

15. The 2013–14 accounts were audited by the auditors Messrs. ND Karwa & Co., Hyderabad and submitted to the tax authorities in time.

From AAHF Chapters

Rajasthan Chapter

- The Chapter published the third and fourth issues of *Pracheen Krishi Vigyan* newsletter.
- **SK Khandelwal**, Treasurer, delivered two lectures: (1) “A useful, forgotten traditional maure: *Kunapajala*” at the Seminar on *Krishi* and *Goupalan* organized by Shri Hadoti Go-Seva Sansthan, Kota, Rajasthan on 11 January 2014; and (ii) “Multiple uses of ancient organic manure: *Kunapajala*” at the Seminar on *Goushalayein Aatmanibhar Ki Aur* organized by Shri Hadoti Go-Seva Sansthan, Kota on 12 October 2014.
- A General Body Meeting of Rajasthan Chapter of AAHF was held on 2 December 2014 and a new Executive Committee of the Chapter was elected for the period 2015–17. The Committee constitutes of the following:
SC Bhardwaj - President
SK Khandelwal - Secretary
Vimal Sharma - Treasurer
PP Jani - Joint Secretary

Advisors: **KN Nag**, **MM Simlot**, **SL Choudhary**, and **IJ Mathur**

Members: **DK Sarolia**, **Dhriti Solanki**, **Pushpa Seth**, **Ganesh Rajamani**, **RS Rathore**, and **Devendra Singh Jhala**

Uttarakhand Chapter

- The Chapter has 55 members including annual and three-year members.
- The IInd issue (May–October 2014) of the Newsletter “Traditional Agriculture: A Key to Sustained Humanity” was published.
- The proceedings of National Seminar on Innovations in Traditional Agriculture, 15–16 November 2013 was published.

West Bengal Chapter

- On behalf of the Chapter, **VS Parmar**, Co-Chairman congratulated both **YL Nene** on his retirement and **SN Nigam** for taking over as the Chairman of AAHF. **SN Nigam** interacted with Chapter members on 31 May 2014 at Siliguri on his visit to Kishangunj.
- The results of several experiments carried out by different tea gardens were shared by the planters at various meetings held during the year. The experiment on smoke fumigation suggested by **YL Nene** was carried out in March 2014 at the Nagrifarm Tea Estate, Tukvar Tea Estate, and Longview Tea Estate in Darjeeling and Samsing Tea Estate and Bamandanga Tea Estate

in Dooara under the guidance and in the presence of **SL Choudhary**. The results have been very encouraging and there was good control of all insect pests namely, *Heliopeltis*, thrips, and greenfly.

- The write-up by the Greenpeace Organization, 'Hope Brewing' A Case Study of Bamandanga and Tondu Tea Estates – a success story of conversion of two large tea gardens to organic, for the first time, in recent years based on the traditional practices under the guidance of **SL Choudhary** is a great

honor. A copy has been sent to the AAHF Headquarters as a souvenir; it makes very interesting reading.

- A day-long Meeting was held with the Scientists of the Darjeeling Tea Research and Development Centre (DTRDC), Kureseong, Darjeeling at the DTRDC Building. It was attended by **SL Choudhary, VS Parmar**, DTRDC Project Director, Tea Board of India, **Mahipal Singh** and his entire team of Scientists. Other Committee members from the Chapter were also present.

Sipani Krishi Anusandhan Farm Award 2014

The Asian Agri-History Foundation (AAHF) announces the Sipani Krishi Anusandhan Farm Award 2014 for the **Best Paper** in Asian Agri-History.

The paper entitled “**Indigenous knowledge of ethno-medicinal plants used by rural people in health care practices in Uttarakhand**” authored by **Tara Negi** and **Dhriti Solanki** (Asian Agri-History 18(4):357–368) has been selected by panels of judges and trustees as the Best Paper for the Award 2014. The Award consists of a cash prize of ₹5000 (which will be split equally between the authors) and a certificate to each author. The Award has been possible through a donation by Sipani Krishi Anusandhan Farm, Mandsaur, Madhya Pradesh, India. Papers authored by trustees, editors, and advisors of AAHF were not considered.

We congratulate the authors.

**Chairman
AAHF**



Tara Negi



Dhriti Solanki