

A land to grow organic vegetables

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People buying organic products at Savayava Swavalambi Santhe organised by Savayava Krishi Grahaka Balaga, Mangaluru, in Mangaluru on Sunday. —Photo: by special arrangement

You wish to grow vegetables organically, but do not have land to do it. This situation is quite common among urban residents. They will be forced to buy products, said to be organic, by paying a premium price.

To change this, some large-hearted farmers and a few organisations dedicated to the cause of organic farming are up for some experiment in Mangaluru. They would give you a piece of land, manure, seeds, water and others required for vegetable cultivation. A few things you have to provide are your time and energy.

Savayava Krishika Grahaka Balaga, Mangaluru, which has been conducting Savayava Swavalambi Santhe in and around Mangaluru from last year, has come out with this novel idea to promote organic farming. During the monthly santhes, the balaga has been providing a platform for organic farmers and entrepreneurs running home-based industries to sell their products, which has been a big hit.

K. Rathnakar Kulai of the balaga told *The Hindu* that it was an attempt to encourage organic farming among urban residents. A progressive farmer, Jayananda Mogaru of Mogaru village, off Ganjimutt on Mangaluru-Moodabidri, had come forward to offer the land for the experiment.

Mr. Mogaru told *The Hindu* that about an acre of his land, which otherwise would be lying idle during the summer, would be offered to the enthusiasts. He would also attempt to provide other inputs, including water, seeds and manure.

The land would be prepared to sow vegetable seeds by the balaga and the farmer and the only expense an enthusiast has to incur could be towards expenses towards water and the waterman. Mr. Kulai said the manure would also be provided by them, while the physical work of sowing the seed and related activities would have to be done by the enthusiast.

Besides offering organically grown vegetables, the initiative could also prove to be an outing for urban residents, Mr. Kulai said.

Those interested may contact Mr. Kulai on 94488 35606. They could be go by bus at 8.20 a.m. to Mogaru on January 15. Breakfast and lunch are arranged on that day only. Kukkikatte is the nearest bus stop for Mogaru, to which buses are available from Kaikamba and Ganjimutt.

Mr. Kulai also said the last of the Savayava Swavalambi Santhe would be held on January 17 at Asaigoli, near Konaje. Instead, the balaga intends to encourage growing organic vegetables, he added.

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