

Natural farm products get boost with new project

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Project aims to get chemical-free farm products to the market. Vithu Muthal Vipani Vare Vishudhi' launched by Earth Care Foundation to ensure maximum price for farmers and toxin-free food for consumers.

The Earth Care Foundation Trust, a non-profitable organisation working for spreading zero-budget farming methods, has launched a project 'Vithu Muthal Vipani Vare Vishudhi' in the district on Tuesday aimed at ensuring a steady market for the produces of registered natural farmers.

Besides, the trust also aims at giving them training, awareness sessions, and farmer interaction programmes from time to time. The trust, which promotes, the Subhash Palekar model of zero-budget natural farming methods, will start marketing outlets for natural farm products at all important junctions of the Thondayadu Bypass starting from Ramanattukara to Koyilandy, said P.V. Krishnankutty, the trust chairman.

"Maximum price for farmer and toxin-free food for consumer is our aim," he said maintaining that middlemen would be completely done away with.

Speaking at a seminar organised in connection with the launch of the project at the Town Hall here, Dr. N. Shudhodanan, noted agriculturist and former Deputy Director of Animal Husbandry, said it was high time that the farmers across the State took a collective decision to turn to natural farming methods if the State was to escape from the threats of dreaded diseases.

It should frighten anyone as more than 45 per cent of Kerala's population was suffering from one or the other lifestyle diseases, including diabetes, said Dr. Shudhodanan. Emphasising on the importance of reclaiming the lost practice of rearing indigenous breeds of cows, he said that ensuring purity of food was the only way to guarantee the mental and physical health of the people.

Noted agriculturist and natural farming exponent P.K. Chandrashekhara from Palakkad, who spoke on the benefits of natural farming methods, said the question was not weather to use organic fertilizers or chemical pesticides, but to make sure the natural condition of the soil and the ecosystem.

"The question is how to make possible an ecosystem that will ensure adequate number of micro-organisms for the proper growth of vegetable and fruits in the soil," he said.

An exhibition-cum-sale of a variety of vegetables, fruits, saplings, seeds, and food products prepared from natural ingredients was also organised as part of the programme.

Farmers, who would like to register with the trust or would like to know more about it may contact members at Ph: 9388110491, 9349999098, 9447847712.

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