

# Organic farming initiative for Idukki district

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Manarcadu Social Service Society (MASS), a collective of more than 5,000 organic farmers, will launch Rebuild Kerala 2021, a sustainable development plan to help farmers in Idukki to rebuild their farms and livelihoods through organic farming. According to Bijumon Kurien, president of MASS, the launch event will be held at Idinjamala in Idukki on November 26 where more than 100 organic farmers from various parts of the country will converge. They will take part in the planting event and donate seedlings. "This coming together of organic farmers is expected to create a farming reform movement not only in Kerala but across India" Kurian said. Initially, around 2 lakh saplings will be distributed for free for cultivation in the fertile hill tracts of Idukki. , MASS targets to plant 1 million saplings in three years and the project is expected to reach out to farmers across Kerala in phases. The focus area is the Western Ghats, a biodiversity hotspot. The project has been designed to help farmers to rebuild their farms and livelihoods which they lost in the recent floods. The types of saplings include herbs, spices, fruits, vegetables, coffee and cocoa. Farmers will be given material and assistance in sustainable and organic-certified practices. Plantrich, the marketing arm of MASS, will offer 100 per cent buyback of the produces and help farmers in processing and value addition. NGOs working in the region will involve more than 100,000 families across 52 panchayats and two municipalities of Idukki. The three-year project will be completed in 2021. First published by [The Hindu](#) on Nov. 4, 2018