

**ANNOUNCING THE ORGANIC FARMING ASSOCIATION'S THIRD BIENNIAL CONVENTION 2010
(ANAND, GUJARAT)**

DATES:

15-17 December (Wednesday to Friday)
Inaugural Session: 15 December 2010 @ 9.30 am.
Closure of the Convention: 17 December 2010 @ 4.30 pm

VENUE:

Bhaikaka Krishi Kendra,
Ravipura [Anand-Sojitra Road],
District Anand, Gujarat.
(Phone: 02692-281664. Use only from December 14-17, 2010)

The Organic Farming Association of India (OFAI) organises its convention of organic farmers every two years in a different State. This year's convention is scheduled to be held near Anand, Gujarat. Earlier conventions were held in Wardha (Maharashtra) in 2006 and Trichy (Tamilnadu) in 2008.

The venue for the 2010 event is the outstandingly successful biodynamic farm of OFAI President Shri Sarvdaman and Mina Patel. OFAI is grateful to this wonderful couple for agreeing to host the TBC 2010 despite all the inconvenience it may cause them.

The convention will be limited to 670 persons, on a first-come, first served basis. All OFAI State Secretariats have been allowed quotas for participation. OFAI members will get priority for registering.

The theme of the TBC 2010 is "Cool Farming for a Hot Planet," reflecting the widely held conviction that organic farming not only eliminates or minimises contributions to green house gases from agriculture (when contrasted with chemical agriculture), but also actively helps in keeping more carbon in the soil.

Three eminent guest speakers have been booked for the three days of the event. The first day's eminent speaker will be Dr O.P. Rupela, former ICRISAT scientist who has endeared himself to the organic farming community by undertaking research that conclusively proves the efficiency of organic farming when compared with other methods. A scientist having total faith in organic farming, Dr Rupela will represent the scientific community.

Shri Prakash Raghuvanshi, the outstanding practising farmer from near Varanasi in UP who has revolutionised the propagation and dramatic improvement of indigenous seeds through ingenious seed selection processes, will share his expertise and seeds on the second day.

Greatly admired by the farming community for his generosity in sharing his seeds and expertise, Shri Raghuvansi will represent the farming community.

On the third day, Shri Umendra Dutt, activist mobilising Punjab and Haryana farmers against green revolution technologies and fiercesome agitator and campaigner against GM seeds, will address the valedictory. He will represent the activist community working on farming issues.

Also invited to speak at the valedictory is Shri Kartikeya Sarabhai, founder of the Centre for Environment Education, the NGO which organised the series of public hearings on Bt brinjal. Sarabhai has always been committed to green farming and green development. Since the Convention is located this year in Gujarat, it was thought the event would benefit greatly from his association, presence, experience and advice.

AIMS OF THE BIENNIAL CONVENTION:

- 1) To understand and discuss the importance of organic farming within the overall perspective of climate change challenges.
- 2) To learn from each others' organic farming experiences and methods.
- 3) To develop and strengthen feelings of solidarity within the organic movement at the national level.

MORE DETAILS OF THE VENUE:

Bhaikaka Krishi Kendra – the venue for the event – is one of the best organic-biodynamic farms in the country and a wonder to behold. The farm is owned and personally managed by Sarvdaman Patel who is also President of OFAI. The farm has been growing various crops including fruits, vegetables, cereals and pulses organically since 2000.

Visitors will get to see a complete nutrient cycle in operation including biomass production, animal husbandry and dairy, compost, mulching, multilayer cropping, etc. Rainwater hardly runs out of the farm. Sarvdaman himself is an agronomy expert. He also runs a farm shop. Internationally known biodynamic expert Peter Proctor has organized many training courses on this farm. That his farm will become the venue of the convention is a matter of pride and joy to the organic farming community of India.

PROGRAMMES DURING THE CONVENTION:

Besides the main focus speeches on organic farming and its role in mitigating the problems caused by climate change, the following programmes are also scheduled for the benefit of participants:

* Useful seeds for organic farming * Crop selection & planning * Water management in organic farming * Soil science & nutrition management * Natural plant protection * Experiences of

organic farmers * Experiences of scientists & activists * Lectures & questions and answers * Demonstrations of soil, water & plant protection measures * Exhibition * Literature and books on organic farming * Songs from Vinay-Charul (Loknad) * Films-silde shows * Cultural programmes

Participating in this event would therefore be the experience of a life time.

EXHIBITIONS:

All bookings relating to exhibition space should be done by 1.11.2010 through **Jatan**. It is subject to terms and conditions and through prescribed form only.

1. For Farmers & NGOs: Posters, farm produce, books, state-wise presentation. No costs for stalls.

2. For Commercial Groups: Input products & dealers promoting their products (subject to terms and conditions provided in the registration form). No display of GM products will be allowed. Likewise, all items promoting chemical fertilizers and synthetic pesticides will not be permitted. One-time **minimum** charge of Rs.5,000 per stall.

INSTRUCTIONS AND REQUESTS FROM THE ORGANIZERS:

Please keep the following in mind to help us organize and manage this national level event to the satisfaction of all parties:

1. Get yourself registered in time and don't expect special exemptions / exceptions. No registration will be possible after the due date. It is absolutely essential to send all your registration dues to the respective offices before 20 November 2010. Registrations will be closed as the total capacity gets booked up. Please bear with this reality. No registration fees will be accepted at the event venue. Food coupons will not be sold at the counter.
2. Upon receiving the application and due amount, the participant will be sent a receipt along with a registration confirmation letter (with important instructions and registration number) before 1st December, 2010. Participants need to show this letter at the registration counter.
3. As OFAI has no commercial interests, no sponsorship or conditional donations will be accepted for this convention. All are welcome to support unconditionally and whole heartedly. By paying the registration fees you help this event to be financially independent. Your support in the form of an additional amount above the minimum registration fee or a donation will be highly appreciated.
4. If financial constraints are a hindrance to your participation in this event, please inform your state secretariat or OFAI. The association will try and ensure that you can participate if you are unable to raise your own resources.

5. Arrangements being made for stay, food and meetings will be simple, like at a common farmer's home. The whole event is organized on a organic farm in tents. The food will be organic as much possible. Although bedding will be provided, you are requested to bring personal lightweight pullover and bed sheets as it might be cold.

6. Those wishing to present their experiences in orally or through demonstrations MUST submit their papers, write-ups, presentations, demonstration requirements before 1st Nov., 2010. Since this is a national event, please cooperate with us to facilitate translation. Earlier experiences have taught us that late submissions always lead to farmers being dissatisfied.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

Volunteers are solicited and welcome. The whole event is being organized totally through people's participation. Sixty to seventy volunteers will be needed to manage various different tasks like managing the kitchen & dining, residential arrangements, managing the auditorium, looking after the guests, running the registration office, the exhibition, photography, videography, computers, audio-visuals systems and so on. Discipline and an ability to carry out tasks until the results are achieved even in adverse situations are both necessary. Skillful and willing volunteers may kindly inform of their availability in advance and make this event their own. Volunteers are also requested to register by paying the necessary fees.

REGISTRATION PROCESS:

Registration begins on 15 September, 2010. First preference will be given to OFAI members. Please quote your OFAI ID number when registering. No spot registration will be allowed at the venue on convention days. Limited numbers of participants allowed since the venue is a farm. Registration closes 20 November, 2010. No admission at the gate will be permitted.

Participants must plan to arrive on 14th evening or early 15th morning either at Anand or Vadodara.

Registration fee for the Convention is Rs. 500/- to Rs.1000/- for farmers (pay according to ability) and Rs. 1000 to Rs.2000/- for non farmers [NGOs/Promoters, Scientists, Students, others]. Fee includes food and accommodation. Those small and marginal farmers who need sponsorship/concession may contact their respective OFAI Secretariats.

REGISTRATION FOR PARTICIPANTS FROM OUTSIDE GUJARAT:

First fill the registration form (to indicate category of participant). There is only one form for all the categories.

Send both form and fees to:

Central Secretariat, OFAI, G-8, St Britto's Apartments, Feira Alta, Mapusa 403507 Goa. For registration at OFAI-CS, send amount by Money Order payable to "Organic Farming Association

of India” at Mapusa P.O. PIN 403507 with name and contact details [postal address, email ID and phone number] to reach by 20 November, 2010 latest.

REGISTRATION FOR PARTICIPANTS FROM GUJARAT:

First fill the registration form (to indicate category of participant). There is only one form for all the categories.

Send both form and fees to:

‘Satvik’, 26, Banker’s Colony, Near Jubilee Ground, Bhuj: 370 001, Dist: Kutch Ph: 02832-254872, Fax: 02832-251914 Email : satvik.india@gmail.com

DD should be in favour of “Jatan”, payable at Vadodara. However, the DD should be sent to the Satvik address at Bhuj.

M.O. should be in favour of “Satvik”.

Cheques will not be accepted.

Special accommodation and registration charges:

Those who wish to avail of their own accommodation in guest houses/hotels nearby may do so themselves. But there will be no concession for registration fees in such cases.

We are repeating: registration will be on first-come, first-served basis. OFAI members will have priority.

NOTE FOR PRESENTERS:

It is important that all presenters take pains to utilise the services of Jatan and OFAI for translation of their presentations. Any write-ups that are being used even during oral presentations should be translated into other languages. All papers for translation should be sent either to Jatan or OFAI by 1.11.2010.

Gujarati language:

Jatan

Vinoba Ashram, Gotri,

Vadodara-390 021

Ph : 0265-2371429

Fax : 0265-2372593

Email : jatantrust@gmail.com

All other languages:

OFAI Secretariat,

G-8, St. Brittio’s Apartments,

Feira Alta, Mapusa, Goa-403 507
Ph : 0832-2255913
Fax : 0832-2263305
Email : myofai@gmail.com

LIVE DEMONSTRATIONS :

The Bhaikaka farm is offering space for any organic farmer who wishes to have live demonstrations of his techniques or cropping practices during the convention days. Individual plots of 10 x 8 sq.feet are being prepared. Any planting and also number of plots required to be done must be intimated to Jatan by 15.10.2010.

People wanting to carry out these live demos should also mention material requirements in details before 15th October.

TOUR OF GUJARAT:

For those who wish to visit historic places and organic farms in Gujarat, there are two programmes being organised by Jatan:

- a) One day tour on 14th December, 2010. Start at 9.00 a.m. from Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad. Visit to Sabarmati Ashram, Sardar Patel Bio-Dynamic Farm, Akshardham, Gandhinagar, end at event venue by the evening on 14th. (Advance to be paid: Rs.250. These should be included with the registration fees sent to the respective registering office.) For this tour, you must arrive in Ahmedabad in time and report for the tour on 14th morning at 9.00 AM at Gujarat Vidyapeeth.
- b) Three day tour from 18-20 December, 2010. Start by evening of 17th soon after the closure of the event, from the event place. Visit to Dwarika, Porbander, Somnath, Wheat Research Station-Lokbharti, Panchvatibaug Farm and will end at the traditional food festival of Shristi, Ahmedabad on 20th evening. (Advance to be paid: Rs.1200. This should be included with the registration fees sent to the respective registering office.)

The advance charged is not the complete cost of the tours. The actual cost will be pooled together and divided among the participants of the tour after the tour programme. Tour expenses will include travel, meals and accommodation. Cancellation charge will be 50% of the advance.

TRAIN TICKET BOOKINGS: WARNING

The nearest railway stations to the venue are ANAND and VADODARA [one hour journey by road]. Please arrange to arrive by 14 December, 2010, evening

This is to bring to your urgent attention that all participants to the Convention travelling from outside Gujarat .will need to book their train tickets starting 13 or 14 September, 2010 [90 days in advance].

Please note that reservations for train travel to Gujarat are difficult to get at any time of the year. We have noted that tickets reach the "Wait List" on the very first day when the booking open. Tickets for travel up to the first week of December are already on Wait List. The reservations open exactly 90 days prior to the date and time of the train's departure from the railway station of origin of the train [not your boarding station]. So if your train journey begins on 13 December, 2010, check the date and time when the train starts at the point of origin and get your online reservation from home, agent or railway station done at that time on 14 September, 2010 [since October has 31 days]. Please confirm the details of your train now.

If you want to participate in either of the two proposed tours, plan your train bookings accordingly.

For further details see www.ofai.org in the coming days and read the OFAI newsletter "The Living Field" or "Shashya Shyamala". For urgent information of any kind, call: 0832-2255913 (during office hours) or email: myofai@gmail.com