



A HANDS-ON ORGANIC FARMING WORKSHOP ATTENDED BY THE EDS TEAM, MUMBAI

Govardhan Eco Village (GEV) Organic Farming

2ND SEPT, 2017

GEV: Day Visit

Agro-chemicals and lab-modified seeds are steering farming towards an ecological crisis. Nestled within the Western Ghats, this eco-village is successfully finding a balance between Vedic sciences and modern inventions. With the principle of *'simple living, high thinking'*, the community practices symbiotic farming to produce a healthier yield and encourage a sustainable lifestyle.

In addition to workshops on organic farming and waste segregation, the campus drives initiatives on Animal Care, Water Conservation, Soil Biotechnology, Green Buildings, Alternative Energy, and Rural Empowerment. Their relentless efforts have been awarded with the prestigious GRIHA 5 Star rating amongst numerous other sustainability accolades.

Organic Farming Workshop

The EDS, Mumbai, Team attended on-field sessions of the organic farming workshop, learning the environmental advantages of crop rotation, incineration, in-situ vermiculture, composting, multi-cropping, mulching, etc. over mechanical and intensive crop plantation.

Using tractors instead of ploughing bulls has diminished natural processes like soil aeration and natural fertilisation from animal excretion. Animal waste contain substrates and enzymes which are proven to be better than most of the commercially available chemical fertilizers when comparing prolonged environmental and economic impact.

Raised plantation beds and manure made from dry twigs, dry biomass, black soil and cow waste yield a healthier harvest in comparison to other farming methods.

The workshop covered the history of traditional practices and its changing impacts in the food chain with a special emphasis on the degrading fruits and vegetables available in the market, loss of seeds in the new crops and the consequential burden on the modern age farmer due to the seed costs.

Highlighted below are learnings from the hand-on sessions of:

'Jeevamrut' solid and liquid natural fertilizers

Bio-enzymes to promote growth of flowerings and non-flowering plants



Figure 1: Isolated planting beds to maintain optimal environmental conditions during the growing phase.



Figure 2: EDS Team at Govardhan Ecovillage

The EDS Team building a raised plantation bed: The bed is roughly designed to be of two hands width and 1 and a half feet long with layers of soil, dry biomass, twigs, leaves, and cow waste.



Step 1: A rectangle marked in a shaded area on a flat soil terrain



Step 2: Making a base layer of black soil and twigs



Step 3: A layer of dry biomass to cover the previous layer



Step 4: A layer of leaves on it and again the same procedure

The Team further learns to make a chemical and pesticide free fertilizer Jeevamrut (Liquid), that enhances the natural nutrients in the soil.



Step 1: Mixture of cow waste and black jaggery



Step 2: Adding that mixture in grey water



Step 3: Addition of rice flour to it

"A step towards learning how to live in harmony with the environment, develop a 'spiritual ecology' that can bring about tangible, positive changes within ourselves – and how we interact with the planet."

Finally, the Team tried their hand at making Growth Promoters for flowering plants and non-flowering plants. These were Bio-Enzymes which act as a growth catalyst and enriching the plant during its growing stages.



Step 1: Papaya and black jaggery are solid growth promoters



Step 2: They are mashed and mixed together



Step 3: Kept in a tightly sealed container with an air gap



Wet waste from kitchen i.e. vegetable waste is finely chopped and mixed with greywater and cow waste

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