

## **Tamil Nadu Must Become an Organic State: Sadhguru**

**2 February 2019, Tiruchy:** Isha Agro Movement launched its nine-day training workshop on natural farming at S.R.M. Medical College, Tiruchy, today. Over 3000 farmers are participating in the workshop which will end on 10 February.

Sadhguru, Founder, Isha Foundation and Padma Shri awardee Shri. Subhash Palekar inaugurated the workshop. Other dignitaries at the inaugural program included Shri. R. Doraikkannu, Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture; Shri. Vellamandi N. Natarajan, Hon'ble Minister for Tourism; Shri. K. Sellamuthu, Head – Tamil Nadu Farmers Association; Dr. R. Shivakumar, Chairman, SRM Group of Institutions, Ramapuram & Tiruchy; Shri. R. Venkataramanan, Managing Trustee, Tata Trusts; and Dr. Harish Krishnaswamy, Chief Operations Officer, Tata Trusts.

The workshop will educate farmers in all aspects of natural or organic farming including input preparation, the role of country breed cattle in organic farming, importance of traditional seeds, methods to enrich the soil and creating markets for value-added goods. The farmers will also be trained in Tamil Nadu's market rate for paddy, sugarcane, coconut, banana and all crop cultivation training. Farmers from all over Tamil Nadu are participating in this training program.

Speaking on the occasion, Sadhguru said that though people want to move away from chemically manufactured foods, nothing has been done to address this need. Sadhguru said Andhra Pradesh had promised to convert completely from chemical to natural farming by 2022 and urged Tamil Nadu to do the same. Sadhguru said that the objective of the workshop was to create an interest in organic farming among the farming community of Tamil Nadu and added that an agricultural center is being established at the Isha Yoga Center to promote natural farming.

Sadhguru said that after the overwhelming success of Velliangiri Farmer Producers Organization (FPO) established by Isha Foundation, plans were afoot to establish larger FPOs with 25,000 to 50,000 farmers. Farmers of the Velliangiri Farmer Producers Organization have doubled their profit since joining the FPO.

Sadhguru said that in order to ensure food security, we must make agriculture a profitable sector so that future generations invest themselves in food production.

Earlier, the guests and audience observed a minute's silence as a tribute to Nel Jayaraman, who dedicated his life towards reviving traditional paddy. Sadhguru dispensed traditional paddy to pioneer organic farmers after the tribute. Native cattle breed of 15 varieties were exhibited during the inaugural program in an effort to build awareness about indigenous cattle breeds. They included breeds such as breeds like Kankarej, Kangayam, Sahiwal and Gir among others.

### **Isha Agro Movement**

The Isha Agro Movement was established in 2007 under the guidance of Shri. Nammalvar, the pioneer of organic farming movement in Tamil Nadu. It was established as a platform to develop and promote collective farming. Since 2015, Isha Agro Movement has also focused on reviving natural farming methods that were traditionally followed in India up until four decades ago. It provides practical support to farmers in all aspects of natural farming including training in efficient organic farming methods, value addition, marketing and procurement. Till date over 4200 farmers have been trained in Tamil Nadu in natural farming methods and over 70% of trained farmers have converted to organic farming leading to improved produce, price and health.

### **Sadhguru - Founder, Isha Foundation**

Ranked amongst the fifty most influential people in India, Sadhguru is a yogi, mystic, visionary and a New York Times bestselling author. Sadhguru was conferred the "Padma Vibhushan" by the Government of India in 2017, the highest annual civilian award, accorded for exceptional and distinguished service.

Three decades ago, Sadhguru founded Isha Foundation, a non-profit human-service organization, with human well-being as its core commitment. Sadhguru has initiated powerful yoga programs for human transformation as well as various outreach projects to uplift under-served communities in rural India.

## **Isha Foundation**

Isha Foundation, founded by Sadhguru, is a volunteer-run, international non-profit, human service organisation dedicated to cultivating human potential. Isha Foundation is operated by over 9 million volunteers from more than 250 city-based centers spread worldwide. The Foundation is headquartered at Isha Yoga Center, set at the base of the Velliangiri Mountains in southern India, and at the Isha Institute of Inner Sciences on the spectacular Cumberland Plateau in middle Tennessee, USA.