
Asian Agri-History Foundation: Progress Report 2015

1. Asian Agri-History Foundation (AAHF) was established in 1994 with the mission to ensure food sufficiency and nutritional security in the South and Southeast Asia regions.

2. During 2015, several individuals and few companies contributed to the corpus of AAHF.

3. AAHF deeply regrets to announce the sad demise of **OP Rupela**, Honorary Public Relations Advisor, AAHF on 22 October 2015.

4. Asian Agri-History:

- This international quarterly journal was published regularly and promptly.
- The number of subscribers to the journal in 2015 was 396 (Individuals 327; Institutions 69). Again we record our gratitude to **KK Ranade**, Director (Operations), IOT Engineers Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai for obtaining subscription of 100 persons.
- Twenty-seven articles and one book review were published in Volume 19. Some authors greatly appreciated and acknowledged the work of the editorial/production team of the journal.
- Twenty-one papers in the series on “Probable agricultural biodiversity heritage sites in India” by **Anurudh K Singh** were published in Asian Agri-History starting in 2009 (Volume 13) and concluding in 2014 (Volume 18). These

papers were compiled for publication as a reference book for readers to know how farming systems suited to the heritage sites were worked out by indigenous farming communities.

5. **SL Choudhary**, Trustee and Honorary Secretary, AAHF visited Meerut from 16 to 17 March 2015 and popularized Vrikshayurveda practices in field and vegetable crops in the village Akkhapur of Meerut district, and Bankhanda and Mohammedpur villages of Hapur district along with **SPS Beniwal**, Trustee, AAHF and **RK Naresh**, Professor (Agronomy), Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel University of Agriculture and Technology, Meerut. Some farmers showed great interest in use of *kunapajala* in rice, potato, and sugarcane crops.

6. **SL Choudhary** delivered a keynote lecture on “Procurement of indigenous maize cultivars, seed treatment, and traditional practices to obtain high yield” at the Traditional Maize Workshop and *Mela*, organized by Bharat Beej Swaraj Manch (Indian Seed Sovereignty Alliance) (a nationwide network) and Banyan Roots (a complete organic store), Udaipur in collaboration with Sahaja Samruda, Bengaluru; ASHA (Alliance for Sustainable & Holistic Agriculture), Bengaluru; and Vagdhara, Banswara on 22–23 May 2015 at Christian Auxiliary for Social Action, Udaipur. About 150 participants including farmers and NGOs from Andhra Pradesh,

Telangana, Karnataka, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Odisha, Punjab, and Madhya Pradesh attended (see photo below).



SL Choudhary and other participants displaying diversity of maize.

7. **SL Choudhary** visited South Africa from 25 May to 9 June 2015 on an invitation from **Vimal Pragdin**, Parklands Veterinary Clinic, Johannesburg. He attended a meeting with **J Visser**, Oaklands Veterinary Clinic, Johannesburg and **M Greenberg**, Wendywood Veterinary Hospital, Sandton and their staff on 30 May 2015. There were good deliberations on ethno-veterinary practices and the participants appreciated the articles published in Asian Agri-History journal. **SL Choudhary** also had a good meeting with **Shobha Naidoo**, University of Pretoria, Pretoria and other agricultural scientists of the university on traditional agricultural practices for sustainable agriculture. Copies of some AAHF publications were given to Indian Cultural Council, Johannesburg for display.

8. **SL Choudhary** demonstrated the methodology of preparation of *kunapajala* (liquid manure) and its use to women farmers of village Vikarani, Udaipur on

21 August 2015, under the leadership of Rohit Jain, a progressive farmer and active member of Rajasthan Chapter of AAHF (see photo below).



SL Choudhary demonstrating kunapajala preparation.

9. **YL Nene**, Chairman Emeritus, AAHF received an invitation from **P Rajasekharan**, Chief of Agriculture, Kerala State Planning Board, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala to write a detailed report on the agri-history of Kerala. A one-year grant of ₹548,800 was provided to AAHF for the report-writing project. **YL Nene** completed writing the report and submission in a period of ten months. The Final Report of 176 pages was titled “**Agricultural Heritage of the State of Kerala, India**” – with focus on developing innovative practices for sustainable agriculture. The Report was praised.

10. The Kerala State Planning Board, Government of Kerala organized the National Workshop on Vrikshayurveda in Plant Health Management on 18–19 September 2015 at Thiruvananthapuram. About 250 participants including scenarists, agricultural officers, scientists, farmers, private entrepreneurs, and staff of NGOs attended. **YL Nene** delivered a lecture “Crop disease management and yield increase: Potential of some methods described in Vrikshayurvedas” and **SL Choudhary** delivered a lecture “*Kunapajala* in plant health mangement”. **SL Choudhary** and **VS Parmar**, Chairman, West Bengal Chapter of AAHF demonstrated the methodology of preparation of *kunapajala* to the participants.

11. **SL Choudhary** delivered a keynote lecture on “History, need, and scope of indigenous practices in plant protection” at the National Seminar on Contextual Relevance of ITKs in Plant Protection organized by ICAR-National Research Centre for Integrated Pest Management, Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), Pusa campus on 28–29 October 2015.

12. AAHF publications:

- Published in December 2014
- Indian Agricultural Heritage [c. 400 BCE–1700 CE] (Agri-History Bulletin No. 10) (published in collaboration with Green Infrastructure Projects Pvt. Ltd., Bengaluru, India)
- Guide to Gardening (Agri-History Bulletin No. 11)
- Published in 2015

- Proceedings of National Conference on Innovation in Traditional Practices for Cultivation of Fruit, Vegetable, and Plantation Crops (published by AAHF and AAHF Chapters – Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal)
- Nuskha Dar Fanni-Falahat (Agri-History Bulletin No. 3) – In Marathi
- Agricultural Biodiversity Heritage Sites and Systems by Prof **Anurudh K Singh**
- Copies of several publications of AAHF were sold during the year.

13. The website of the Foundation www.asianagrihistory.org is updated regularly. A large number of persons from all over the world contact AAHF each year seeking information on agricultural heritage of Asia.

14. During 2015, the following awards were conferred:

- Sipani Krishi Anusandhan Farm Award: Awarded to paper entitled “*Nirgundi* (*Vitex negundo*) – Nature’s gift to mankind” by **SC Ahuja**, **Siddharth Ahuja**, and **Uma Ahuja** (Asian Agri-History 19(1):5–32). The Award carries a cash prize of ₹5000. In addition, each author receives a certificate (see box on p. 62).
- Dr KL Mehra Memorial Award: Awarded to two papers entitled “Forest foods of northern Western Ghats: Mode of consumption, nutrition, and availability” by **Rohini Jadhav**, **Mandar N Datar** and **AS Upadhye** (Asian Agri-History 19(4):293–316); and “Multiple uses of neglected wild plants by the indigenous

- people of the Garhwal Himalayas” by **Anuradha Dutta, Chandra Dev, BK Khanduri, and Sanjay Sachan** (Asian Agri-History 19(3):195–203). The Award carries a cash prize of ₹5000. In addition, each author receives a certificate (see box on p. 63).
- The Falvey Award: Awarded to paper entitled “**Cow urine – Sanjivani for honeybees: Success stories of beekeepers**” by **Ruchira Tiwari** (Asian Agri-History 19(3):215–227). The Award consists of a cash prize of ₹10,000 and a certificate to the author (see box on p. 64).
15. All Honorary Advisors, Honorary Editors, members of International Advisory Board and others helped the Foundation, as and when needed, in fulfilling its mission and objectives. We especially acknowledge **SM Sinha** (Honorary Advisor-Art and Printing), **Ch Vengala Reddy** (Consultant-Production), and **S Vijay Ramchander** (Honorary Editor) for their help. The Foundation staff, **Sheila Vijayakumar** (Managing Editor), **K Salai Muthu** (Administrator and Finance Officer), **Shyamili Bose** (Administrative Assistant), **Y Prasanthi** (Administrative Assistant), **SV Raghav Rao** (Consultant-Audit), and **D Surya Prakash** (Facilities Officer) served the Foundation with hard work and dedication.
16. The 2014–15 accounts were audited by the auditors **Messrs. ND Karwa & Co.**, Hyderabad and submitted to the tax authorities in time.
17. AAHF Chapters:
- Rajasthan Chapter
 - The Chapter has been promoting awareness of AAHF activities in various forums. Consequently, 16 persons (agricultural scientists and PhD students) enrolled as life members of the Chapter during the year.
 - Twenty-eight individuals enrolled as subscribers to Asian Agri-History journal for three years (2015–17).
 - Uttarakhand Chapter
 - **Sunita T Pandey**, Secretary, Uttarakhand Chapter of AAHF organized a meeting of members of the Chapter with **SN Nigam**, Chairman, AAHF on 16 April 2015. Enhancement of AAHF fellowship amount and number of subscribers to Asian Agri-History journal were discussed.
 - Sixty members of the Chapter enrolled as subscribers to Asian Agri-History journal in 2015.
 - A brainstorming session on Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge of Agriculture in Relation to Intellectual Property was held on 21 May 2015 at GB Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar.
 - The Newsletter of Uttarakhand Chapter - AAHF Vol. III, No. 2 was published in July 2015.
 - West Bengal Chapter
 - The results of several experiments carried out by different tea gardens were shared by the planters at various meetings held during the year. Some gardens reported good control of *Helopeltis* with different combinations

- of *Clerodendrum*, cow dung, and cow urine. Overall, indsafari [*saphari* (tiny shiny fish) + cow urine], *kunapajala*, *Vitex negundo*, *Clerodendrum*, rice husk, rice starch and other concoctions and smoke fumigation used in organic tea gardens gave good control of insect pests and diseases.
- During early 2015 all tea gardens in Darjeeling were affected by severe drought. Spraying of rice starch, cow dung, and cow urine concoctions gave fair to good results in different gardens and improved plant growth. Light traps recommended by **SL Choudhary** controlled green fly and various moths of caterpillars (looper, red slug, etc.).
 - **VS Parmar**, Chairman of West Bengal Chapter of AAHF was invited as Lead Speaker and delivered a lecture on “Regeneration of tea gardens through Vrikshayurveda in North East India” at the National Workshop on Vrikshayurveda in Plant Health Management organized by the Kerala State Planning Board, Government of Kerala on 18–19 September 2015. About 250 participants attended and overall the workshop was extremely interactive. The concept of adopting ‘Moon Calendar’ for all aspects of agriculture including sowing and germination of seeds, planting, manuring, pest control, harvesting of various crops for high yield and good quality was discussed along with many other aspects mentioned in ancient literature on agriculture. The deliberations were useful and would help the Government of Kerala to take decisions on the plan to go “Organic” state-wide, in the next few years. **SL Choudhary** and **VS Parmar** demonstrated the methodology of preparation of *kunapajala* with vegetarian and nonvegetarian ingredients. Participants highly appreciated the practical training imparted.
 - **SL Choudhary** visited Darjeeling from 5 to 9 October 2015. He visited Nagrifarm Tea Estate (Chamong Group) and Samsing Tea Estate (PCM Group) and gave practical training to garden managers and assistant managers on preparation of *kunapajala* with vegetarian ingredients. Plants showed good growth subsequently in tea gardens sprayed with *kunapajala*.

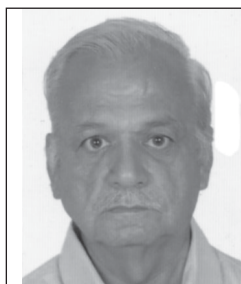
Sipani Krishi Anusandhan Farm Award 2015

The Asian Agri-History Foundation (AAHF) announces the Sipani Krishi Anusandhan Farm Award 2015 for the **Best Paper** in Asian Agri-History.

The paper entitled “*Nirgundi (Vitex negundo) – Nature’s gift to mankind*” by **SC Ahuja, Siddharth Ahuja, and Uma Ahuja** (Asian Agri-History 19(1):5–32) has been selected by panels of judges and trustees as the Best Paper for the Award 2015. The Award consists of a cash prize of ₹5000 (which will be split equally between the authors) and a certificate to each author. The Award has been possible through a donation by Sipani Krishi Anusandhan Farm, Mandasaur, Madhya Pradesh, India. Papers authored by trustees, editors, and advisors of AAHF were not considered.

We congratulate the authors.

**Chairman
AAHF**



SC Ahuja



Siddharth Ahuja



Uma Ahuja

Dr KL Mehra Memorial Award 2015

The Asian Agri-History Foundation (AAHF) announces Dr KL Mehra Memorial Award 2015 for the **Best Paper on Biodiversity** in Asian Agri-History.

The following two papers have been selected as one award-winning entry by panels of judges and trustees as the Best Paper for the Award 2015.

1. “Forest foods of northern Western Ghats: Mode of consumption, nutrition, and availability” by **Rohini Jadhav, Mandar N Datar, and AS Upadhye** (Asian Agri-History 19(4):293–316).

2. “Multiple uses of neglected wild plants by the indigenous people of the Garhwal Himalayas” by **Anuradha Dutta, Chandra Dev, BK Khanduri, and Sanjay Sachan** (Asian Agri-History 19(3):195–203).

The Award consists of a cash prize of ₹5000 (which will be split equally between the authors) and a certificate to each author. The Award has been possible through a donation by Ms Santosh Mehra, w/o the Late Dr KL Mehra, Founder-Advisor of AAHF. Papers authored by trustees, editors, and advisors of AAHF were not considered.

We congratulate the authors.

Chairman AAHF



Rohini Jadhav



Mandar N Datar



AS Upadhye



Anuradha Dutta



Chandra Dev



BK Khanduri



Sanjay Sachan

The Falvey Award 2015

The Asian Agri-History Foundation (AAHF) announces The Falvey Award 2015 for **the Best Paper on Asian agricultural history** (aspects of animal welfare, notable historical innovations associated with the past period of Indianization across Asia, or spiritual aspects of agriculture) in Asian Agri-History.

The paper entitled “**Cow Urine – *Sanjivani* for honeybees: Success stories of beekeepers**” by **Ruchira Tiwari** (Asian Agri-History 19(3):215–227) has been selected by panels of judges and trustees as the Best Paper for the Award 2015. The Award consists of a cash prize of ₹10,000 and a certificate to the author. The Award has been possible through a donation by Prof Lindsay Falvey (AAHF International Advisory Board member, Australia) and Ms Simone Falvey.

We congratulate the authors.

**Chairman
AAHF**



Ruchira Tiwari