



**TARALABALU
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**Agriculture, Soil
and Water
- a KVK perspective**

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2014

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Printed under ATMA project 2013-14

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– a KVK perspective

Preamble/ Introduction:

“There seem to be but three ways for a nation to acquire wealth. The first is by war, as the Romans did, in plundering their conquered neighbours. This is robbery. The second by Commerce, which is generally cheating. The third by AGRICULTURE, the only honest way, wherein man receives a real increase of the seed thrown into the ground, in a kind of continual miracle, wrought by the hand of god in his favour, as a reward for his innocent life and virtuous industry”

– **Benjamin Franklin.**

Agriculture is one of the finest inventions of human kind for all time. The very word 'culture' is involved in it for a great deal of meaning and content. As time moved on, we have reached a stage wherein, the word 'culture' started losing the essence. Agriculture is now in confused state and at the same time, a very vibrant and highly debated sector.

All said and done, food is the basic necessity of any living being, the law of nature. Human race, as evolved, found diversified ways of acquiring food in nature. WATER and SOIL are the main most media for production of food, known to mankind. The very soil has been abused for whatever reasons by all living creatures on the earth. Man represents the worst. Water abuse too is fast approaching and posing a serious threat to all life on the planet. Climate change due to global warming and other related reasons is everybody's

challenge irrespective of social status, age, gender, caste, creed, religion or nationality. Problem exists before us and the managerial solution too. Now, nothing remains secret or enigmatic in the world. Everybody knows everything. It is only choice that we make bring us the result intended. Sadly, the end has begun !

Agriculture, however, still remains with the hope of rejuvenation and can bring along solace to mankind. We have seen Green Revolution and its fatigue. We need Ever Green Revolution now. It has to come from nature friendly way. Ironically, we are increasing in number and land is decreasing per capita day by day. We ought to provide food to all stomachs. We can't have starving people around and talk about development. This is the big challenge! This is where it evidently becomes everybody's task to tackle. Yes, certainly, each one of us can contribute to manage the crisis.

Water, the most crucial element of all five basic elements, the PANCHABHOOTHAS is in danger. It is increasingly becoming essential to know and act about water. Soil has already reached the irreparable stage due to countless reasons. It is time that we take a closer look at the nature and learn to manage the soil and water. These two elements are best managed by the microbes. Simple logic prevails is that to encourage the microbes to perform the respective duties. Our interferences need to be reduced so as to enable microbes to function efficiently. This mindset would set right most of the situations in farm lands. A special focus on small holder farms is given in the recent past. These constitute a huge chunk of (about 80%) total farm lands. An environmentally friendly mode of agriculture operations with Low External Inputs and Sustainable Agriculture operations would set a better trend of development and ease the pressure on these

small holder farms. Attracting and retaining youth in agriculture must be considered as the country would boast of 50% of its population being youthful by 2020 in the whole world. Therefore, every drop of water becomes significant and crop per drop of water would be the slogan.

Irrigation is the powerful invention and need to be thoroughly managed for holistic growth. Saline and alkaline soils are the after effects of irrigation which need to be tackled properly. Country on a whole has received massive irrigation projects since independence and the negative consequences as well. It is high time that due attention is given to reclaim these affected areas in economically best suited methods for ecologically appropriate developments.

We are narrowing down to district level for better clarity of the issues and provide a KVK (Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Farm Science Centre) perspective. We are trying to acquire knowledge on the better management practices of soil and water wherever possible. We have seen a beautiful fruit and ornamental plant nursery being maintained through spoon fed water ! There are cases of farmers where in coconut and arecanut gardens being managed with one or less than one dose of water in a year! Few farmers do not use fertilisers, pesticides, herbicides and weedicides. Some have sorted to organic cultivation for quite number of years and obtained economic yields in several crops, especially rice. Here, key is the inclusion of green manure crops in the fields, especially the legumes. Natural way of farming is appearing in the farmer's dictionary once again. Principles explained by Masanobu Fukuoka are gradually gaining place in the rainfed farms.

Fish culture in water logged areas is an efficient and effective technology for productivity enhancement among small and marginal farmers.