



## Conservation and Improving the Productivity of Traditional Paddy Varieties by Sri Jayaraman



During the 2003 yatra, he obtained a traditional variety of paddy from Sri Ramakrishnan in Vadavur village and afterwards he toured nearby villages to collect traditional paddy varieties in Nagapattinam and Thiruvavur Districts. Then he multiplied the seeds of these varieties. **At present he is conserving 63 varieties of paddy.** His wife (a house wife) is also supporting his mission. He has received support from the Indian Overseas Bank and SBI for creating awareness of traditional paddy varieties. In 2009 he attended a few days training at Karnataka State Agricultural University on the selection and improvement of seeds, and he has developed his own skills in improving the productivity of paddy seeds. Sri Jayaraman has 4.5 acres of land and has access to another 11 acres of land belonging to an NRI philanthropist in the nearby village of Athirengam who handed over his building and land for his experiments as he now lives in the USA. This arrangement enables Jayaraman to do his seed multiplication and conservation work more effectively. After multiplying the traditional varieties he distributes the seeds free of cost at 2 kilos per farmer on condition that twice the quantity should be returned. So far he has distributed traditional varieties to 13,762 farmers.

R. Jayaraman,  
CREATE  
Perumal Koil Street,  
Adhregam,  
Kattimedu,  
Thiruvavur District 614  
716, Tamil Nadu  
Cell: 94433 20954

Age: 44  
Education: 9<sup>th</sup> standard  
Consumers' Forum  
2003 organic farming  
yatra led by Sri  
Nammalvar

### Methods of improving the productivity of traditional varieties

He has improved the productivity of traditional varieties such as Karudan samba, Poonkaru, Kavuni, and Mappilai samba from a yield of 25 bags to 60 bags per acre (each bag weighs 70 kilos) by using a number of agronomic practices. These are:



- green manuring
- treatment of seeds with panchakavya
- for each acre of planting with 12-18 days old seedlings, uses 2.5 kilo of seeds for growth in the nursery
- application of activated organic fertilizer - treats farm yard manure with panchakavya + *Pseudomonas*
- a herbal pesticide as a growth promoter and for control of pests

**Herbal pesticide recipe:**

- neem leaves
- *Vitex negundo* leaves
- Neyvelikattamanukku - *Ipomoea carnea*
- dhatoda leaves

Each 2 kilos of this mixture is immersed in cow urine for a few hours. 300ml of the extract is dissolved in 10 litres of water and sprayed.

**Examples of achievements with traditional varieties**

**1. Karudan samba**

- i) Rice is red but there is white on the neck region of the seed giving it its name of Karudan samba (eagle necked variety).
- ii) Duration period is 150 days.
- iii) Gives a yield of 30 bags / acre. By adopting agronomic and organic practices, the yield has improved to 60 bags / acre.
- iv) This rice is used for food and preparation of savouries (Murukku, palagaram, snacks).

**2. Poongaru variety:**

- i) Rice is red; duration 70 days.
- ii) Normally it yields 21 bags per acre but using improved agronomic practices increases the yield to 41 bags / acre.
- iii) It improves the lactation of mothers and therefore it is used by pregnant and lactating mothers.

**3. Kavuni variety:**

- i) Rice is red; duration 140 days.
- ii) Normally it yields 26 bags / acre but using his agronomic practices it yields 48 bags / acre
- iii) It is used in the preparation of traditional foods and savories.

**4. Mappillai samba (good for newly-wed bridegroom)**

- i) Rice is red and coarse; duration is 150 - 160 days.
- ii) The boiled rice water (water filtered after cooking, locally called *vadithanneer*) is taken orally to control body sugar levels. It improves stamina and recommended especially for newly-wed bridegrooms.

## SRISTI SAMMAN



iii) Normally it yields 35 bags / acre but using his agronomic method produce 60 bags.

### Appreciation

- 2011 Appreciation Certificate plus cash award of Rs 10,000 from District Collector based on the recommendation from State Agricultural Department
- One of 10 farmers at national level recognition of Best Farmers selected by National level Food Security Group / Social Movement Group (by social worker Kavitha Kuru Kandhi)

Documented by  
P.Vivekanandan,  
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