

PROCEEDINGS OF ECHO MEETING



ECHO in Collaboration with
Agriculture Dept, West Godavari, AP.
Presents Multi-Stakeholder Consultation on
**'Decent Work Issues and
Challenges in Corn Seed Supply Chain'**



Venue : Hotel N convention centre,
Eluru, West Godavari, AP.
Date : 26/03/ 2022. Time : 10.30 AM to 1.00 PM

ECHO in Collaboration with Agriculture Dept., West Godavari, AP organizing

**MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATION ON
DECENT WORK ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN CORN SEED SUPPLY CHAIN**

Date and Venue: 22-3-2022, Hotel `N` Convention, ELURU,

DRAFT PROGRAM AGENDA

Topic	From	To	Speaker/ Facilitator
Participants Registration	10:15 am	10:30 am	
OPENING SESSION 10-30 AM TO 11.30 AM			
Welcome and Opening remarks	10:30 am	10:40 am	Dr Davuluri Venkateswarlu, Director/General Secretary ECHO
Keynote address	10.45 am	11.00	Mr. Jagga Rao, Joint Director, Agriculture, West Godavari
Tackling child labour and minimum wages in the Agriculture sector –Sharing MVF experiences	11.00 am	11.15 am	R Venkat Reddy, National Convenor , MVF
Minimum wage law in the agriculture sector	11.15 am	11.30.am	Mr Vasanta Rao, Additional Commissioner Labour department
Tea break	11.30 am-	11.45 am	
SESSION – I: ADDRESSING DECENT WORK ISSUES IN CORN SEED SUPPLY CHAIN- SHARING EXPERIENCES AND BEST PRACTICES: PRESENTATIONS FROM SEED COMPANIES Moderator: Dr Davuluri &Team			
Syngenta- Learnings from implementing minimum wage pilot project in corn seed production	11:45 am to 12.30 am		Mr PB Kulkarni, Field Sustainability Lead, Asia Pacific
Bayer- Field safety initiatives			Mr. Lingaiah, Production lead, India
Nuziveedu seeds			Mr Setu Raghava Naidu, DGM (Production)
UPL- ADVANTA			Dr Chiranjeevi Reddy, Regional production manager
Corteva Agri Science			Mr.Sarat Babu/Mr.CH A R L Rao
NGO presentations			
Discussion	12.30 to 12.50 am		
Summing up and vote of thanks	12.50 am -1.00 pm		
LUNCH	1.00 PM onwards		

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONSULTATION:

- Program began with a warm welcome for all participants (seed company representatives, seed organizers, NGOs, Key guests and ECHO members), garlanding and lighting the lamp



- Dr. Davuluri shared opening remarks for the consultation and briefed the participants about objectives of the consultation, decent work issues in corn seed supply chain especially minimum wages compliance for various field activities and specific to detasseling farm labour. He has

quoted about the recent field research study in sampled corn seed production villages near Eluru which reflects that there is a gap of 30 to 35% between legal minimum wages and prevailing market wages for labour working in corn seed production farms. Complexities involved in defining minimum wages are explained due to number of working hours criteria followed in AP, role of seed organizers in engaging farm labour especially for detasseling, different nature of hybrids, demand of labour and other associated costs for food, transportation etc., However, there is a need to address by seed companies to gradually develop suitable models to integrate them in business to streamline payment of minimum wages as this is an alarming subject having global attention.



- Sri M. Jagga Rao garu set the context for the meeting by talking about Sustainable agriculture which is a most alarming subject of global attention and as a prime focus for Department of Agriculture too. He is appreciative of ECHO initiative to look at social aspects of agriculture like child labour, bonded labour, minimum wages, workplace safety etc., and strategize broader level actions. He also emphasized on importance of collaboration and to prepare our farmers to achieve social and environmental compliance and appreciated ECHO for organizing this multi stakeholder consultation to discuss on various issues and challenges. He mentioned that there are about of 0.5 lakh acres of corn seed production in West Godavari district spread majorly around 3 to 4 mandals being grown by close to half a lakh farmer with the support of

many lakhs of farm labour. He expressed concern about farmers and farm labour who get exposed to pesticide sprays and abnormal weather and working conditions and hence requested seed companies to share best practices to address these issues that can be adopted by others. He requested all participants to utilize this opportunity and actively participate in deliberations and also said ECHO to take forward the deliberations to ground level at the field and make farmers socially compliant and progressive. Sri Jagga Rao garu assured to as well participate in field level initiatives of seed companies in future.



- Dr. R.Venkat Reddy garu of MV Foundation appreciated seed corporates for taking a serious note on ensuring decent works in corn seed supply chain and for their efforts in this direction to comply with laws of the land. Dr. Reddy also mentioned about alarming situation of child labour in different sectors and emphasize that agriculture is not an exception. He emphasized on concerted efforts of different stakeholders to achieve social compliance. He also appreciated efforts of ECHO as a think tank to facilitate constructive discussions and develop customized models for social issues especially in agriculture. He advised companies to dream for adopting and transforming them as socially compliant model villages where they produce corn seed and strive for quality seed and by equally taking care of social issues that includes decent work norms.



- Sri KSN Malleswara Rao garu of Labour department emphasized on current trends and dynamics of minimum wages compliance in agriculture and specified the necessity to comply with them. He talked about both farm level activities and labour activities in processing plants in relation to minimum wages and discrimination across the genders and need to address those issues by corporates as their responsible business practices.
- Mr. PB Kulkarni and Mr. Pushparaj of Syngenta shared about their pilot project in minimum wages, measures to handle child labour issues and how their Human Rights program evolved over the time. They shared different kinds of awareness and audit tools they use in the field





- Mr. Lingaiah of Bayer briefed about their field safety initiatives, Pesticide safety awareness programs, pilot project on minimum wages (Surya Project) etc., besides their commitment towards initiating a pilot project on minimum wages very soon
- Mr. Sethu Raghavan Naidu of Nuziveedu Seeds Ltd., emphasized on conducting various school level CSR initiatives for handling child labour issue
- Mr. Chiranjeevi of Advanta -UPL shared about their child labour eradication initiatives and CSR programs across rural locations. A documentary film on different Human Rights and CSR activities is nicely done and shared



- Mr. Sharat Babu and Mr. Rao briefed about Corteva commitment on social compliance, their field safety initiatives and other CSR projects and to collaborate with ECHO in their future endeavours. They agreed to launch a pilot project on minimum wages to advocate relevant best practices in corn seed production villages.



- Dr. Davuluri garu expressed his happiness about active participation of different stakeholders in the deliberations and requested all seed companies to prepare an action plan to pilot a project in identified villages around minimum wages compliance. He extended to facilitate and support through required tools and methods for successful

execution of pilot projects. Further, the necessity of organizing periodical consultations to review the progress has been highlighted.



LIST OF DELEGATES

Sl. No	Name of the delegate	Company/Institution –Designation
S.No	Name	Organization/ Designation
1	Shri Jagga Rao	JDA, Agriculture , West Godavry
2	Mr M Venkat Reddy	MVF India, National Coordinator.
3	Dr. Davuluri Venkateswarlu	ECHO Forum -Director/ General Secretary
4	Mr K S Naidu	Nuziveedu Seeds, DGM, Production
5	Mr N Saidiah	Nuziveedu Seeds, AGM, Production
6	Mr Sarat Babu	CORTEVA(Formerly Pioneer)-Agronomy Manger
7	Mr CH Rao	CORTEVA (Formerly Pioneer), – Regional Production Manager
8	Mr S V Krishna Reddy	Rasi Seeds, Production Manager
9	Mr Anil Khed	Limagrain
10	Mr Hemakumar	Limagrain
11	Chiranjeevi Reddy	UPL- Advanta seeds , Regional production Manager
12	Mr Pavan Kumar reddy	UPL- Advanta seeds , TPM
13	G Narsi reddy	UPL- Advanta seeds , TPM
14	Mr Raghunath Reddy	Syngenta Seed India , RegionaI Production Manager
15	Mr Kulkarni	Syngenta Seeds India, CSR Incharge
16	Mr K Prasad Rao	Syngenta seeds India, CSR Mnager
17	Mr Lingaiah	Bayer , Production Lead India
18	Mr Subbarayudu	Bayer, Regional Production Manager
19	Mr T Madhu	KYRD (NGO)
20	Mr Bujji Babu	Agriculture Department, ADA Chintalapudi
21	Mr Y Subbarao	Agriculture Department, ADA Eluru
22	Mr B Purushotham rao	PRDS (NGO)
23	Mr M Radha Madhav	Subject Matter expert
24	Mr K Mallleswara rao	District Labor Department
25	Mr Konda reddy	Bio Seeds, Production Manager
26	Mr Ammi Naidu	Regional Production Manager,JK Agri-Genetics Ltd. (JK Seeds)
27	P Rambabu	Seed organizer
28	Mr Yadaiah Goud	ECHO Secretariat
29	K Mallikarjuna	Kalash seeds
30	Dr GV Rajendra	Kalshseeds
31	Chinni Yerraiah	Mahyco seeds

News Clippings:

వ్యవసాయ కార్మిక సమస్యల పరిష్కారానికి కృషి




వ్యవసాయ కార్మిక చట్టాల అవగాహన కార్యక్రమంలో మాట్లాడుతున్న జేడీ జగ్గారావు

ఏలూరు (ఆర్ఆర్పేట): రాష్ట్రంలో వ్యవసాయ కార్మికులు ఎదుర్కొంటున్న వివిధ సమస్యల పరిష్కారానికి వ్యవసాయ శాఖ అధికారులతో పాటు కార్మిక శాఖ అధికారులు, స్వచ్ఛంద సంస్థలు, విత్తన కంపెనీ ప్రతినిధులు కలిసికట్టుగా పని చేయాల్సిన అవసరం ఉందని వ్యవసాయ శాఖ జాయింట్ డైరెక్టర్ ఎం.జగ్గారావు పిలుపునిచ్చారు. శనివారం స్థానిక హోటల్ ఎన్ కన్వెన్షన్లో ఎసీబిలింగ్ చైర్ అండ్ హ్యూమన్ రైట్స్ విత్ సిడ్స్ ఆర్గనైజేషన్ (ఎకో ఫోరం) కార్యక్రమంలో అవగాహన కార్యక్రమం నిర్వహించారు. ముఖ్య అతిథిగా పాల్గొన్న జగ్గారావు మాట్లాడుతూ వ్యవసాయ కార్మికులకు కనీస వేతనాల చట్టం ప్రకారం వేతనాలు చెల్లించాలని సూచించారు. ఎకో ఫోరం ప్రధాన కార్యదర్శి దావూరి వెంకటేశ్వర్లు మాట్లాడుతూ ప్రభుత్వ నిబంధనల ప్రకారం చెల్లించాల్సిన వేతనాల కంటే 30 శాతం తక్కువగా చెల్లిస్తున్నారని ఆందోళన వ్యక్తం చేశారు. కార్యక్రమంలో కార్మికశాఖ సహాయ అధికారి మల్లేశ్వరరావు, సీసెంటా సంస్థ ప్రతినిధి ప్రమోద్ కులకర్, రాదామాదవ్, పాల్గొన్నారు.

మొక్కజొన్న సీడ్ కార్మికుల సంక్షేమానికి కృషి

ఏలూరురూరల్, మార్చి 26 : మొక్కజొన్న పంట, విత్తన కంపెనీల్లో పనిచేసే కార్మికుల సంక్షేమానికి, వారి అభివృద్ధి ఎకో ఫోరం చిత్తశుద్ధితో కృషి చేస్తుందని ఫోరం డైరెక్టర్, జనరల్ సెక్రటరీ దావూరి వెంకటేశ్వర్లు పేర్కొన్నారు. శనివారం స్థానికంగా ఒక హోటల్లో కార్మిక శాఖ, వ్యవసాయశాఖ అధికారులతో సందర్భంగా వెంకటేశ్వర్లు మాట్లాడుతూ మొక్కజొన్న విత్తన పంటలో పనిచేసే కార్మికులకు కనీస వేతనాలు ఇవ్వడం లేదన్నారు. పని గంటలు, సమాన పనికి సమాన వేతనం అందించాల్సి ఉండగా, నేటికీ 30 శాతం వేతనమే యాజమాన్యాలు అందిస్తున్నాయన్నారు. మందులు పిచికారీ చేసేటప్పుడు కనీస జాగ్రత్తలు పాటించే విధంగా ఎకో ఫోరం కృషి చేస్తుందని తెలిపారు. కార్మికుల కనీస వేతనం, ఆరోగ్యం, సమాన పనికి సమాన వేతనం అందించాలంటే వ్యవసాయశాఖ, సీడ్ కంపెనీల సహకారం అవసరమన్నారు. ఇందుకోసం రాష్ట్రవ్యాప్తంగా అవగాహన కార్యక్రమాలు నిర్వహిస్తున్నట్లు తెలిపారు.



సమావేశంలో మాట్లాడుతున్న ఎకో ఫోరం డైరెక్టర్ వెంకటేశ్వర్లు