Participatory Guarantee System [PGS] and its mainstreaming

“Be the change you want to see”
Mahatma Gandhi

Miguel Braganza, Mapusa-Goa
00822962678; braganza.miguel@gmail.com
Participatory Guarantee Systems [PGS]

“Participatory Guarantee Systems are locally focused quality assurance systems. They certify producers based on active participation of stakeholders and are built on a foundation of trust, social networks and knowledge exchange.” IFOAM [www.ifoam.org]

One can find PGS labeled products in Australia, Brazil, India, Kenya, NZ, Peru, Spain, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda, USA, Philippines, Indonesia and Bhutan are also working on systems similar to PGS
ORGANIC AGRICULTURE is NOT all BULL.

It is also NOT about going BACK to old, unscientific ways of farming.
ORGANIC LABELED PRODUCE
is also NOT a Tall Story or History

Mysore’s Cathedral of St. Philomena, whose ‘saint’ label has been withdrawn by Vatican
Organic agriculture

"Organic agriculture is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects. Organic agriculture combines tradition, innovation and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and a good quality of life for all involved."

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM)

The focus is on soil health rather than on plant productivity
PGS and “Organic Agriculture” need a “conversion”: a change of heart.

- PGS is a lifestyle make-over, from ME to WE.
In PGS, ‘WE’ means T.E.A.M....
For Together Everyone Achieves More
ORGANIC LABELED PRODUCE is something one has to be convinced about ... collectively, through hands-on experience
The Executive Members of PGS Organic Council elected in April, 2011: President Joy Daniel, IIRD-Aurangabad, Treasurer Mathew John, Keystone Foundation [now World Board Member of IFOAM] and Secretary, Miguel Braganza, OFAI and Botanical Society of Goa
This “in conversion” organic farm and “Learning Centre” are owned by Mr. Shrinivas V. Dempo, who is more famous for the top notch Dempo football club and earlier, the Dempo Mining Company exporting iron ore: That’s “conversion”!!
School students learning mushroom cultivation at the Mahamaya Organic Agriculture Learning Centre, Sal village, Bicholim-Goa
Promoting Organic practices among the GenX and GenY through T.E.A.M. work with GOACAN [Goa Consumer Action Network] and school managements
Vermicomposting: One of the basics of organic agriculture
The Botanical Society of Goa and Green Essentials
“Best Organic Vegetable Grower” of 2012 and 2013

Shailaja Sharma
At her rooftop vegetable garden in Ponda.

Ms. Piedade Fernandes of Aldona being felicitated by Mr. Satish S.P. Tendulkar, Director of Agriculture, Panaji-Goa.

Vegetables in a home garden
The Botanical Society of Goa and Green Essentials
“Field Visit to an Organic Vegetable Garden” 2013
Publications like Books, Magazines, popular articles in newspapers and interactions on Net groups, live groups, etc help to popularize and mainstream Organic Agriculture and PGS.

www.ifoam.org
www.pgsorganic.in
www.konkanfruitfest.com
Prices have doubled since Ganesh Chaturthi

High prices push local vegetables out of reach of common man

MARGAO: The Ganesh Chaturthi festival has concluded in the entire state of Goa as well as in the nation of India. In fact, we are now making preparations to celebrate the festival of Dussehra. However, the prices of vegetables and fruit, particularly the locally grown varieties, which had risen on account of the Ganesh festival, are still coming down and stabilising. The high prices of these fruit and vegetables affect the finances of the low-income and middle-income group, as they depend on these for their daily consumption.

The season from September to December is considered as a time of religious festivals in the state, involving Hindus, Muslims, and Christians, culminating in the New Year, and usually this season sees a rise in the prices of almost all commodities. It has also been observed over the last many decades that the prices of locally grown vegetables and seasonal fruit usually come down and stabilise after the Ganesh festival. However, this year this has not happened and the local vendors have ruled out the possibility of this happening. They say this is because even the demand for these products is great, the supply is insufficient. The reason they give is that most of the local vegetables are consumed at source, meaning the ones who grow it also consume it. The other reason given is that the locals in the area also go to these farms and buy the products there for personal consumption. Hence there is not enough left to bring to the market.

Rising prices and high prices of local fruit and vegetables have thrown family budgets of the common man and those living below the poverty line into disarray and this has led to discontentment among a large section of society.

One can see local vegetable vendors sitting by the side of the road selling the local vegetables, but they do not attract too many customers as the prices are high. During the Ganesh festival these vendors were busy as people bought the products and it was found that the prices were cheaper as compared to the vegetables coming in from Belgaum. However, now, the local varieties cost more than the imported varieties.

Local vegetable vendors can be seen at Fatorda, Borda, Vidhanagar, Near Chowgule College, Davudlim, Aquem, and also at South Goa Planning and Development Authority market complex. However, the prices were found to have doubled over the last month.

Five to six bundles of green vegetable which costs Rs 10 then is now sold at Rs 20. Bunches of Tamdi Bhaji have jumped to Rs 10 form Rs 5 each. Local green chillies have gone to Rs 30 per kilo from Rs 15.

Besides brinjals, onion, cucumber, and other vegetables, grown locally in Davudlim, Borda, Fatorda and other villages of Salcete have not only become expensive, but are not available in plenty.

In the years gone by, local varieties were sold by the roadides and at the gardens itself. These products seldom came to the markets in the city. However, now as the prices are high, these vendors choose to sell their products at the market where they can make some extra money.

Some of the cultivators said that they grow these crops for domestic consumption and that these crops are seasonal. They also do not venture into large scale farming and so this is the reason why the supply of these products is not able to meet the demand.

Goa's Ten Nutritious Monsoon Vegetables

Traditional Goan food draws from seasonal food resources. This article stresses on the importance of ten monsoon vegetable delicacies in search of which a true Goan would roam the markets, travel far distances and bargain hard just because his genes dictated his taste buds, and his enzymes crave for the ancient substrates...
From last three generations we have been eating food grown using chemical fertilizers and pesticides. And we know this.
We have eaten choice mangoes ripened with

Artificial ripeners like calcium carbide
Chemical farming leads to:

- Hardening of soil structure
- Destruction of beneficial microorganism, earthworms, birds etc.
- Leaves residues in fodder, food, water and air and causes acute & chronic diseases to living beings
- Health hazards increase—produce endocrine disruptions and causes abnormalities in mammals.
- Decline in yield of crops over time
- Insecurity of quality food
- Elimination of natural enemies & induces pest resurgence
- Serious micro nutrients deficiency in soil    Susceptibility to insects & diseases
ELIMINATION OF NATURAL PREDATORS
The reality of **ENDOSULFAN**

A child suspected to be victim of endosulfan in Kerala.
Organic agriculture

"Organic agriculture is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects. Organic agriculture combines tradition, innovation and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and a good quality of life for all involved."

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM)

The focus is on soil health rather than on plant productivity.
Organically grown vegetables are as big as, and better tasting than, the same varieties grown with synthetic fertilizers and insecticides.
Patronize local organic products and motivate them to sell at competitive prices by not insisting on Third Party certification for PGS Local Groups growing food organically in your own neighbourhood.
PGS has been approved and notified by the GoI Ministry of Agriculture for implementation through NCOF and RCOFs. It is also formally recognized in some countries and unofficially accepted in many other countries.

In **PGS**, ‘WE’ means **T.E.A.M.**....
For **T**ogether **E**veryone **A**chieves **M**ore
Miguel Braganza
Secretary, Botanical Society of Goa, Panaji
09822982676 braganza.miguel@gmail.com
Vice-President [Asia], INOFO of IFOAM
with inputs from Jafar Ali and others