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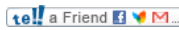
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# In Karnataka, farmers turn judges

Vasanthi Hariprakash, Monday December 7, 2009, Bangalore



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While India faces an agrarian crisis in many states, many thinkers are also worried about the deep disconnect between what farmers want and what agri-research says.

But an organisation in Bangalore did a role reversal: Farmers asked questions, agricultural scientists listened. Even if some of questions made them squirm.

Hemamma grows ragi, corn and millets on her three acres of land in Karnataka's Haveri district. But she never thought that there would be a day when she would question agricultural scientists, tackling them out of their labs for a first hand feel of what the farmer needs.

"We ask them something, they say something else. He says wait for 5 years for solutions; who knows whether we will live or die in these 5 years? I used to get 5 bags of corn every yield," said Hemamma, tribal Lambani farmer.

Twenty eight such farmers and farm labourers from every district in Karnataka, heard researchers and university scholars over two days, before giving their verdict: Agriculture research needs to be pro-farmer, and the government for farmers.

"In a country with 5000 years of vibrant agriculture history, if the agriculture science says farmers are not useful for agricultural science - the only recipients of the last bit of research that comes out - I cannot accept it," said P V Satheesh, Organiser, Deccan Development Society.

"In Karnataka Sheep Board, they should include shepherds because only then will the government know about what diseases sheep face, how sheep should be marketed, what problems you face while you graze them," said Neelakantappa, shepherd, Belgaum district.

When have you seen a group of women farmers, Dalit farmers and marginalised labourers play jury, summon and question top notch agricultural research scientists? If such juries are replicated across India, it just might make farming research - actually helpful for farmers.

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Very nice move it will be better if research is done in consultation with users. Most of research work is sponsored to establish some MNC Products....infact since ages researcher are busy in finding artificial solution which solve one problem and create another. We must find natural solution and move with nature instead of working against the nature.

Posted by **WidowsPistha** on Dec 07, 2009

Very good move. This should be implemented in all places across India.




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