

December 25, 2002

DEAR MR. NORMAN UPHOFF,

GREEN GREETINGS. I AM AN ORGANIC FARMER AND ACTIVIST, RESIDING AT ARACHALUR VILLAGE, ERODE DISTRICT, IN TAMIL NADU, INDIA.

I GOT PAPERS RELATED TO SRI METHOD OF RICE CULTIVATION IN 2000 MAY THROUGH MR. NAMMALWAR, OUR ORGANIC FARMING MOVEMENT'S LEADER, AND TRIED IN AUGUST SAME YEAR.

ALL THE FARMERS RIDICULED ME AND MY WIFE. HOWEVER ALL OF THEM HAD KEPT AN EYE ON THE HAPPENINGS. HUNDREDS OF THE FARMERS VISITED OUR FIELD.

WE WERE NOT ABLE TO TRANSPLANT THE SEEDLINGS BEFORE 18 DAYS. WE DID IT ON 22nd DAY ONLY. [Note: This is about a week "too old" for proper use of SRI methods.] WE CULTIVATED WITHOUT ANY ORGANIC MANURE. PRIOR TO THIS, SORGHUM WAS CULTIVATED IN THE FIELD.

WE USED OUR OWN ORGANIC TONIC CALLED PANCHAKAVYA, A PREPARATION MADE USING COW'S URINE, DUNG, MILK, CURD AND GHEE. THIS PREPARATION IS WORKING FANTASTICALLY ON ALL CROPS, HELPS THE PLANT TO DEVELOP DISEASE AND DROUGHT RESISTANCE, AND ADDS WEIGHT TO PRODUCE.

THE LEAF ROLLER WAS THE ONLY INSECT THAT WE REPELLED, I.E., THE ONLY PEST BOTHERING, USING HERBAL EXTRACTS.

VERY LITTLE WATER WAS USED. WHEN THE FELLOW FARMERS WERE FIGHTING FOR WATER, WE USED VERY LITTLE. THE LAST 20 DAYS THERE IS NO WATER IN THE CANAL. YET THE SRI CROP WITHSTOOD THE STRESS.

WE OBSERVED THAT THE AVERAGE TILLERING IS 22. SOME HAD 38 AND 52. WE HAD NOT COUNTED THE EFFECTIVE TILLERS.

THE YIELD WAS 2,507 Kgs. IN ONE ACRE (WE CULTIVATED IN 1.10 ACRE). [THIS AMOUNTS TO 6.25 T/HA] QUITE REMARKABLE YIELD.

SATISFIED WITH THE RESULTS, OUR ORGANIC FARMING MOVEMENT ADDED ONE CHAPTER ON SRI METHOD OF CULTIVATION IN ITS "ORGANIC WAY OF RICE CULTIVATION" BOOKLET. HERE WE NAMED THE METHOD AS SINGLE-SEEDLING METHOD, TO GIVE DIRECT UNDERSTANDING OF THE METHOD.

IN THE NEXT SEASON ABOUT 40 FARMERS TRIED THIS AND GOT MIXED RESULTS, MOSTLY DUE TO POOR UNDERSTANDING OF THE SYSTEM. ALSO, THIS TIME WE DID NOT GET WATER. HOWEVER THE FARMERS ARE STILL EAGER TO TRY SRI IN THE COMING SEASON IF THERE IS ENOUGH RAIN.

NOW I WISH TO KNOW HOW THE FARMERS ELSEWHERE RAISE SEEDLINGS THAT COULD BE TRANSPLANTED IN 5-8 DAYS. ALSO I WISH TO KNOW THE RESULTS OF DIRECT SOWING METHOD. KINDLY SEND THE DETAILS. GREEN WISHES AND HAPPY NEW YEAR.

RAMASAMY SELVAM