



# THOTTARA PUNJA REJUVENATION PROGRAMME 2016-2018

## ERNAKULAM DISTRICT



KERALA GOVERNMENT

കാർഷികവികസന കർഷകക്ഷേമ വകുപ്പ്

# INTRODUCTION

This compendium is a humble attempt to delineate some of the activities undertaken to bring up the past glory of “Thottara Pancha” Paddy Field, spread over an area of 900 Acres in Amballoor and Edakkatuvayal of Ernakulam District and Velloor Panchayath of Kottayam District. This is an expression of exceptional teamwork by the Department of Agriculture Development and Farmers Welfare and allied departments with the superb guidance and support from the Ernakulam District Administration. The incomparable enthusiasm of farmers being the core group brought a practical success version to the long cherished dreams. A crucial intervention of Indian Oil Corporation, Kochi by contribution a CSR Fund of 14 lakhs is an icing on the cake.

# OVERVIEW

Thottara Punja, once the rice bowl of Ernakulam District, is on the path of rejuvenation after a sharp decline from its past glory. A new story is being written, thanks to the effective intervention of District Administration, Agricultural Department, Indian Oil Corporation, Kerala Land Development Corporation, Periyar Valley Irrigation Project, Minor Irrigation department and Local Self Government institutions through the active participation of landowners, Padasekhara Samithies, Joint Liability Groups, Kudumbasree and leased farmers. A co-ordination under the umbrella of “Haritha Keralam” brings about a drastic change in the farming scenario and thus created a positive attitude among the farmers. Situation changed much faster for the last two years which brought about 562 acres of fallow land and sparsely grown area under active farming in Ernakulam district.

Thottara Punja previously consisting of 1082 acres of land in Amballoor and Edakkattuvayal in Ernakulam District and Velloor Panchayath of Kottayam District has lost a considerable area by relinquishing to the railway lines, construction of canals and adjacent bund roads etc. At present the area is estimated 700 acres in Ernakulam District and 200 acres at Velloor Pancahayath in Kottayam District.

From the South -West Monsoon to the end of North-East Monsoon, this vast area is under submerged condition which makes it a very fertile land due to the silt deposition and accumulation of nutrients and minerals which are washed down from the adjacent upper tracts. The catchment of area of approximately 2000 acres area makes this land a fertile land with an average productivity of 2600Kg/Acre.

## **A BRIEF HISTORY**

The legend of Thottara Punja dates back to Mahabharatha . It is believed that Pancha Pandavas during the period of exile stayed at Thrikkakkara and through a cave they reached Thottara Punja regularly for paddy cultivation activities. Thus Thottara Punja is believed to be a manmade paddy field by the Pancha Padavas and their workers. Thottara Punja comprises of 72 moozhs (small paddy pockets in padasekharam), which are manmade. One of the moozhs or paddy fields is made by Thoomba (Spade) and thus derived the name Thoomba Churandi. It is believed that the soils collected by thousands of workers in Kotta (Baskets) and heaved up in particular portion, a hill is formed which later known as Kottathatti (Soil deposited by bringing it in baskets). The Azhakath Moozh derived its name from Azha Ketti Ooru that is the place where the cloths of all the workers are dried in ropes (Azha) after laundry.



# REASONS ATTRIBUTED TO NON-CULTIVATION

The paddy cultivation in Thottara Puncha has witnessed steady decline over a period of time starting from 2010 onwards and in the year 2014-2015 it is seen sparsely cultivated due to several factors.

- Reluctance of farmers due to low profitability
- General trend of people shifting from traditional agriculture sector to real estate and allied activities
- Competition from other crops
- Shortage of labour in peak season
- Various impediments as a result of infrastructure development works carried out in Thottara Puncha
- Absence of proper irrigation system, blockage of irrigation channels and lack of proper water management system
- Low confidence level of Padasekkara samithies to motivate farmers
- Failure in timely release of the procured paddy cost to farmers from the side of government agencies



**UNCULTIVATED FIELDS DURING 2014-15**



An early initiative - Meeting attended by Hon. Agriculture Minister Sri K. P. Mohanan & Hon. Minister for Civil Supplies Adv. Anoop Jacob to initiate Thottara Pancha Canal Development Programme at Amballor in the year 2012



## REVIVAL IN THE YEAR 2016

During July 2016 local farming community, local self-government institutions, leaders of mass organisations and political parties sought intervention of district administration in this matter, and district collector Sri K Muhammad Y Safirulla conducted series of meetings involving the stake holders and officials from the department of agriculture and allied departments followed by frequent site inspections to sort out the problems faced by farmers. The timely intervention of district administration along with the spirit and enthusiasm of farmers succeeded, and the farmer's collective could restart the cultivation in 2016 December. An area of 280 acres brought under cultivation by the joint effort of agriculture department, Panchayats, Minor irrigation, Periyar Valley Irrigation Project and farming community under the leadership of district collector. Thanks to corporate social responsibility fund support from Indian Oil Corporation to the tune of 6 lakhs in addition to various subsidies from department of agriculture and Local Self Government Institutions.

### **Actual Cultivated Area & Padasekhara Samithies Involved, during 2016-17**

<b>Name of Padasekhara Samithies</b>	<b>Name of Panchayat</b>	<b>Area Cultivated</b>	<b>No. of Farmers</b>
Kunnamkulam	Amballoor	80 Acre	105
Manakathazam	Amballoor	100 Acre	106
Kaippattor	Edakkattuvayal	40 Acre	130
Thottara	Edakkattuvayal	30 Acre	108
Ayyamkunnam	Edakkattuvayal	30 Acre	115
Total		260	564



Field Preparations



Sowing of seeds in the beginning of the season -2016-17 – inaugural function attended by Hon: MLA Sri Anoop Jacob, District Collector K Muhammad Y Safirulla, District Panchayath President Smt. Asha Sanal, Principal Agricultural Officer Sreedevi, Gramapanchayat President Jalaja Mohanan



Planting Inauguration at Amballoor & Edakkattuvayal 2016-17 Hon. MLA Adv. Anoop Jacob, District Collector K Muhammad Y Safirulla District Panchayath President Smt. Asha Sanal, Block Panchayath President Smt. Jaya Soman, Amballoor Panchayath President Smt. Jalaja Mohanan



Transplanting in Progress



Field after 1 Month



Conducted Farmer's Field School for continuous 7 weeks at Thottara Punja for bringing about awareness among farmers regarding scientific paddy cultivation



Farm School – Activities



## Crop Ready for Harvest



Harvest inauguration by Hon: Agriculture minister Adv V S suilkumar at Kunnamkulam Padashekaram along with block panchayat president Smt Jaya Soman grama panchayat presidents Smt Jessy Peter and Smt Jalaja Mohanan of amballoor and edakkattuvayal and Principal Agricultural officer Sreedevi and Deputy director of agriculture Sri Johnson



Harvest inauguration at Manakkathazham Hon. MLA Anoop Jacob harvested crop and handed over to Indian Oil Corporation General Manager P. S. Mony. The function was attended by District Collector, EX MP P Rajeev, District Panchayat Member A. P. Subash, Grama Panchayath President Jalaja Mohan and Padashekara Samithi representatives.

## Incentives Granted to the Farmers - 2016-17

Sl No	Particulars	Total Cost	Name of Dept/Agency for	Amount eligible as per nomes voluntary	Contribution for samithies
1	Clearing of Paddy field	7500/Ha	CSR of IOC		
2	Installation Of Pump set 10 no as per estimate	1960080	Department of Agriculture	1764072	196008
3	Cleaning of canals and field channals		Minor irrigation		
4	Field preparation	20000/Ha	LSGD Jillapanchayath , MNREGS	17500/ha	-
5	Soil ameliorants	7200/ha	Dept.Agri	5400/ha	1800/ha
6	Seed	4000/ha	-	-	4000/ha
7		4000/ha	-	-	4000/ha
8	Manure and PPC	1500/ha	Dept.Agri.	1500/ha	13500/ha
9	Operational Expenses	500/ha	Dept.Agri	360/ha	140/ha
10	Training Programme to Farmers	10000 2No:	Dept.Agri(ATMA)	10000	
11	Harvesting and Transportation	6500/ha	-	-	6500/ha
12	Miling to Rice	15lakh for RiceMill	Dept.Agri	5 lakh	10lakh
13	Marketing Rice	40/kg			40/kg
14	Production Bonus			1000/ha	-



## ACTIVITIES IN 2017-18

After a successful harvest in the year 2016-17, the Padashekara Samithies and farmers gained confidence and in that context a target of 550 acres has been fixed for the year 2017-18, involving all 9 padashekarams coming under Thottara puncha . An overall 1500 metric tons of paddy and a branded product in the name of Thottara puncha also targeted for the year 2017.

A striking point during this year is the formation of Thottara Karshaka Samithy which is an apex body registered by selecting the representatives from the whole Padasekharams of Thottara Pucha area which immensely helped in co-ordinating the irrigation schedules, farming activities such as ploughing, sowing, cultural operations, harvesting and formulating strategies for the branding and marketing of THOTTARA RICE.

### Actual Cultivated Area & Padasekhara Samithies, Involved during 2017-18

Name of Padasekhara Samithies	Name of Panchayat	Area Cultivated	No. of Farmers
Kunnankulam	Amballoor	80 Acre	105
Manakathazam	Amballoor	100 Acre	106
Thottara Puncha	Amballoor	45 Acre	67
Virippachal	Amballoor	60 Acre	65
Kannankerimuzhu	Amballoor	22 Acre	27
Thullikari	Amballoor	55 Acre	65
Kaippattor	Edakkattuvayal	87 Acre	130
Thottara	Edakkattuvayal	31 Acre	108
Ayyamkunnam	Edakkattuvayal	82 Acre	115
<b>Total</b>		<b>562 Acre</b>	<b>788 No.</b>

## ADDITIONAL INPUTS GIVEN DURING 2017-18

The additional inputs and continuing support from district administration, Agriculture Department and LSGIs resulted enhanced production and productivity.



Hon. MLA Adv. Anoop Jacob handing over Mini rice mills of 15 numbers worth Rs. 5,98,000/- to the Padasekhara Samithies.



Installed 20 HP pump set under ATMA scheme during 2016-17 for a cost of 2.25 lakhs

## **For Efficient Water Management**



An amount of Rs. 3701337 has been allocated during 2017-18 to upgrade existing petti & para using 12 no. of submersible pump sets at 7 points of Thottara Pancha.

## Planting Inauguration 2017-18



Planting Inauguration at Amballoor & Edakkattuvayal 2017- Hon MLA Adv. Anoop Jacob, District Collector K. Muhammad Y. Safirulla, District Panchayath President Smt. Asha Sanal, Block Panchayath President Smt Jaya Soman, Amballoor Panchayath President Jalaja Mohanan.

## Transplanting in Progress



## Harvest Inauguration – 2017-18



### Future Plans

- Cultivating all the available fallow pockets in Thottara Puncta.
- Explore better marketing avenues by branding **Thottara Rice** for value addition to provide better income to farming community.
- Installation of a modern rice mill and thereby generate employment.
- Responsible farm tourism by preserving the entire Thottara Puncta and maintain the ecological harmony.

### Acknowledgement

The timely intervention of District collector , Agricultural Department, Indian Oil Corporation, Kerala Land Development Corporation, Periyar Valley Irrigation Project, Minor Irrigation department and Local Self Government institutions, through the active participation of landowners, Padasekhara Samithies, Joint Liability Groups, Kudumbasree and leased farmers. Under the umbrella of “Haritha Keralam” mission of govt of kerala revived the cultivation and bring back the glory of thottara puncta to a great extent.

