

Pragati, the World's First Sustainable Castor Bean Program, Moves to the Next Level

2,700 Farmers Now Certified; New Website Launched; Project Extended for Another Three Years

India, April 22, 2019: The collaborating companies of Pragati project – Arkema, BASF SE, Jayant Agro-Organics and Solidaridad – have now empowered more than 2,700 Indian farmers in their journey to sustainable castor bean production.

Having successfully achieved a wide range of favorable impacts in the first three years, the partners are extending the project for another three years (May 2019 to May 2022) with a goal to reach more farmers and encourage more end users. The project partners have also established the SuCCESS Secretariat, an independent association as custodian of the SuCCESS (Sustainable Castor Caring for Environmental and Social Standards) code. The secretariat will now be open to new members within the castor community.

Since its launch, Project Pragati has led to intensive farmer engagement and adoption of good agricultural practices within the castor farming community. The collaborators now intend to more than double the number of participating farmers in the region to 7,000.

After completing a 2016 baseline survey of more than 1,000 castor farmers in Gujarat India, where more than 80 percent of the world's supply of castor beans originates, Project Pragati was launched in May 2016 with a goal of enabling sustainable castor crop production by:

- Using good agricultural practices to increase yield and farmer income
- Efficiently using water resources and maintaining soil fertility
- Driving adoption of good waste management practices
- Enabling better health and safety practices and respecting human rights

Key outcomes of the project to date:

- A sustainable castor code titled 'SuCCESS' (Sustainable Castor Caring for Environmental & Social Standards) has been established
- A new website is launched www.castorsuccess.org
- More than 4,000 hectares of castor farming are now in accordance with the **SuCCESS** sustainable castor crop framework, representing associated production to date of more than 5,000 metric tons of certified sustainable castor seeds
- Two formal certification ceremonies were completed with lead farmers in attendance, representing more than 2,700 farmers who have been successfully trained, audited and certified by third party inspection agencies
- A yield improvement of more than 50 percent over the 2016 baseline has been achieved by the combined member farmers
- Over 3,000 personal safety kits and crop protection product storage drums were distributed to participating farmers
- Water consumption has been lowered by approximately 25 percent in the demo plots where water utilization is monitored
- Soil and water tests were completed across more than 50 villages
- Five demo plots were created for demonstrating good agricultural practices for farmers

Arkema is a global leader in specialty chemicals and advanced materials. BASF SE is one of the world's leading chemical company. Jayant Agro-Organics Ltd. is a pioneer in castor oil-based chemicals in India. Solidaridad is an international civil society organization.

Visit www.castorsuccess.org for more details or contact info@castorsuccess.org.