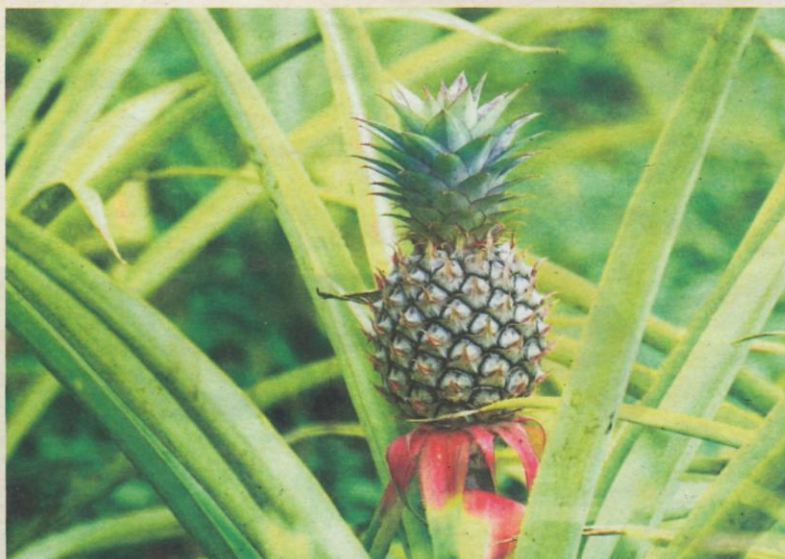


February 16, 2018

HEALTHY LIVING

The restoration period

A festival that shows how eating safe will have a restorative effect on one's health



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Restore is organising a Safe Food Festival on February 17 and 18 at Stella Maris College on Cathedral Road, Teynampet. The festival commemorates the 10th anniversary of Restore, a not-for profit organisation, which works with marginal farmers to revive traditional and organic methods of farming.

Panel discussions and technical sessions with subject matter experts (SMEs) in the fields of environment and agriculture is an important aspect of this festival. The SMEs include organic farmers keen on reviving indigenous crops and seed conservationists and agricultural activists. Some of those participating in the event have turned their back on the corporate sector and taken to farming.

Various sessions aimed at making people aware of what they eat, have been lined up.

February 17

TIME: 11 A.M.

TOPIC: "Can Organic Farming Feed The World?"

SPEAKERS: Kavitha Kuruganti, founder of The Coalition for a GM-Free India; and Kapil Shah, convener of Organic Farming Association of India; and G. Sivaraman, Siddha physician.

TIME: 2 P.M.

TOPIC: "Urban Sustainability"

Speakers: Prof. Sultan Ismail, soil biologist and pioneer of earthworm research in India; Indra Kumar, senator, Exnora International;

and Nalini Shekar, co-founder of Harisu Dala, a Pune-based non-governmental organisation that works with marginalised waste-pickers.

TIME: 3.30 P.M.

TOPIC: "Restore and Its Role in the Organic Farming Movement in India"

SPEAKERS: Film actors M. Revathy and Rohini

February 18

TIME: 11 A.M.

TOPIC: "Alternative Futures - Radical Eco Democracy and Local Economy"

SPEAKER: Ashish Kothari. He is the founder of an environmental group called Kalpavrikh. He has been a member of expert committees that formulated India's Biological Diversity Act and National Wildlife Action Plan.

TIME: 1.30 P.M.

TOPIC: "Traditional Seeds and Seasonal Food"

SPEAKERS: M. Balasubramanian (well known as Pamayan); Debal Deb, Nel Jayaraman and Vishala P. Pamayan, recipient of Anasaheb Sahasrabuddhe Award in 2012. He has over two decades of experience in organic farming. He has served as the State coordinator of the Organic Farming Association of India.

Debal Deb known as "India's Rice Warrior" is preserving the genes of over 1,000 native varieties of rice.

Similarly, Nel Jayaraman has also worked tirelessly to conserve seeds of native

paddy. Vishala P. is a former chartered accountant who left the corporate sector and took up organic farming.

TIME: 3 P.M.

TOPIC: "Living off The Land"

SPEAKERS: Dhirendra Soneji, Navadarshanam Gopi, Surya Pasupathy and Sujatha Mahesh.

Dhirendra Soneji quit city life over 25 years ago and took up farming. He has worked with many tribal communities. Navadarshanam Gopi, a technologist, now practises permaculture farming. Surya Pasupathy is an architect by profession. She produces primarily for her family's consumption and shares excess produce with friends and neighbours. Sujatha Mahesh has also quit six-year-long career in the IT industry and decided to lead a simple and sustainable lifestyle.

Other highlights

According to a press release, the festival will be marked by stalls selling farmers' produce cultivated through natural and organic methods; ready-to-eat food stalls, traditional games and workshops on pottery, spinning, weaving and natural dyeing.

(Compiled by L. Kanthimathi)