

PROMOTING LOCAL FOOD SECURITY & SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES IN NORTHEAST INDIA AND ON CANADA'S WEST COAST

Fertile Ground:

East/West Sustainability Network

UPDATE—FALL 2014

In the news....

New Association for Organic Tea Growers Launched in Assam!



Dhiren Phukan, Co-Chair and Founding Member of OSTGAN

Pompy Ghosh Goes Back to School!



Pompy completed the Indian Institute of Plantation Mgt's "Certificate Program in Tea Tasting & Marketing"

East/West Connections



Board members Neil Turner, Arzeena Hamir and their wonderful daughters Inara and Amina shared information and stories with farmers, students and NGO's from villages throughout Assam, including Jorhat, Chandrapur, Biswanath Charali.

Stay in touch with Fertile Ground!

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Support for Assam's Emerging Organic Farming Sector!

This fall, we learned that Rotary Clubs in District 5020 will help fund development of a new organic demonstration garden and training program at Kakojan College!

\$3,500 will be contributed by Strathcona Sunrise Rotary here in the Comox Valley, and that amount will be matched by funds from the District Grants program

North East Affected Area Development Society (NEADS), an NGO based in Assam, will look after project administration. We have invited Mahan Borah, a young farmer and avid seed saver from the Jorhat area, to be involved in planning and design of the garden, and to provide training at the College and in nearby villages.

Kakojan's principal, Mrs. Ruprekha Bordoloi, wrote to us recently to say she'd like to find ways students in Assam could connect with members of the Young Agrarians movement here in Canada, as well as with Canadian Organic Growers groups on the Gulf Coast and Vancouver Island.

Fertile Ground will contribute an additional \$2,000 to this project – a donation made by Mili Dutta, from the Assam Foundation of North America. Thank you, Mili! These funds will help construct and equip a production unit where compost, vermicompost and formulas made from locally available materials will be prepared.

Sales of the inputs and organic vegetables grown in the garden will help defray project operating costs and offer students an opportunity to develop marketing and entrepreneurial skills.

Local food production in Assam has been declining over the past decade and young people from farming families are leaving the area in large numbers in hopes of finding employment. But as the market for organic tea, vegetables and grains grows, government initiatives aimed at increasing organic food production are creating new entry-level management and skilled field-level jobs - positions that Kakojan College would like to see their graduates be able to fill.

Get Growing!

TRANSITIONING TO GREENER AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

A Demonstration Garden and Vocational Training Project in Jorhat, Assam



Identifying and developing key skills and resources for educators, farmers and students

Join us at Fertile Ground's AGM - Saturday, Nov. 1st!

Our annual general meeting will be held again this year at the beautiful Creekside Commons, 2202 Lambert Drive in Courtenay.

The business meeting will start at 2:00 pm, followed by a short presentation about the new organic farming program just getting underway at Kakojan College in Jorhat, Assam.

Chai and samosas will be served - please call or email to let us know if you can make it!

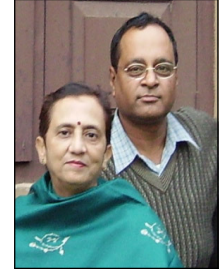
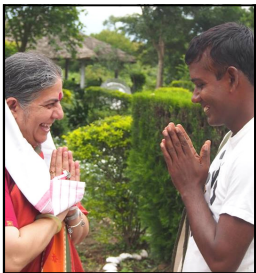


For over a decade, training and information provided by Fertile Ground volunteers and our staff in Assam has reached thousands of growers, NGO's, students and farming families. By working together, we've

- conducted extensive research into sustainable, organic and traditional agricultural practices in the temperate tropics
- provided encouragement and support to small-scale tea growers, farmers and educators
- offered training and hands-on demonstrations on composting and production of botanical formulas for controlling insect pests
- provided funding, labour and technical assistance to the Digboi Rotary Club and the Indian Oil Corporation to develop an organic demonstration garden and training centre. The project provides jobs for people from the local community, and is supported in part by the sale of organic vegetables, seedlings and compost produced onsite
- organized exposure visits for an agricultural extension officer and a small-scale tea grower, both from Assam, to attend conferences, visit schools and meet with organic farmers and retailers here in Canada
- delivered over a hundred presentations to a range of audiences in Canada and India, and participated in several national and international conferences
- created "the small tea co-op" and worked with Level Ground Trading (www.levelground/products/tea) to bring teas grown by independent organic growers here to Canada's west coast
- provided internships and volunteer opportunities in Assam for over 35 Canadian volunteers, including students from Camosun College and UBC

....and much more!

For information, visit www.fertile-ground.org, www.smallteacoop.com and www.seedssofarassam.net



How you can help.....



Make a donation

We're a charitable organization registered with Revenue Canada.

Visit our website for some unique donor opportunities.

Tax receipts will be issued for donations of \$25 or more.



Join Fertile Ground

Individual memberships are \$15 & family memberships \$25. Applications available online or by calling us at 337-8348!



Volunteer

From time to time, we need administrative help, writers, event organizers, bakers, ticket sellers, graphic artists, researchers, etc. Contact us for more information!