

# Fertile Ground:

## East/West Sustainability Network

WORKING WITH FARMERS  
AND GROWERS IN ASSAM TO  
EXPLORE THE LINKS BETWEEN  
SUSTAINABLE AND TRADITIONAL  
AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

UPDATE FALL 2009

### A FEW HIGHLIGHTS

- **Pompy Ghosh takes on role of Coordinator at Adarsh Seuj Prakalpa**



- **Adarsh Seuj Prakalpa hosted Assam's second organic vegetable show and competition. The event was judged this year by two visiting Canadian volunteers - Niels von Meyenfeldt and Peggy Carswell.**



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## The Adarsh Seuj Prakalpa Resource Centre in Assam continues to gain credibility and visibility

Since the centre officially opened in 2006, many hundreds of people have visited the centre and demonstration garden to learn how to grow crops without relying on chemical pesticides and fertilizers.

Last year, training was provided to farmers from villages and rural areas throughout the state, including Dirak, Kakopothar, Chabua, Lakshmipathar, Lahoal, Philobari, Enthem, Bokul, Jorhat, Laika, Majuli Island and Dodhia.

Women from Lakhimpur, Nagaon, Tegrai, Bokaghat, Lahoal, Jorhat and Mamoroni also travelled to Digboi to attend training sessions.



New staff member Soumen Ghosh shows farmers visiting from Mariani Village the correct way to prepare compost

## Events Help Tea Growers Regain Confidence in Traditional Farming Practices

The importance of growing and saving local seed varieties, using "green manure" crops to improve the soil, and trapping insect pests instead of poisoning them are practices promoted at Adarsh Seuj Prakalpa.

For young growers like Gobin Hazarika from North Lakhimpur (standing on the left), attending training at the site gives him a rare opportunity to be recognized for his own knowledge of traditional practices, and to exchange information with other growers concerned about growing healthy food and taking care of the environment.



Small-scale growers enjoy hand-processed tea grown by participants at an organic tea seminar

### A NOTE FROM COLLEEN HANLEY, PRESIDENT OF OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

"As a non-profit society, Fertile Ground's board provides oversight to the work of the organization.

At Adarsh Seuj Prakalpa, people are learning about new ways to grow food organically and sustainably. The challenges of moving away from an increasingly chemically-dependant growing environment are considerable, and the education, advice and support that this project offers is important to the farmers, workers and educators who seek the advice provided by our staff.

The board of Fertile Ground is very pleased with the progress our staff have made this year, and appreciates the hard work of our staff and volunteers – both in Assam and here in Canada."

## Please, consider making a donation to Fertile Ground.

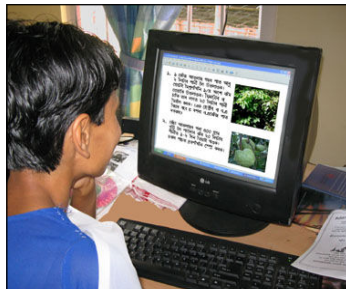


We're a charitable organization registered with Revenue Canada.  
Tax receipts will be issued for donations of \$25 or more.  
Make cheques payable to: Fertile Ground: East/West Sustainability Network  
Box 179, Merville, B.C. V0R 2M0

**Your contribution will support the services provided at Adarsh Seuj Prakalkpa in Assam, and help move the project towards greater self-sufficiency and sustainability.**



Tools, Seeds & Supplies for the Demonstration Garden



Professional Development & Training for Staff



Training & Outreach at the Resource Centre & in the field



Equipment & Tools for New Entrepreneurs Projects

“The greatest constraints to growers who are shifting to more sustainable practices are the lack of knowledge, information sources and technical support.”

from a report issued by the United Nations' Food & Agriculture Organization

### FERTILE GROUND'S GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR:

- continue providing training at the resource centre and in adjacent village areas
- provide training and support to Adarsh Seuj Prakalpa staff and our partners in Assam that will enable them to assume greater responsibility for the management and long-term sustainability of the centre
- focus on strengthening our “East/West Network” by finding more ways to involve growers, students and volunteers here in Canada. If you'd like to help out, we'd love to have you join us!

