

# *Earth Rising, Women Rising*

## *Regenerating the Earth, Seeding the Future*



*Diverse Women For Diversity*



*Mahila Anna Swaraj*



# **THE EARTH RISING, WOMEN RISING**

## **REGENERATING THE EARTH, SEEDING THE FUTURE**

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# Seeding the Future Healing The Planet, Healing The Humanity

Akshat means unbroken and Whole, Health is wholesome and Whole  
We commit ourselves to regenerate our health, our economy, and our planet

असतोमा सद्गमय। From ignorance, lead me to truth;  
तमसोमा ज्योतिर् गमया। From darkness, lead me to light;  
मृत्योर्मा मृतं गमय॥ From death, lead me to immortality  
शांति शांति शांति peace, peace, peace

We are making the transition from broken health system to a healthy food system.  
From broken economies to regenerative economies.  
From a broken relationship to the Earth to a new oneness with all beings.  
Let us begin with the food that we grow and eat  
Poison free, middle man free,  
Biodiverse organic food straight from our farms to your table.  
For your health and the health of the planet

**DIVERSE WOMEN FOR DIVERSITY**



**MAHILA ANNA SWARAJ**



# CONTENT

<b>The Earth Rising, Women Rising: Regenerating the Earth, Seeding the Future</b>		
<b>1.</b>	Regenerating the Earth	3
<b>2.</b>	Regenerating Seed and Biodiversity	10
<b>3.</b>	Regenerating Agriculture, Regenerative Agriculture	12
<b>4.</b>	Regenerating Food And Food Rights	15
<b>5.</b>	Regenerating Health And Nutrition	19
<b>6.</b>	Regenerating Self Confidence, Self-Organisation, Self-Reliance And Swaastha	24
<b>7.</b>	Regenerating Living Knowledge	31
<b>8.</b>	Regenerating Living Economies	36
<b>9.</b>	Regenerating Living Democracy	46

# EARTH RISING, WOMEN RISING

## REGENERATING THE EARTH, SEEDING THE FUTURE

The Earth sustains us all.

Women feed the world through Earth care.

For us agriculture is not an industrial production system based on intensive fossil fuel and chemical inputs to produce monoculture of commodities for global trade and profits.

For us agriculture is the care of the Earth, the culture of the land. We co-create with Mother Earth giving love and care. Our economies of care nourish the soil and feed our communities and country.

We the women farmers of the Mahila Anna Swaraj Movement (MAS- a movement to keep Seed Sovereignty and Food Sovereignty in Women's Hands) are the Change we want to see, the change we want to seed in society and in government policies, from the local, regional, national and global levels. Globalisation as Corporate rule has made the right to profit a higher right than the Rights of Mother Earth, the Rights of Women, the Rights of Farmers, Human Rights and the Rights of Future Generations. The limitless greed of corporations is violently disrupting ecological laws and planetary boundaries creating ecological and health emergencies.

The Corporations want to own our seeds and our food, trapping us in debt, pushing us to hunger, malnutrition and disease. They are trying to grab our land and hijack our economies and democracies. We are reclaiming our seed, food, knowledge and economic Sovereignty. We are defending our livelihoods and land, our biodiversity and ecosystems. We are creating local living swadeshi economies based on our indigenous biodiversity, indigenous knowledge and skills, our indigenous values of cooperation, mutuality and solidarity.

Anna Swaraj is Sovereignty over our food systems. Swaraj is Self Organisation, Self Rule, Self Reliance and Self Determination.. Anna Swaraj is Atmanirbaharta, dependence on ourselves, from the local to the global, with deep awareness of our oneness and interconnectedness, our diversities and creativities.

Food is life. Food Sovereignty embodies the right to live in freedom. In a living interconnected world, our freedom is not atomistic. It is connected to the freedom of other beings. Freedom and Atmanirbarta begins with protecting all life, all members of our earth community, our human community, and defending the rights and laws that protect life and the right to life. Corporations have labelled our duty to protect as "protectionism". We will not be colonised and pushed to extinction through their

vocabulary of doublespeak.

Innovation is derived from “Innovare”, to renew; to regenerate. Regeneration is our innovation to avoid collapse, to imagine a healthy, happy future for all.

Through our lives and our living knowledges, through our many languages, worldview and practice, we are paving the way for solutions to the multiple emergencies humanity faces. We are taking steps to mitigate and adapt to climate change and creating strategies of climate resilience. Through Poison Free Biodiverse Organic Farming and Gardens of Hope we are growing more food and nutrition for our families, communities and the earth family.

The Women’s way is the way of biodiversity. We are regenerating the soil biodiversity, plant biodiversity, insect and pollinator diversity. We are creating biodiversity of knowledge, living economies and living democracies. Through farming as care for the Earth, we are regenerating our oneness with the Earth and each other.

We are regenerating the Earth, We are Seeding the Future.

# 1. REGENERATING THE EARTH

- Earth care is restoring our relationship with diversity of all life as a sacred family
- Earth Care is Climate Action
- Earth care is the solution for hunger and desertification
- Earth Care is Food Justice

We are the Earth. We are the land. We are the soil. We are Biodiversity. We are part of Nature. We are Co-creators with the Earth, not her Masters and Owners.

We feed our families, communities, countries and the world through Earth Care.

We are one Earth family, deriving our common identity as earthlings from the Earth, sharing our common sustenance for life, breath, food and water, from the land through community and mutuality. When we care of the land and the soil, we reclaim our humanity. Our future is inseparable from the future of the earth.

Colonisation and Recolonisation through Industrial Agriculture and Corporate Globalisation have appropriated our natural resources, our land and seed, the knowledge and wealth we create. This is at the root of the ecological, economic, hunger and health emergency.

Like the colonisers, billionaires are grabbing land. For us our land is our Mother.

The ancient Bhumi Sukta, the prayer to the Earth in the ancient Atharva Veda recognizes that the Earth is mother, and we are children of the earth

“Impart to us those vitalizing forces that come, O Earth, from deep within your body, your central point, your navel, purify us wholly.

The Earth is mother; I am child of Earth.” Atharva Veda XII. 1

“The Earth is our Mother”  
- Naro Devi, Doon

As the Gurbani says “Pawan Guru, Paani Pita Mata Dharat Mahat” The Land is the Great Mother.

We are Regenerating the Earth and our societies and economies through Earth Care.

For us Regenerating the Earth, her biodiversity and our communities is an ethical, ecological and social imperative.

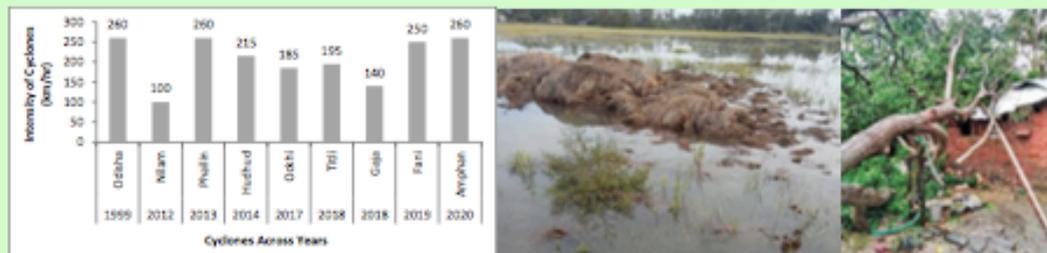
“I work with the Earth. She fulfils our need, Saves our children and gives pure food, clean air to breath, Food and Good health”

- Prakashi Devi, Doon Valley

## Seeds of Hope Seeds of Resilience: Women's Resilience to Climate Change in the Bay of Bengal

Mother Nature undergoes her own stages of warming and cooling. The present trend towards warming and the related destabilisation of climatic systems induced by increasing greenhouse gases emitted largely by industrial fossil fuel burning is increasing the frequency and intensity of cyclones. The cost is paid by those least contributing to the greenhouse emissions.

The Bay of Bengal has faced the wrath of 9 most intensive cyclones since the 1990s. It has led to destruction of life and property. Agricultural farms were destroyed affecting the food security of the communities affected and livelihoods of farmers.



We, the Mahila Anna Swaraj (MAS) women of the Bay of Bengal are the survivors of Climate change adversities of Cyclones and Super-cyclones in the Bay of Bengal for 2 decades. We saw our communities struggle. With our collective philosophy of growing, saving, exchanging and collecting native seeds, Seeds of Hope for the climatic changes induced weather extremes affected communities of Bay of Bengal. We have since survived 9 cyclones in the last two decades.

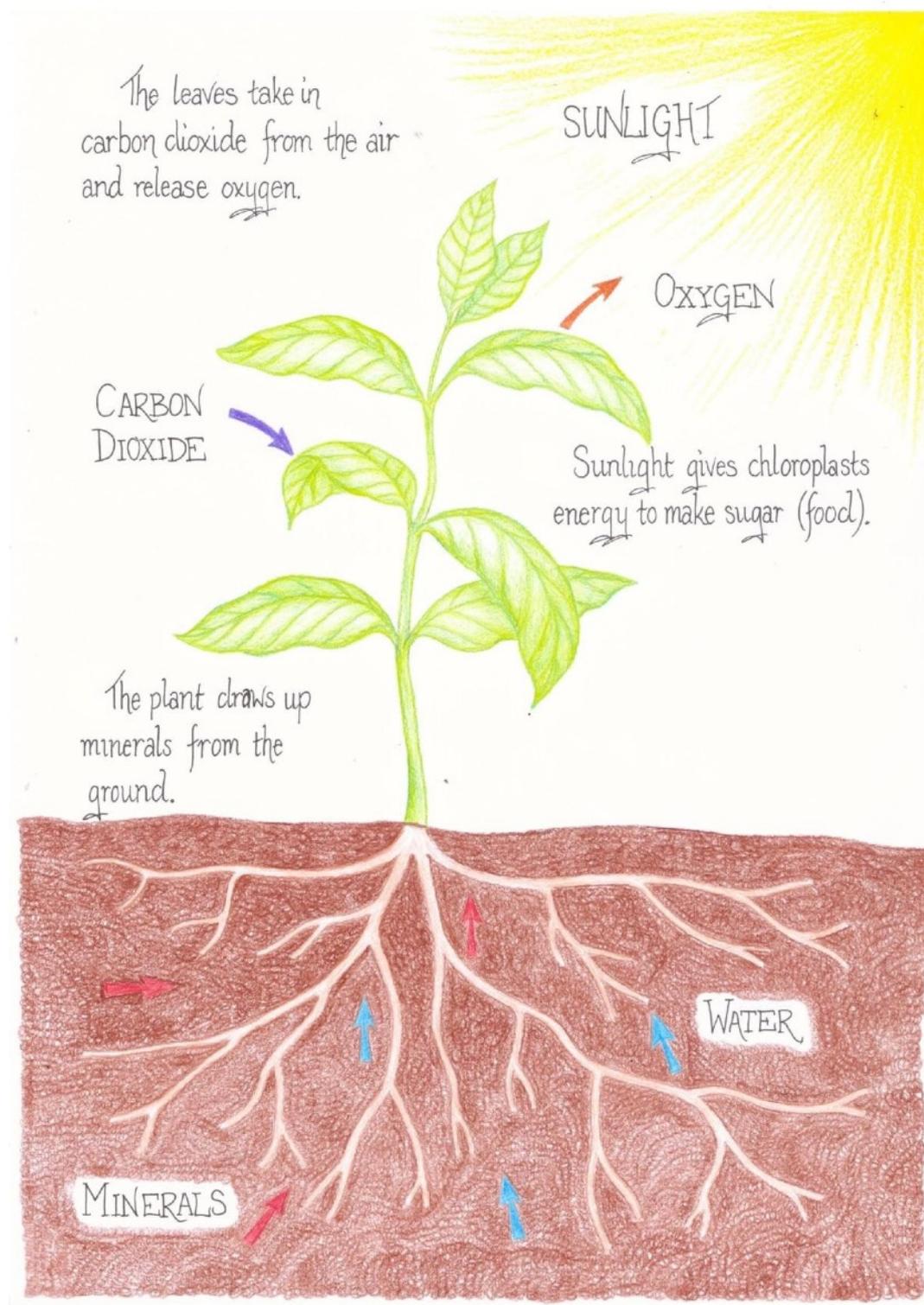
With our collective efforts we saved the flood tolerant (Nalidhulia, Ravana, Seulpuni and Dhosarakhuda), drought tolerant (Nalibakuri, Kalakaya, Atia and Inkiri) and salt tolerant (Bhundi, Kalambank, Lunabakada, Sankarchin) varieties of paddy seeds. We have been offering relief to cyclone and flood affected farmers who have lost their crops and seeds to farm flooding, drought spells and cyclonic winds due to the human induced rapidly changing climate for 2 decades.

[http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/80106814.cms?utm\\_source=contentofinterest&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=cppst](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/80106814.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst)



During 2020, five cyclones impacted India. Nisarga and Gati were formed over Arabian Ocean. Amphan, Nivar and Buravi were formed over Bay of Bengal. Super cyclone Amphan hit Bengal on 20th May, 2020, taking 90 lives and destroying hundreds of thousands of homes. After the recent cyclone Amphan that hit the Bay of Bengal region in May 2020 caused widespread destructions, causing damage trees, uprooting and breaking many of them, destroyed standing crops of summer paddy and vegetable diversity. This affected the food and livelihood of the farmers and their communities. We the MAS women with our Seeds of Hope were able to rejuvenate our communities. We were also able to provide basic healthy food relief to the community. Thus, with our collective efforts we brought back hope and rejuvenated the communities of the Bay of Bengal.

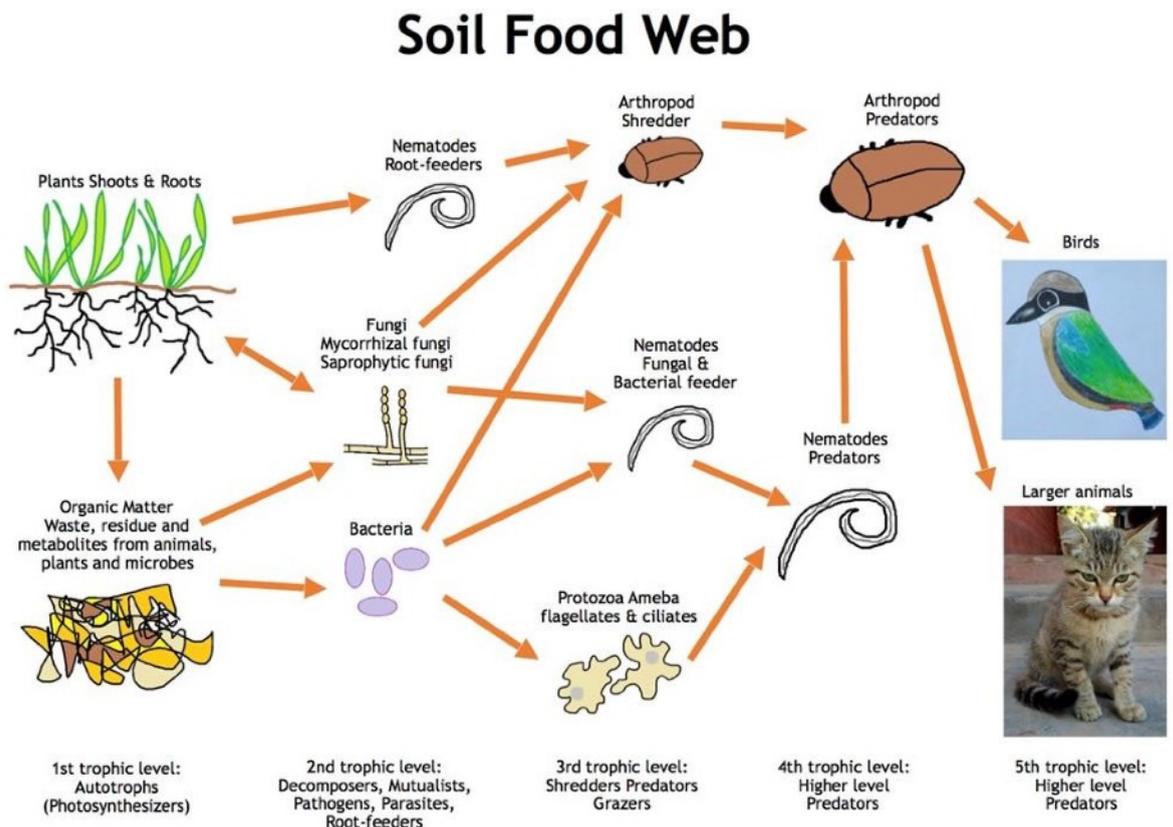
We are part of one earth family Jaiv Vivividh Jaivik Kheti - farming as part of nature and one 'Earth Family'.



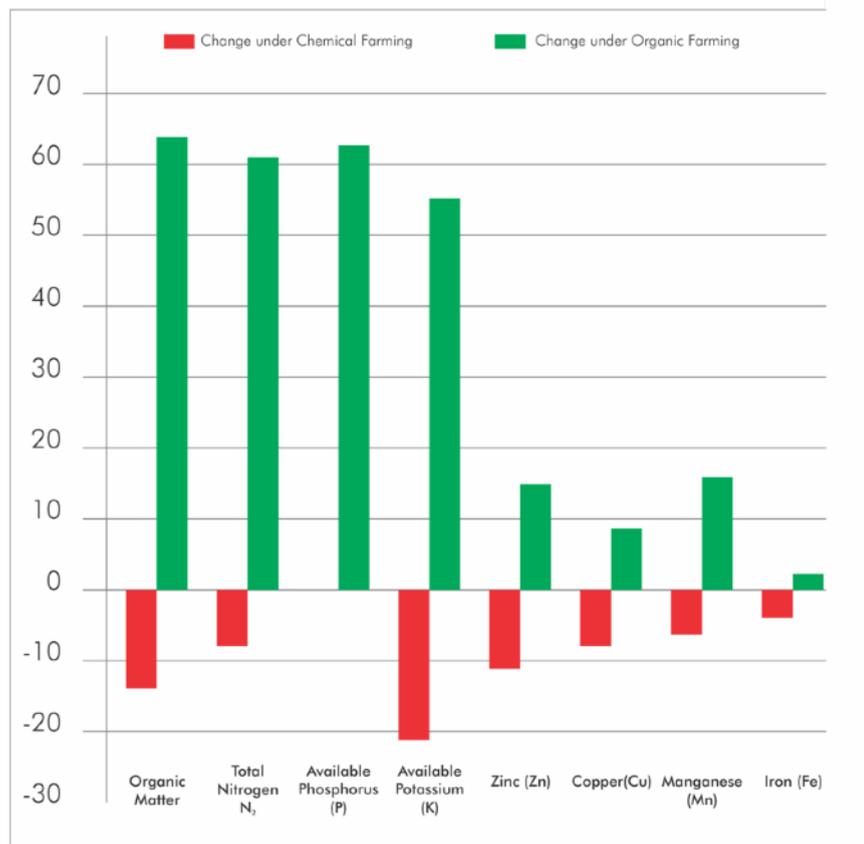
Women's Ecological solutions to the ecological emergency, Co-creating with Biodiversity we are sowing seeds of hope and seeds of resilience to Climate Change. Women are the biodiversity and seed experts; we are the Agroecology and organic farming experts. We are the food nutrition and health experts. We are experts in climate resilience because we live through extreme events and regenerate our lives.

## Regenerating Biodiversity through Earth Care

By caring for the soil and returning living carbon to the Earth we feed the Soil Food Web, grow more nutritious food and address climate change. In partnership with biodiversity of plants and soil organisms, through organic farming, we draw down the excess carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide from the atmosphere where it is a pollutant, into the soil, where it is fertility that grows good. Earth Care is the solution to hunger and desertification. Earth Care is Food Justice. Earth Care is Climate Action.



Through Regenerative Agriculture based on Co-creation, we are regenerating our ecological civilisation which recognises all life as an expression of the sacred. For us the seed, the soil -Dharti Ma, the vegetation, the bees are expression of the Divine. We are regenerating biodiversity of plants, insects and pollinators, which are driving the extinction crisis. We are reversing the path to collapse by spreading chemical free, poison free zones.



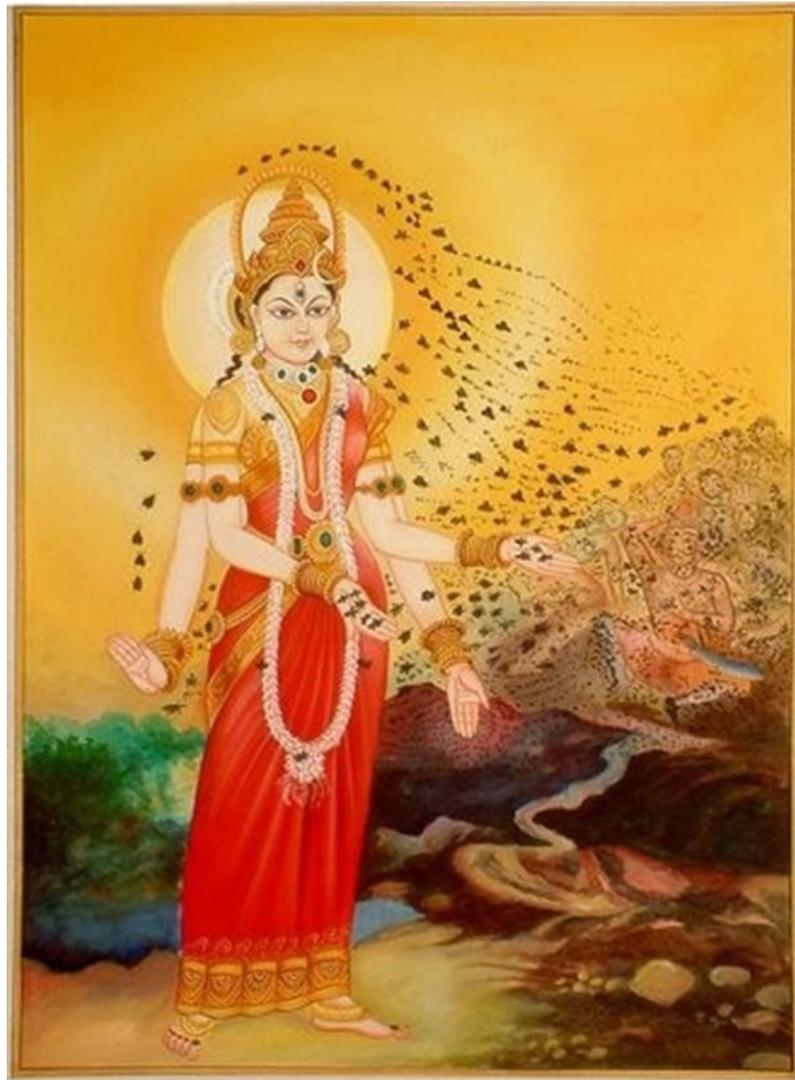
## Reversing the extinction crisis, Regenerating Biodiversity of Insects

Crop Biodiversity in our fields supports biodiversity in the soil food web and insect biodiversity including bees and pollinators. In our indigenous culture divinity is in all form of life. The circular flow of caring and sharing helps in preserving the natural cycles of an ecosystem and its species. We do not grow food only for humans; we grow food for biodiversity in the soil and of insects. For us insects are not “enemies” to be executed. They are members of our sacred Earth Family. We even have a Goddess of Bees ‘Brahmaree’.

### Bees and other Pollinators

Pollinators provide valuable and irreplaceable ecosystem services of pollination to cultivated and wild plants. There is a diversity of pollinators surrounding us. Insects, especially bees, butterflies, beetles and flies are some of the important groups of pollinators. Pollinating species forage for food such as nectar and or pollen from the flowers. When pollinators collect these resources they transfer conspecific pollen from male to female flower parts resulting in pollination. Thus, the number of seed and fruit sets of the plants increase. Globally, one third of the plants consumed are dependent on pollinator services and about 75- 85% of the food plants are pollinated by insects, chiefly by bees. Over the last 5 decades the pollinator populations particularly that of managed honeybees have declined in the North America and Europe. Studies around the globe are fragmented, yet show that there has been a decline in the pollinators. The major drivers of pollinator decline are agricultural intensification, chemical pesticides, habitat destruction, disease pathogens and climate change. Unsustainable agricultural practices of pesticide

use, monocultures and mechanisation, are one of the major threats pollinators face. Ecosystems also support predatory insectivorous species to regulate pests in nature.



**‘Brahmaree’ Goddess of Bees.**

However, monocultures result in pest infestations which destroy a single type of crop. Monoculture promoting multinational industries sells hazardous chemical pesticides and herbicides along with non-renewable hybrid seeds. These chemicals kill majority of the pests and non-target species such as predators and pollinators. A few resistant pests survive to reproduce profusely leading to secondary infestations. Thus, by using chemicals the natural biodiversity functions are upset rendering pest outbreaks and pollinator declines. In case of regenerative, biodiversity based agroecological practices the natural flows of interactions are uninterrupted and there is a continuous exchange of nutrients from one level to another.

A study carried out from 2012-2017 in biodiversity based organic farms in Doon Valley in the Himalayas showed that the number of bee pollinators were similar to bee diversity and richness found in the forested areas. This shows that chemical free, diverse organic farms are homes to bees and other pollinators just as the forests. Industrial agriculture monocultures with intensive mechanization and chemical inputs are destroying the habitats and food resources. Diversity based food crops, chemical free organic farming

increases, provide natural habitats which sustain pollinators and beneficial insects that provide valuable ecosystem services. (<https://www.biorxiv.org/content/10.1101/804856v1>)

## 2. REGENERATING SEED AND BIODIVERSITY

- Seed (Sovereignty) Bija Swaraj is our birth Right
- Art 3j Plants, animals and seeds are not inventions therefore not patentable.
- Farmers are breeders, Art 39 Farmers rights Acts protects farmers to save, sow, resow, exchange, share or share
- Indigenous Bred and Saved by farmers are nutritious
- GMO HYV seeds are toxic, dependent on chemical inputs, nutritionally empty, have high cost, and trap in debt and suicide.

**We are a strand in the web of life and the web of Biodiversity. We are custodians, breeders and producers of seed. Living Seed is our Living Heritage which we have received in diversity and integrity from our ancestors, and which we have a duty to safeguard and pass on to future generations.**

**Seed holds our co-evolutionary potential as part of creation.**

**Seed Sovereignty (Bija Swaraj ) is our birth right.**

**We are reclaiming our Seed Sovereignty**

***"Ekam Bijam"***

***"First the Seed"***

Life begins as Seed. Food begins as Seed.

Healthy food grows from healthy seed.



We are breeding, producing, and sharing our seeds as a commons. Seed is not an invention. Seed is not the Intellectual Property of Corporations. Seed is life. Seed is Sacred.

We have created local community seed banks to conserve indigenous seeds and farmers' seed producer groups to multiply and distribute nutritious and climate resilient local seeds.

**"Beeja Swaraj can give us self-sufficiency. Our slogan is 'Save seeds for Future, No HYV, No GM seeds. Local Indigenous seeds are our life and we will save them'"**

**- Mahila Anna Swaraj**

**"We conserve our traditional seeds and use them to grow vegetables and crops. We also exchange our own saved seeds. This empowers the women"**

**- Sapna Devi, Doon Valley**

Our Indigenous Desi seeds and farmers varieties have much higher nutrition than the so called “High Yielding Varieties’ which have been bred to adapt to chemicals, are nutritionally empty, contributing to diseases of deficiencies of micronutrients and trace elements, and loaded with disease causing toxics. Indigenous seeds need less water, are more pest and disease resistant and more climate resilient. GMO seeds are toxic, and GMO Bt cotton has failed to control pests, but trapped farmers in debt and drove hundreds of thousands of farmers to suicide.

The attempts to promote GMOs based on gene editing are designed to undermine Biosafety Regulations.

We have rejuvenated our Climate Resilient indigenous seeds.

We are reclaiming our Seed Sovereignty, and defending our laws that defend Seed Sovereignty such as

Art 3j of the Indian Patent Act clearly states that plants, animals and seeds are not inventions, hence not patentable

*“plants and animals in whole or in any part thereof other than microorganisms; but including seeds, varieties, and species, and essentially biological processes for production or propagation of plants and animals”.*

And

Art 39 of the Plant Variety Protection and Farmers Rights Act which states

*“A farmer shall be deemed to be entitled to save, use, sow, re-sow, exchange, share or sell his farm produce including seed of a variety protected under this Act in the same manner as he was entitled before the coming into force of this Act”*

### 3. REGENERATING AGRICULTURE, REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

- Industrial Globalised Agriculture is war against the land and farmers.
- Farming without farmers and Digital agriculture is a step towards destruction.
- Our indigenous knowledge and practice of agriculture are based on principles of Agroecology, working with the laws of nature and the Earth, not against them.
- Chemical Intensive monoculture creates an illusion of “Feeding the World”.
- Seed Sovereignty and Land Sovereignty are the foundation for Food Sovereignty through which farmers economic sovereignty is protected and no one goes hungry.
- Agriculture of Earth Care cultivates our local community and rejuvenates the Earth.

Agriculture is Care for the Land, Care for Mother Earth. Agriculture is our culture, identity, our livelihood, our life.

We are farmers. We do most of the work in agriculture. Our work is based on love and care for the earth, our communities, and our families.

In less than a century violent systems of industrial agriculture, including the Green Revolution, with roots in war, have destroyed the planet’s ecological cycles and systems, are driving farmers to extinction, depriving billions of livelihoods and food, and are threatening the health of both the planet and people.

Instruments of violence and war - synthetic fertilisers, pesticides, herbicides -have been presented as “technological progress”. These technologies of violence have spread a culture of carelessness and indifference about the health of the Earth and the health of society.

The latest step towards carelessness is the promotion of digital technologies and farming without farmers. In other words, ‘uprooting communities who care for the land.’

We are resisting this violence of the globalised food system based on chemicals, GMOs, and monocultures, profits and extractivism, by reclaiming our values and ethics of care, our indigenous ecological traditions. Our indigenous knowledge and practice of agriculture are based on principles of Agroecology, working with the laws of nature and the Earth, not against them.

We are regenerating the living seed and biodiversity, living soil and living food our indigenous knowledge of biodiversity, of the living earth, of care for the soil and seed, of the health of the planet and people is nonviolent and non-invasive. We have received this civilizational knowledge from our grandmothers. It is being reaffirmed by the best of independent ecological science and principles of Ecological Agriculture, including organic farming. India has gifted the world based on Agroecology principles of Biodiversity, the Law of Return and Self Organisation of food systems through small farms.

"We had a ban on chemical fertilizer, to protect soil health and protect our food and health. Now we are saving the seeds of traditional crops i.e.; Koda, Jhangora and vegetables. We are growing enough millet crops and we are celebrating Ropany (planting paddy) as community farming."

- Sulochana Devi, Bashanti Devi, Priyanka Devi, Parvati Devi, Tehri

Monocultures of chemical intensive crops create an illusion of "feeding the world" by increasing production of commodities. The shift from biodiversity to monocultures, from food and nutrition to globally traded commodities is induced by the misleading measure of "yield per acre" which does not measure whether the farming method or technology leaves Mother Earth and the land degraded or regenerates it. It does not measure whether the farmer was left impoverished and indebted, or the farmers' wellbeing was improved. It does not assess whether the food is nutritionally empty and toxic or nutritionally rich and dense. It does not tell you whether the commodity produced went for biofuel, animal feed, producing fake lab food, or went to feed people with real food.

Yield per acre is a measure of pseudo productivity.

Pseudo productivity also becomes an illegitimate instrument of land grab. Since 1991 Structural Adjustment, an attempt has been made to grab the land of small farmers through contract farming or changing the land acquisition act. Seed Sovereignty and Land Sovereignty are the foundation for Food Sovereignty. India will be Atma Nirbhar when our farmers are Atma Nirbhar, the land sovereignty, seed sovereignty, knowledge sovereignty and economic sovereignty of farmers are protected, and no one goes hungry.

In the social, ecological and health context, yield per acre facilitated the expansion of commodity production which is destroying biodiversity, our farmers, and our health.

We are making a transition from Monocultures to Diversity, from "Yield per Acre" to more authentic metrics which measure true productivity.

More appropriate measures than "yield per acre" are "health per acre" and "Nutrition per acre", "Wealth per Acre" and "Care per Acre".

Regeneration of the soil needs care, which means more "hands per acre" instead of fossil fuel guzzling machines and toxic chemicals which destroy the earth and livelihoods.



We are reclaiming our Food Sovereignty and showing the way for a transition from Industrial Agriculture based on Toxic Chemicals to Poison Free Biodiverse Organic/ Natural farming (Anna Swaraj).

We Protect, Regenerate and grow Biodiversity, not Monocultures of plantations or agriculture commodities which do not perform the ecological functions that biodiverse ecosystems do in controlling pests and weeds, conserving soil and water, and bringing excess carbon and nitrogen from the atmosphere where it contributes to climate change, to the soil, where it improves soil fertility and provides healthy, nutritious food, including proteins through nitrogen fixing pulses and beans.

Earth Care is the foundation of Regeneration of Soil, Biodiversity Regeneration, livelihoods and economy, health and wellbeing.

Through Agriculture based on Earth Care we are cultivating our local communities and the earth community.

“We are not using chemical fertilizers in the soil. These chemicals destroy soil structure. **The soil has the life itself.** Chemicals kill it, so we are saving soil life by using organic manure. Organic manure contains nutrition and water cycle in the soil. The soil loves chemical-free life and gives us healthy food.”

- Meena Devi, Majaf, Tehri.

## 4. REGENERATING FOOD AND FOOD RIGHTS

- Food Sovereignty is our Birth Right (Anna Swaraj).
- Growing our food through our self-reliance (Atmanirbharta) is the basis our ecological civilization.
- Universal PDS recognizes that the right to Food is a Human right.
- National Food Sovereignty system should be strengthened through decentralization as per our food culture.

### **Food is living. Food is Life. Food is the Creator. *Annam Brahman***

Food connects us to the earth and each other. Food is the Currency and Communication whose flow maintains and sustains the web of life and cycles of life.

**We feed the world by feeding our earth family and the human family.**

**All beings, including humans have a Right to Food. Food Sovereignty is our Birth right (Anna Swaraj)**

Food is not a commodity for extracting profits through rules of “free trade”. Nature’s Laws of ecology and social rules of ethics and justice govern food. Free trade rules written by Agribusiness corporations disrupt the earth’s ecological cycles driving the ecological emergency, destroy livelihoods creating an economic and agrarian emergency, and dismantle regulatory systems for food security, creating hunger and malnutrition emergency, degenerate food creating a health emergency.

We are reversing the commodification of food and reclaiming food as life, food as culture, and food as a human right.

We are putting the wellbeing of the earth, of farmers and consumers at the center of our food systems, regenerating our civilizational values of farmers as the givers of nourishment, of Annadatas.

In India we say “Annadata Sukhi Bhava” – May the providers of food be happy.

We are growing solutions to Hunger and Malnutrition while caring for the earth and regenerating her Biodiversity.

Hunger and malnutrition is structurally designed into the industrialized, globalized food system which is destroying the small farms. More than 500 million family farms manage between 70 and 80 percent of the world’s agricultural land, the U.N.’s “The State of Food and Agriculture 2014” reported. In India our entire food system is based on small farms. Small farms are more productive because they are based on care for the biodiversity and for the land; they are based on deep knowledge and multiple intelligences of farmers.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-foundation-food-farming-idUSKCN0I516220141016>

Food is a Human Right. The Right to Food is enshrined in our laws. It must be protected.

Growing our food through our self-reliance (Atmanirbharta) is the basis our ecological civilization.

We are growing food and nutrition on our farms and in our gardens.

While we grow our Gardens of Hope and our biodiverse ecological farms, we also strengthen the foundation of the food security of our country. We have always stood on the frontline to defend our country from food imperialism and food colonization.

We have had a universal public distribution system recognizing the right to Food is a Human right.

The Universal PDS system needs to be brought back. The alternative to the centralized rice and wheat monoculture system created to fit into the centralizing structures of the Green revolution is not handing over our food and agriculture to even more centralized control of giant corporations. The alternative is to grow diversity of crops and have diversity of foods in the PDS system, giving adequate resources to all levels of government and local communities to grow and procure healthy diverse food for public health.

In the context of polarization of prices because of globalization which leaves an insignificant 1-4% of what the consumers pay with farmers, cash transfers are not a solution to hunger. We need to grow real healthy biodiverse food everywhere, and distribute it through biodiverse distribution systems, from the local to the national level.

We do not want our national food Sovereignty system dismantled, we want it strengthened through decentralization in accordance with our culture and our constitution, with resources balancing rights and responsibility.

The PDS systems, the Mid Day meal schemes, the ICDS schemes need to be linked to local food production so that women farmers have a local market for the biodiversity of healthy vegetables and crops, and the poorest child and the last person has access to good, healthy, biodiverse organic food.

A truly woman centered, decentralized democratic model of food procurement and distribution for food security has to ensure:

- Food security at the household level;
- Food security at the local level; Food security at the regional level;
- Food security at the national level;

The present food crisis is reflected in bursting godowns and starving people - a reflection of total food insecurity at the household, local and regional levels.

A truly decentralized democratic model will put the foundation of national food security and household food security in women's hand.

### **Elements of Women- Centered Household Food Security**

- High nutrition per acre to increase nutritional security.
- Internal input agricultural practise to reduce debt and expenditure on purchased inputs.
- Increased use of drought resistance varieties and crops to reduce ecological vulnerability. Organic methods to improve soil moisture, conservation and reduce water demand.
- Producer's livelihoods are protected and hence their food entitlement is protected.
- Local procurement reduces storage and transport cost.
- Local procurement provides culturally appropriate foods
- Use locally procured grain for all public food- related programmes and schemes like ICDS, Food for Work Schemes, Anna Anthodia, Jawaharlal Rodger Yojana and other development programmes, school mid-day meals, as well as in all other public sector institutions such as primary health centers, district health centers, canteens, railways etc.
- Diversity of crops to ensure balanced nutrition throughout the year.
- Use of farmer saved open pollinated varieties to reduce costs and improve adoption. Elements of gram-sabha centred local level food security.
- Food security should be a central element of genuine decentralization of the food system. For gram sabhas to be empowered to function as providers of food security, they need to Establish community grain banks - Gram Annakosh

In case surpluses exist after meeting local needs, village grain bank should sell to grain banks of state and centre

In case of scarcity and emergency, village grain banks receive from state and central grain banks.

Gram sabha has the right to develop a taxation system to raise complementary financial resources for procurement and running the Gram Annakosh. Receive grants to procure locally so that local

### **Elements of Women and Food Security-centered Food Procurement and**

#### **Distribution System. Mahila Annakosh**

Women-led household level food security based on improving women's capacity to grow, consume and sell nutritious food. This includes promotion of sustainable, low external input agriculture based on Agroecology

Surplus sold to Gram Annakosh

Gram Sabha procures locally to ensure food security for the village, and to provide foodgrain for nutrition and food related schemes and programmes such as PDS, ICDS, Food-for-Work programmes

Surplus sold to Kshetriva Annakosh

### **State level Food Security System - Kshetriya Annakosh**

State procures from the Gram Sabha within it, to ensure regional food security and to provide food grain for nutrition and food related schemes at the regional and district levels State government's procurer's surpluses from Gram Sabhas.

States are empowered to procure regionally with the centre providing adequate financial resources during the transition period.

State policies include ability to raise complementary financial resources through taxation  
Surplus sold to Rashtriva Annakosh

### **National level Food Security System - Rashtriya Annakosh**

Maintain the FCI as the central institution of procurement during the transition to multilevel food procurement system to ensure genuine decentralization and effective food security at household, local, regional and national levels.

Maintain the PDS system merging the BPL with the APL so that all people's access to food is protected. Centre procures from various states to maintain buffer stock to ensure national food security, and to provide food grain for nutrition and food related schemes at the national level and for those that are directly under the Centre Genuine surpluses exported at fair price through state agencies



## 5. REGENERATING HEALTH AND NUTRITION

- Food is our medicine. When we grow healthy organic food we grow health.
- Nutritional deficiencies are results of Toxic Industrial Monocultural Agriculture which destroys our biodiversity, nutrition and health and extracts profits from Farmers.
- We need to decolonise our agriculture through indigenous seeds, chemical free biodiverse Organic Farming and our Food and nutrition through culturally appropriate and artisanal Processing.

**In Ayurveda we recognize that Food is the best medicine – “Annam Sarvaushadhi”. Hippocrates said “Let Food be thy medicine.**

**Access to Healthy, nourishing, biodiverse, poison free, culturally appropriate food is a human right**

When we grow food we grow health.

We grow health and nutrition for our families in our “Gardens of Hope”, which provided Resilience during Covid and the lockdown.

After Independence we had a Grow More Food Campaign. We now need a Grow more Nutrition, Grow more Health, Grow more Self Reliance and Atma Nirbharta campaign from Local to the National level.

“We pledge to transmit to our children the knowledge and wisdom of Eating Right based on biodiversity, chemical, and junk food free diets. We will mentor future generations to know about healthy eating and our indigenous food cultures, to grow health and nutrition in kitchen gardens”.

Gardens of Hope, Gardens of Nutrition, and Gardens of Health must be encouraged everywhere with native seeds, agroecological training and community access to public lands and spaces, including schools. The “Saagwadi” in Schools can provide fresh vegetables and healing plants to Midday Meal Schemes and Anganwadis.

We intensify Biodiversity in our farms to increase nutrition per acre, regenerating the health of the soil and the land, the health of the planet and our health.

Our biodiversity intensive systems grow more nutrition per acre. We can feed two times India’s population with our biodiversity intensive small farms and gardens.

Nutritional Deficiencies are a result of an unjust food system that commodifies food and robs people of their Right to Food, and a profit driven industrial production system which extracts nutrition from food while it extracts profits from farmers.

Our health is broken because we are using toxics in agriculture, we are growing monocultures to increase use of chemicals, and we are destroying our biodiversity which is

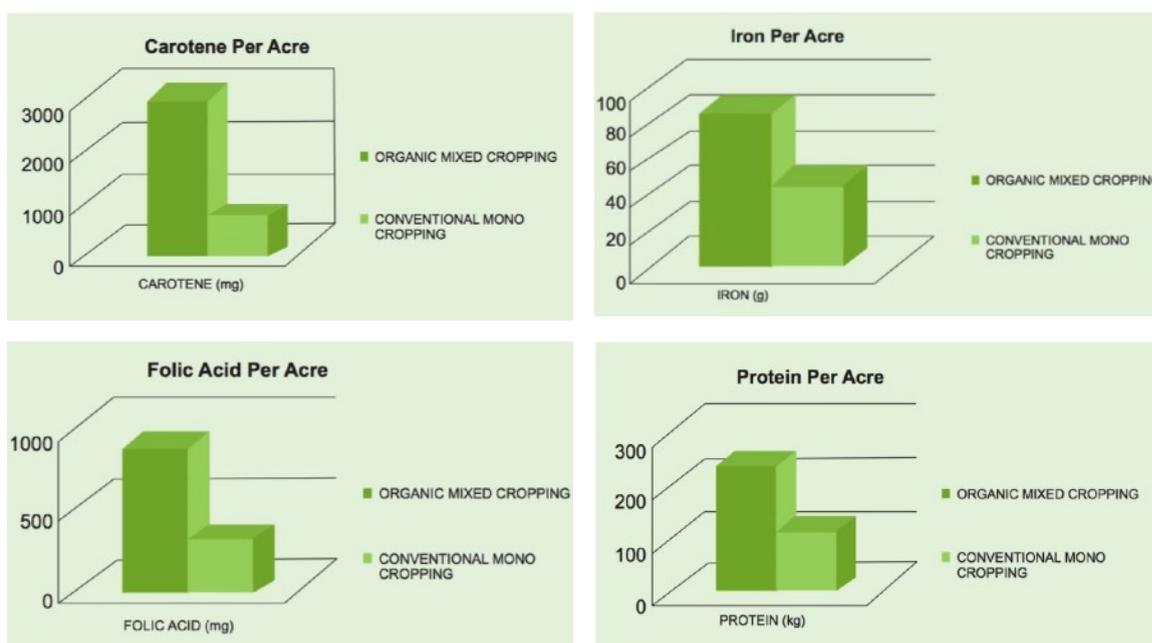
the basis of health and nutrition. Biodiverse organic farming produces more nutrition than chemical monocultures. It is the answer to nutritional deficiency.

Anemia is widespread in India--58.6% of children, 53.2% of non-pregnant women and 50.4% of pregnant women were found to be anemic in 2016, as per the NFHS. India carries the highest burden of the disease

<https://www.indiaspend.com/improve-womens-education-health-services-to-reduce-indias-anaemia- burden-worlds-highest/>

<https://www.nature.com/articles/1601504>

Our Iron rich biodiversity of Indigenous food is the answer to Anemia.



Anemia, and other nutrient deficiencies in India are a result of growing chemical monocultures which produce nutritionally empty commodities at very high cost.

In a chemical and capital intensive model of agriculture and food production, people are deprived of the right to produce and have access to wholesome food rich in nutrients.

Firstly, when rural communities spend money on costly chemicals, they join the ranks of the hungry. Half of the hungry people in the world today are farmers. Half of India's hungry are farmers.

<https://news.trust.org/item/20150527174457-gt30a/>

Secondly, the seeds bred through the Green Revolution model are bred for taking up more chemicals. Green Revolution varieties are called High Yielding Varieties (HYV). This is a misnomer. As the UN pointed out in 1970's, they are not High Yielding in and of themselves. They respond well to chemicals, and should more accurately be called High Response Varieties. (Vandana Shiva, The Violence of the Green Revolution).

In terms of nutrition, the so called modern varieties have low nutrition compared to native varieties. When measured in terms of nutrition, Green Revolution varieties are “low yielding” and native varieties are “high yielding”. A recent study carried out by scientists in Calicut University, Kerala comparing 13 traditional varieties with two Green Revolution varieties showed that native varieties had more than 11% protein compared to so call HYV. They had higher mineral content Zinc, manganese, potassium calcium and iron. <https://t.co/0e1ISpAIhP?amp=1>

Instead of measuring the weight of nutritionally empty commodities and suffering the illusion that we are growing more food, we should replace yield per acre with the more appropriate measure of nutrition per acre that Navdanya has adopted. We can feed two times India’s population with full nutrition if we grow our native varieties, and intensify biodiversity instead of chemicals.

<https://www.navdanya.org/attachments/Health%20Per%20Acre.pdf>

Thirdly, chemical agriculture destroys nutrients in the soil, and hence in plants that we eat. In industrialized countries food has lost more than 60% of its nutrients due to industrial agriculture.

Navdanya’s research comparing changes in soil nutrients in chemical farms with organic farms over 20 years shows that chemical farms have lost up to 37.8% Zn while Zinc content of organic soils increased by up to 14.3%. Chemical farms lost 12% iron, contributing to iron deficiency.

<https://www.ibpbooks.com/biodiversity-agroecology-regenerative-organic-agriculture-sustainable-solutions-for-hunger-poverty-and-climate-change/p/43816>

Fourthly, industrial processing is a system of removing nutrients from food, and bringing us nutritionally empty food which contributes to malnutrition and metabolic disorders. Industrialists remove the bran from rice, and sell it as a high value supplement, thus making money twice, once from selling white rice and then selling bran. While polished rice has only 0.7 mg of Iron in 100 gm. of rice, bran has 35.0 mg of iron. Hand pounded rice has 2.8 mg of iron, and rice flakes have 20 mg.

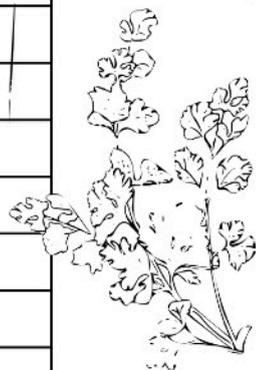
To address malnutrition, we need to regenerate our native seeds which are high yielding in terms of nutrition, practice chemical free organic farming, and promote artisanal processing. We need to decolonize our food, agriculture and nutrition paradigm. We have a rich legacy of Ayurveda and organic farming which can inform us to address the crisis of malnutrition.



Traditional Indian food Sources of Vitamin-A and their  $\beta$ -carotene content:



Source	Hindi Name	Content (microgram/100mg)
Amaranth leaves	Chauli Saag	266- 1166
Coriander leaves	Dhania	1166- 1333
Curry leaves	Curry patta	1333
Drumstick leaves	Saian Patta	1283
Cabbage	Bandh Gobhi	217
Fenugreek leaves	Methi- ka-saag	450
Radish leaves	Mooli-ka-saag	750
Mint	Pudina saag	300
Spinach	Palak saag	600
Carrot	Gajar	217- 434
Pumpkin (yellow)	Kaddu	100- 120
Mango (ripe)	Aam	500
Jackfruit	Kathal	54
orange	Santra	35
Tomato (ripe)	Tamatar	32
Milk (cow, buffalo)	Doodh	50-60
Butter	Makkhan	720- 1200
Egg (hen)	Anda	300- 400
Liver (goat, sheep)	Kaleji	6600- 100000
Cod liver oil		10,000- 100,000



Source: Nutritive value of Indian foods

We have to avoid false solutions of biofortification like genetically engineered Golden rice or the proposed iron fortified rice.

We do not need Golden Rice. We have superior alternatives.

We are Regenerating our Health by rejuvenating our biodiversity, our diverse food cultures. We grow and eat diversity.

# The Golden Rice HOAX

Profits from patents, not nutrition for children

**1 What is Golden Rice?**  
Golden Rice is a genetically engineered rice with genes from **daffodils** and **bacteria** to produce 1.6 milligrams of Vit A in a kilogram of rice.

**2 It will not alleviate Vitamin A Deficiency**

Traditional Foods with Vitamin-A: Daily Value (%)

229%	561%	444%
1/2 Cup Spinach	1 Sweet Potato	3 Ounces Liver
100%	100%	100%
1 Tablespoon Coriander Chutney	1 Mango	1.5 Tablespoons Mint Chutney

An adult will need to eat **2.272 Kilograms** of golden rice everyday to receive adequate Vitamin-A.

The transgenic rice plants must now be crossed with strains of rice that are grown locally and are suited to a particular region's climate and growing conditions. -ISAA.org

Source: ISAA

**3 Trojan Horse** Intellectual Property Rights.

If approvals are given under a humanitarian guise, Syngenta can **commercialise** when they please. With the trait being crossed into local varieties of Rice, Syngenta can claim **ownership** over all those varieties in the future, for **their nutrition, climate resilience and their yield**. The yield of Golden Rice **does not** come from the 'Golden' trait. It comes from the plant the trait is put into. Engineering the Vitamin A trait into Rice is merely a means to establish **Intellectual Property Rights**.

**4 Golden Rice is not a Humanitarian Project**

**Syngenta** owns **commercial rights** to GoldenRice and has negotiated licences with other Corporations

Source: [http://www.goldenrice.org/Content1-Who/who4\\_IP.php](http://www.goldenrice.org/Content1-Who/who4_IP.php)

**5 Charity Cartel**

The fraudulent philanthropy is a means to gain access and dodge anti-trust regulators. Rice eating cultures of the Global South must protect their food security and not allow a corporate takeover of the very basis of their survival.

**DID YOU KNOW**  
IN 2011 APPROXIMATELY

94%	90%	88%	90%
SOY BEAN	CANOLA	CORN	COTTON

rice ?

OF THE U.S. CROP YIELD CONTAINED GMO'S?

Source: <http://willvoteforfood.com/understanding-measure-92/>

**SAY NO TO GOLDEN RICE**

## **6. REGENERATING SELF CONFIDENCE, SELF ORGANISATION, SELF RELIANCE & SWAASTHA**

- Food is our identity.
- Over millennia we have evolved our food heritage for enriching our communities, culture and living economies.
- By regenerating our biodiversity and indigenous food we are getting freedom from Food colonization and Food imperialism caused by globalization.
- Self-Organization and atma Nirbharta is the foundation of Food democracy.
- Corporate Vision for future is Farming without farmers, Farm Free lab grown, fake food.

**Food is our culture, identity, health. Food is our heritage. Over millennia we have evolved this heritage for enriching our communities, cultures and living economies. We care for ourselves, our children and families and our communities. Health and Safety has shaped our food systems. Through millennia of evolution of our food cultures we know what safe and healthy food is. We are reclaiming SwaAsthā - our confidence in our local indigenous culturally diverse traditional foods and food heritage.**

Globalization is leading to food colonization and food imperialism, creating pseudo safety standards which make our indigenous foods illegal and promote disease causing ultra-processed and fake food.

Reclaiming our indigenous food systems is vital for Food Sovereignty, for our right to healthy food, and our right to decide what is healthy and what is not through community participation and self-governance.

FSSAI laws are heavily influenced by the junk food industry which destroys our health, our indigenous food heritage and our artisanal processing industries.

### **Women's authentication certificate for artisanal processing (Creation of Panchayat/District levels)**

Globalization has promoted uniformity and centralization, destroying both diversity and democracy in our food systems. Self-reliance and Atmanirbharta involves self-governance of communities with their Indigenous food systems to protect the livelihoods, health and our culture. Food democracy demands that we shift from industrial, top down, centralized system of certification and authentication of safe and health food to participatory community authentication based on centuries of knowledge.

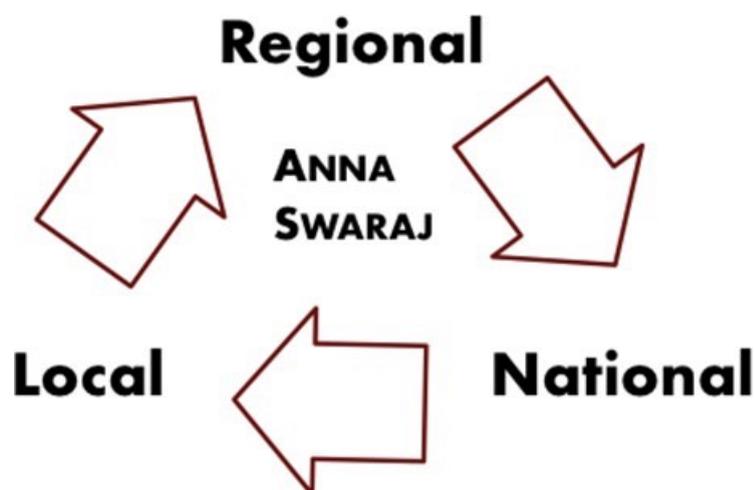
The current system of authentication is linear top down and centralized.



From this we have to move to a circular community authentication of food, as part of circular economies.

We need community authentication of our food through participation of local producers, processors and consumers

This is the key to transformation of food towards health and food democracy. Self-Reliant and AtmaNirbhar SwaAstha food systems help us regenerate biodiversity and food democracy.



We are shifting from Industrial Processing that destroys work, Health and Self Reliance to Artisanal Processing that Regenerates Rural Livelihoods, Biodiversity and Healthy Food System.

To address simultaneously the crises of unemployment and chronic diseases created

by industrial food processing food, we are regenerating artisanal processing of food, such as wheat, paddy, pulses through our *Chakis* and edible oils made from indigenous oilseeds such as mustard, linseed, sesame, groundnut, coconut, in our *Ghanis* creating more work opportunities in rural areas through agro processing and food processing, producing healthier food, and a diversification of local agriculture by creating local circular economies and local food communities.

Corporations want a future of “farming without farmers” and “farm free food”. We grow real food for health for our loved ones and communities. We are creating a future in which no hands are wasted, no one goes hungry, and no one suffers from diseases related to ultra-processed food.

Just as the spinning wheel (charkha) brought us freedom from British Colonialism, our indigenous seeds and foods will bring us freedom from the Food Imperialism that is destroying biodiversity, our health and our livelihoods.

“We have so many local food, we women neglect it. I request all members to learn old traditional food. Traditional food & knowledge can save our society, our life as well as our mother earth. Amar Anna Amar Swaraj- Our Food Our Freedom”.

- Sonali Maity

We have created Self Reliant, *Atma Nirbhar* food safety systems from the ground up. We have evolved *SwaAstha*, confidence in our indigenous healthy food systems. In our circular economies, food safety becomes a participatory process as part of Anna Swaraj, Food Sovereignty linking those who produce and process the food and those who eat it through intimacy and knowledge sovereignty. Desi foods have been evolved by our ancestors and grandmothers for our health and wellbeing. In a time where there are plans for a new food imperialism through fake food made in labs, knowing what we are eating, how it was produced, what its impact is on the earth, farmers, society and our health becomes central to Anna Swaraj, Food Sovereignty.



World Simplicity Day, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2020

## SwaAsthA

**Creating Self Reliant Food Communities and AtmaNirbharJaivik  
Bharat SwaAsthA for Swashakt, Saral Jeevan  
**Self Confidence for SelfReliance and Simple life****

"Live simply so that others may simply live. Simplicity is the essence of universality. Mahatma Gandhi

Can we live and let all other living beings live? Can we live leaving a small ecological footprint?

Can we live without destroying the environmental balance?

Can we ensure the last person, the last child has healthy nutritious food and no one goes hungry?

Can we ensure no hands are wasted and no one is unemployed?

Can we Regenerate the Earth's Biodiversity, Water, Soil so future generations have food and water?

Yes We can, Yes We must

Acknowledge that we are members of an Earth Family (Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam) on this beautiful planet, not its owners, masters, destroyers.

Respect the right of every living being to sustained life

Understand that every action of ours impacts another living beings and fellow human beings Accept that for sustained life every living being has to be in harmony with the environment

Concede that selfish greed driven practices have led to a breakdown of sustained living as shown by the pandemic

A few alarming facts

Poverty and hunger and Chronic diseases are a consequence of greed of corporations who push poisons and chemicals to grow food and process it.

Poverty and hunger is a by-product of colonialism. The British appropriated \$ 45 trillion from the peasants of India and transferred it to Britain, pushing more than 60 million Indians to famine

Poverty and hunger is a result of exclusivity and selfish practices which enclose common land, forests and pastures, seeds and biodiversity for accumulating wealth.

Poverty and hunger results from an extractivist system of industrial globalised agriculture which extracts fertility from the soil, value from hard working farmers , leaving then indebted and dispossessed pushing them to suicides It extracts life from species which are being driven to extinction . And it extracts health.

Cocreating with the Earth, in Community, we can grow Good Food for All

As the Isavasya Upanishad says- “Isavasyamidamsarvamyatkim ca jagatyamjagat, tenatyaktenabhunjitha, ma gridhahkasyasviddhanam” (Isa 1)

Mahatma Gandhi distilled this ancient teaching in his famous quote

“The Earth Gives enough for everyone’s Needs, but not a few people’s greed”

Simplicity is the path to leaving enough of the Earth’s gifts for others to meet their needs Implicitly ensures Justice and Sustainability

Live a simple life to meet your needs So No one is Displaced, No one goes hungry

Hunger, Poverty and Scarcity are created when economies based on greed appropriate resources from people

We can create living circular solidarity

economies - Based on sharing not greed

Based on self-reliance not external dependence

Serving the health of the community and nation not corporate greed

Incorporating environmental friendly Agroecological and Artisanal practices not extractive and ruinous protocols

Understanding that our traditional practices of agriculture, food processing and nutrition was our strength and sustained sustenance

**SwaAsthā is our Birth right**

## Launching SwaAsthā on World Simplicity Day 2020 during the COVID19 Pandemic

In times of a global pandemic of COVID 19 and the Health Emergency, SwaAsthā is our self Confidence in our indigenous food and farming systems that grow health, not disease. SwaAsthā it is our declaration that healthy food is the basis of health, and Good Food for All is a universal, basic right

Simplicity is Swaraj (Self Organising and Self Rule) and Swadeshi (Self Making and Cocreation) Simplicity in Hindi is Saralta, Sadgi, Sahajta

Sahaj means “natural” “original”. The opposite is aswabhavik, “unnatural”

We pledge to change the food system to make it simple and truthful, instead of complicated and dishonest.

We pledge to commit ourselves to shift from a toxic degenerative system that is destroying the health of the planet and people, to one that regenerates the health of the earth and society through caring and nurturing practices

We pledge to care for the Earth and share her gifts that we co- create. And maintain her health for the future

SwaAsthā strengthens Food Sovereignty, Anna Swaraj, Self-Governance, are simple and truthful because they are based on Swaraj Self-Organisation, intimacy, honesty, community and solidarity

.Corporate control over our food hides how our food was grown and processed, what artificial ingredients are in our food, what harm it does to the planet, her biodiversity and our health. Corporate control over food spreads hunger and disease. SwaAsthā creates good healthy food for all.

SwaAsthā protects Swadeshi and Desi Local food systems. It is the foundation of Self Reliance, AtmaNirbharta, from the community to the country .Short chains and local circular economies based on our indigenous seeds and food are simple because they are natural and protect nature. We know what we are eating, we know how our food was grown, who grew and processed it, what are the true costs and real value and true quality. Globalised trade in food controlled by corporations is based on deregulation of commerce, destroying regulations that protect the environment, farmer’s livelihoods and our health - it hides the true costs, creating the illusion of “cheap food”. Low prices paid to farmers who growing industrial commodities at high cost is not a low cost economy. It is not Saral. It is not Sahaj .It is dishonest and manipulative .It is extractive and exploitative. It exploits nature and farmers, leaving a very heavy ecological footprint for the earth to bear, destroying rural economies and our health .The Earth, our farmers, our bodies can no longer bear the burden of extraction and pollution.

We pledge to regenerate the earth, our communities and our health.

Our 9 steps to simplicity and SwaAsthā are

1. From linear extractive economies controlled by corporations who only take , to circular solidarity economies based on giving, mutuality and trust in community
2. From Corporate Control on Seed through GMOs and Patents for extracting profits and royalty , to Seed Sovereignty and Seed as a Commons
3. From Industrial Agriculture based on toxic chemicals to Biodiverse ecological agriculture that works with nature on principles of Agroecology.
4. From Monocultures of the Mind and on the Earth, to Biodiversity of the Mind and on and. From “Yield per Acre” of monoculture commodities produced with uses of resources , fossil fuels , and capital ,to “Health per Acre”, “Wealth per Acre” and “Care per Acre” based on the “Law of Return” - giving back to the Earth and Society

5. From Industrial Processing based on chemicals, artificial ingredients , and heavy use of energy, water and resources to Artisanal Processing which creates health , dignity and freedom
6. From greed and profit driven food and agriculture systems based on a very large Ecological Footprint that creates Poverty, Hunger, Unemployment and an Ecological Emergency by taking away the share of others to seeds, food, land, water, to systems that increase the head, heart and hand print, deepening care and justice, and ensuring health, good food and good work for all.
7. From Corporate Controlled Globalised Bad Food systems to localisation of food systems with ever expanding circles of Biodiversity of economies based on community control
8. From Corporate food dictatorship which is attempting to deny us our freedoms to grow our food and process it safely , to food democracy , food democracy and food freedom
9. From colonisation of the mind and the manipulation of knowledge by Big Ag, Big Pharma, Big Tech and the Poison Cartel to Epistemic Decolonisation and knowledge sovereignty based on embodied, lived knowledge.

## 7. REGENERATING LIVING KNOWLEDGES

- We embody the multidimensional knowledge and practise of Biodiversity in all spheres of life.
- We are making a transition from Colonisation of the mind to decolonisation through regenerating our indigenous knowledge.
- All living being are a part of the Earth Family, and it is our duty to ensure their wellbeing.
- Our knowledge is based on participation, cooperation and cocreation, not on separation, domination and violence.
- Biodiversity can be regenerated by regenerating our living knowledge's of life, for life.
- We do not need artificial industrial "fortification" of nutritionally empty food or nanoparticle's in our blood to address nutrient deficiency.
- Biodiverse, local, organic, artisanal food systems hold the answers to the multiple emergencies created by the corporate industrial globalised food and agriculture

**We embody the knowledge and practise of Biodiversity of seeds and species, of cultures, of knowledge's, of economies, and of democracies.**

**We are living Intelligent Creative Beings on a Living Intelligent Creative Earth. Women have intelligence and are creative. Plants have intelligence. Insects have intelligence.**

**Our knowledge is the knowledge of cocreation with the earth and her diverse living organisms. We know our fellow beings are sentient. We must respect their integrity and relate to them in nonviolence, causing no harm.**

**We are making a transition from Colonization of the Mind by Domination of Violent Militarized Mechanistic Systems of Knowledge to Decolonization through Regenerating our indigenous knowledge's of cocreation and creativity in non violent form (Knowledge Sovereignty )(Gyan Swaraj).**

In the violent epistemology of mechanistic, industrial knowledge, that separates us from the earth and each other, creating hierarchies, living beings are treated as inert objects, mere machines to be manipulated for profit. In our epistemology of love, compassion and nonviolence, all beings are our relatives, and have a right to life and wellbeing. We have a duty to ensure their wellbeing.

Capitalist patriarchy perceives our care and nonviolence as passivity, as absence of creativity and knowledge. It promotes knowledge that is a war against nature.

Colonized and colonizing Knowledge of the industrial paradigm is in denial of the creativity and diversity of nature, women and indigenous cultures. It defines knowledge as the exclusive domain of powerful men. It confuses violence with knowledge, and the power to dominate and exploit as expertise.

Our knowledge is based on participation, cooperation and cocreation, not on separation,

domination and violence.

We recognize that knowledge grows from practice. We are biodiversity experts. Our knowledge has grown through protection of our biodiversity. We use our expertise to conserve and rejuvenate. Through our living knowledge we resist exploitation and destruction of our biodiversity.

An agriculture paradigm that has its roots in colonialism separated agriculture from food, and food from health and nutrition. It promoted monocultures of commodities, destroying biodiversity, impoverishing the earth, farmers and our health. India's gift to the world is the science of Agroecology based on care for Mother Earth, and the science of Ayurveda, which recognizes that food is health (Annam Sarva aushadhi ). We are reclaiming our knowledge sovereignty to regenerate of food and agriculture. We are connecting food to health so we can prevent the health emergency of chronic diseases.

Chemical agriculture is based on toxic on fertilizers that destroy soil biodiversity, Herbicides such as Round Up and Glyphosate that kill plant biodiversity and insecticides that kill insect biodiversity, leading to an “insectageddon”, including the neonicotinoids that are threatening bees. GMO's deny the creativity and self organization potential of living seed.

Our living knowledge's connect our ancient systems to contemporary ecological science. We are regenerating Biodiversity by regenerating our living knowledge's of life, for life.

Corporations have pirated and patented our indigenous knowledge of Biodiversity through Intellectual Property Rights. We are regenerating our living knowledge as our common heritage through Community Biodiversity Registers, through our Seed and Food Festivals.

Our knowledge and experience teaches us that diversity produces more food and nutrition per acre and provides resilience to climate extremes and economic shocks. It is the answer to hunger and disease. Diversity brings higher returns to farmers by avoiding unnecessary expenditure on costly seeds and chemicals, and by preventing vulnerability of price collapse that goes hand in hand with monocultures.

In 2010, Google was granted the patent WO2010034319A1 for introducing magnetite nanoparticles as a treatment for Iron deficiency that results in Anemia. A Nano particle a billionth (10 to the power minus 9) of a nanometer, about three to five atoms wide, or some 40,000 times smaller than the thickness of human hair. There is no scientific system of assessing the impact of introducing nanoparticles is our body.

(Vandana Shiva and Dr Gangadharan “Two Futures of Food, Health and Humanity: A Civilizational Dialogue)

<https://www.amazon.com/Futures-Food-Health-Humanity-Civilisational-ebook/ dp/ B08PPQJBDT>

The CEO of Google's new Life Sciences Venture, Andy Conrad sees this domination through ignorance as the only way "*we are going to defeat Mother Nature.*" (Piller, 2015)

This is the world view of violence and conquest that has created the hunger and malnutrition crisis. It cannot be a solution for the problem it has created.

Through Our love for Mother Nature, we seek ways to address hunger and malnutrition in cooperation with her Biodiversity.

## **GROWING HEALTH AND NUTRITION GARDENS OF HOPE, GARDENS OF BIODIVERSITY**

Our Biodiversity and Knowledge holds the answer to iron deficiency – anemia.

We hold the knowledge and biodiversity so no woman or child suffers from anemia. Gardens of Hope and Gardens of Health everywhere, agriculture systems based on Biodiversity and organic farming, regenerating the biodiversity of our indigenous foods can help us fight both malnutrition and chronic diseases. We have an abundance of iron rich biodiversity in our indigenous food and agriculture systems. We do not need artificial industrial "fortification" of nutritionally empty food or nanoparticle's in our blood to address iron deficiency anemia.

"Multinational companies brought BT cotton into farmer's lives illegally. Farmers unknowingly grew these using the chemical fertilizers and pesticides and destroyed the local seeds, soil, water, health and lives of farmers. These seeds destroy the life in the soil. The soil becomes barren and gets eroded easily with wind and runoff. Farmers and daily wagers working in Bt cotton farms develop allergic reactions and swelling on their bodies. BT cotton cannot be stored in the home for long as they cause allergic reactions on the skin as well as difficulty in breathing. We should not use Bt cotton at all since it is bad for the health of the Earth, local seeds and lives of all including our communities".

- Madhuri Phalke & Seema Sanjay Ghate

## Biodiversity of Iron rich Indigenous Food



Name of the food	Iron	Name of the food	Iron
Cereal Grain And Products		Leafy Vegetables	
Rice, bran	35.0	Amaranth Paniculatus	18.4
Rice, Flakes	20.0	Amaranth Polygonoides	27.3
Pluses and Legumes		Amaranth Spinosus	22.9
Soybean	10.0	Amaranth Species (Chakravarthikeerai )	18.0
Amaranth Tristis	38.5	Other Vegetables	
Amaranth Viridis	18.7	Karonda dry	39.1
Beet Greens	16.2	Lotus Stem, dry	60.6
Bengal Gram Leaves	23.8	Sundakal, dry	22.2
Betel Leaves	10.6	Nuts and Oil Seeds	
Cauliflower Greens	40.0	Coconut Meal, deoiled	69.4
Chekkur Manis	28.0	Garden Cress	100.0
Cow Pea Leaves	20.1	Niger Seeds	56.7
Fetid Cassia ( Fresh )	12.4	Condiments And Spices	
Garden Cress	28.6	Arisithippili	13.50
Knol – khol Greens	13.3	Asafoetida	39.4
Kuppameni	17.3	Cloves dry	11.7
Manathakkali Leaves	20.5	Cumin Seeds	11.7
Mint	15.6	Mace	12.3
Mukarrate Keerai	18.4	Mango Powder	45.2
Mustard Leaves	16.3	Omum	12.5
Parsley	17.9	Pepper Dry (black)	12.4
Paruppu Keerai	14.8	Pippali	62.1
Radish Leaves Table	18.0	Poppy Seeds	15.9
Rape Leaves	12.5	Tamarind Plup	17.0
Shepu	17.4	Turmeric	67.8
Turnip Greens	28.4		

Fishes And Other Sea Foods		Fishes And Other Sea Foods	
Bombay Duck	19.1	Parsey dried	17.4
Chingri Small dried	27.9	Ribbon Fish Fresh	13.9
Chingri goda, dried	49.6	Tapra (dried )	41.2
Crab muscle	21.2	Meat And Poultry	18.8
Mandeli, dried	11.9		

Our knowledge, our skills, our work, hold the answers to the multiple emergencies the corporate industrial globalized food and agriculture system has created.

Through Biodiverse, local, organic, artisanal food systems we are regenerating the health of mother earth and the health of our families and communities.

## 8. REGENERATING LIVING ECONOMIES

- Shakti: Power to create and regenerate.
- Circular local Economies is art of living, giving to and caring for Mother Earth and our community.
- Circular economies intensify livelihoods and wellbeing, thus regenerating nature and local economies.
- A capitalist patriarchal definition of productivity makes women farmers and their work invisible, ignoring the fact that most women are farmers, and they produce most of the food that nourishes communities.
- The Right to Food, Right to Health, Right to work ensure Real Food for All, Real Wealth and Wellbeing for all, and meaningful cooperative work for all.
- We are creating ever expanding circles of food sovereignty (Anna Swaraj ) beginning with ourselves and our households and reaching out to our communities, our regions, our country.

We are Shakti. We have the power to create and regenerate. With Nature, our work and our love, we co create the food economy. We are food producers and producers of real wealth and real food. We do most of the work to produce, process, transform and distribute food even though our contributions are not counted.

Economy is the Art of living and taking care of Oikos, Gaia, Mother Earth, our Earth family, our human family. Love, care, compassion and cooperation are the currencies of Life that connect us to the Earth and each other and contribute to the wellbeing of all. We grow life. We grow wealth as wellbeing. Life and food are the currencies of life and Money is not the only currency of life.

We are leading a transition from a Linear Extractive Globalized Economy and Greed and Profit driven food and Agriculture System that Creates Poverty, Hunger, Unemployment and an Ecological Emergency to Circular Local Living Economies and food systems systems that respect the Rights of People to Food, Work and Health from the local to the national level and Regenerate the Earth, our livelihoods, and wellbeing of all.

(Economic sovereignty -Arthik Swaraj )

Extraction from nature and society to make money is based on greed and violence, driving the ecological and economic emergencies. Our Relationship with the earth is based on an Economy of Care, of giving and non-violence.

Ecology and economy both have their roots in the word “oikos” which means home. Knowledge of the home is ecology. Taking care of the home on the basis of knowledge of ecology is economy.

The dominant model of the economy no longer has its roots in ecology, but exists outside and above ecology, disrupting the Earth’s laws that govern ecological systems and processes that support life in the natural and social world. The unchecked conquest of resources is pushing species to extinction and has led ecosystems to collapse, while causing irreversible climate disasters.

Similarly, economy, which is part of society, has been placed outside and above society, beyond democratic control. Ethical values, cultural values, spiritual values, values of care and co-operation have all been sidelined by the extractive logic of the global market that seeks only profit. Competition leaves no room for cooperation. More and more people are excluded from the economy, both in terms of livelihoods and in terms of basic needs, including the Right to Food.

The economy of greed counts extraction as “growth” measured in terms of GDP.

Women’s economic and knowledge contributions have been made invisible in the dominant economy shaped by capitalist patriarchy which artificially constructs a creation boundary and production boundary. Women’s knowledge is pirated through patents, their work is not counted because the definition of growth is “If you produce what you consume, you do not produce”.

Women’s economic and knowledge sovereignty calls for a change in the knowledge paradigm, the economic paradigm and the work paradigm to recognize and respect women’s contribution, to take into account the creativity and productivity of nature and women.

A post Corona recovery needs a shift to healthy food and agricultural systems that respects nature and biodiversity, so we will avoid future pandemics, that maximize health and nutrition per acre, that maximize the return to farmers through circular economies of real, healthy, fresh food and do not focus on commodity production and cash crops as raw material for industrial processing. Circular economies intensify livelihoods and wellbeing, thus regenerating local economies.

Farmers were turned into refugees on their land by industrialized farming propelled by neo liberal globalization that incentivized agriculture led by agribusiness corporations. “Productivity” was manipulated to drive farmers off the land and also create the illusion that we were producing more food and reducing hunger. When Productivity takes chemical capital, chemical and energy inputs into account, industrial agriculture is in fact a negative economy because it uses 10 units of energy to produce one unit of energy as food. In the pseudo productivity calculus, instead of taking into account the high costs of chemical, energy and water inputs, productivity is measured falsely by treating human beings as “inputs” instead of recognizing that human beings are cocreators who take care of the land and the wellbeing of society is the outcome of any economic activity.

Displacement of farmers is tautologically built into this definition of pseudo productivity of industrial agriculture. A capitalist patriarchal definition of productivity makes women farmers and their work invisible. It ignores the fact that most women are farmers, and they produce most of the food that nourishes communities. Women produce more food through biodiversity intensification on less land. They produce nourishment for themselves and their families through Gardens of Nutrition and Gardens of Hope.

[https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9781137349088\\_32](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9781137349088_32)

Pseudo productivity is creating an ecological crisis, an unemployment crisis, and a hunger and malnutrition crisis.

The Economy for us is not just the Global Market manipulated and controlled by Global Corporations to make super profits by spreading GMOs, Monocultures, Commodity trade, spreading hunger and disease. Corporations sell us nonrenewable hybrid and GMO seeds. The result has been farmer's debt and suicides. They extract super profits from us both by selling costly seeds and chemicals, and by buying what we produce at low prices. Their profits increase while our incomes go down.

We have learnt through practice that every step of dependence on corporations for inputs or markets ties us deeper into debt and dispossession.

That is why we are reclaiming our sovereignty, self-reliance and *atma nirbharta* by creating circular economies based on caring and sharing.

We are producing and sharing our own seeds and organic fertilizers through circular, renewable economies of seed and soil nutrition.

We sell the diversity we grow in a diversity of markets, beginning with our local Haats, creating markets close to home, minimizing the distance between the producer and the consumer, maximizing the benefits to both by circulating food, health and wealth in local living circular economies.

The industrial globalized food system has given us poverty, hunger and unemployment. We are creating Local living economies based on solidarity, community, and wellbeing of all, regeneration of the Earth and Regeneration of livelihoods and rural economies based on ecological agriculture, regeneration of natural resources and the commons, regeneration of crafts and ecologically friendly skills is an ecological, economic and social imperative for us.

We put nature and people, and local circular economies at the heart of the food system, instead of the linear, extractive globalized economy driven by greed and wasteful use of resources which destroys ecosystems and displaces and dispossess people, contributing to both non sustainability and injustice and inequality. Our Economies are economies of care and giving. For us agriculture is a circular economy of living relationships between seed, soil and us as farmers. Through Circular Economies we heal broken ecological cycles by giving back to the Earth. We correct injustices and inequalities by ensuring a fair share is given back to farmers and producers, and no one is deprived of food and health this is the law of return on which nature's cycles of permanence and social and economic justice are based. The shorter the distance between producers and consumers, the less the exploitation and extraction, the higher the biodiversity, the richer the nutritional quality of food. We are helping move our communities and societies from competition to cooperation, from separation, fragmentation, and indifference to solidarity. From degeneration of the local economy, culture, ecosystems, health to regeneration of rural economies, diversity of our cultures, our biodiversity and our health. Farmers, artisans, street vendors and "consumers" joining hands are creating local circular economies. This is the foundation of true self-reliance, *Atma Nirbharta*. We are creating food economies which are poison free, corporation free.

Globalised extractive economies are based on polluting fossil fuels, chemicals and plastic, leading to destruction of local economies and livelihoods while they contribute to greenhouse gases and climate change, destruction of biodiversity, and pollution of our rivers, ponds and land.

The rich and powerful are now planning economies where Artificial Intelligence and Robots replace people, where lab made Fake Food replaces real nutritious food as nourishment and as the currency of life.

Fossil fuel intensification, chemical intensification that are driving climate change and species extinction are based on technologies of carelessness. They treat people as an “input” that needs to be reduced to increase productivity and efficiency.

We are creative. We are intelligent. We are hard working. We are the foundation of the food system. We will not disappear. We will not be pushed to extinction. We are sowing the seeds of the future through love and care.

We have liberated ourselves from a corporate model of an extractive economy which treats the living earth and hardworking, creative, intelligent farmers as “inert inputs”, and steals fertility from the soil and value from farmers, leaving both the land and people poorer, destroying local economies and livelihoods.

The Right to Food, Right to Health, Right to work in this context translates into actions and policies that ensure Real Food for All, Real Wealth and Wellbeing for all, and meaningful cooperative work for all.

By regenerating biodiversity through local circular economies, we regenerate biodiversity based livelihoods in agriculture, crafts and agro processing.

We are creating ever expanding circles of food sovereignty (Anna Swaraj) beginning with ourselves and our households, to our communities, our regions, and our country.

We are reversing the agrarian crisis and creating real wealth among communities. We know how to create Zero Poverty. We are increasing the growing of healthy nutritious crops. We have shown the path to Zero hunger and Health and wellbeing for all.

We do not need to import industrial soya oil and palm oil. We are conserving and growing and processing the diversity of our oilseeds, creating local living economies through healthy food. Farmers do not have to be driven to suicide or die of pesticide poisoning. The circular economy we have created through Fibres of Freedom is creating wellbeing for farmers, for those who weave and spin cloth

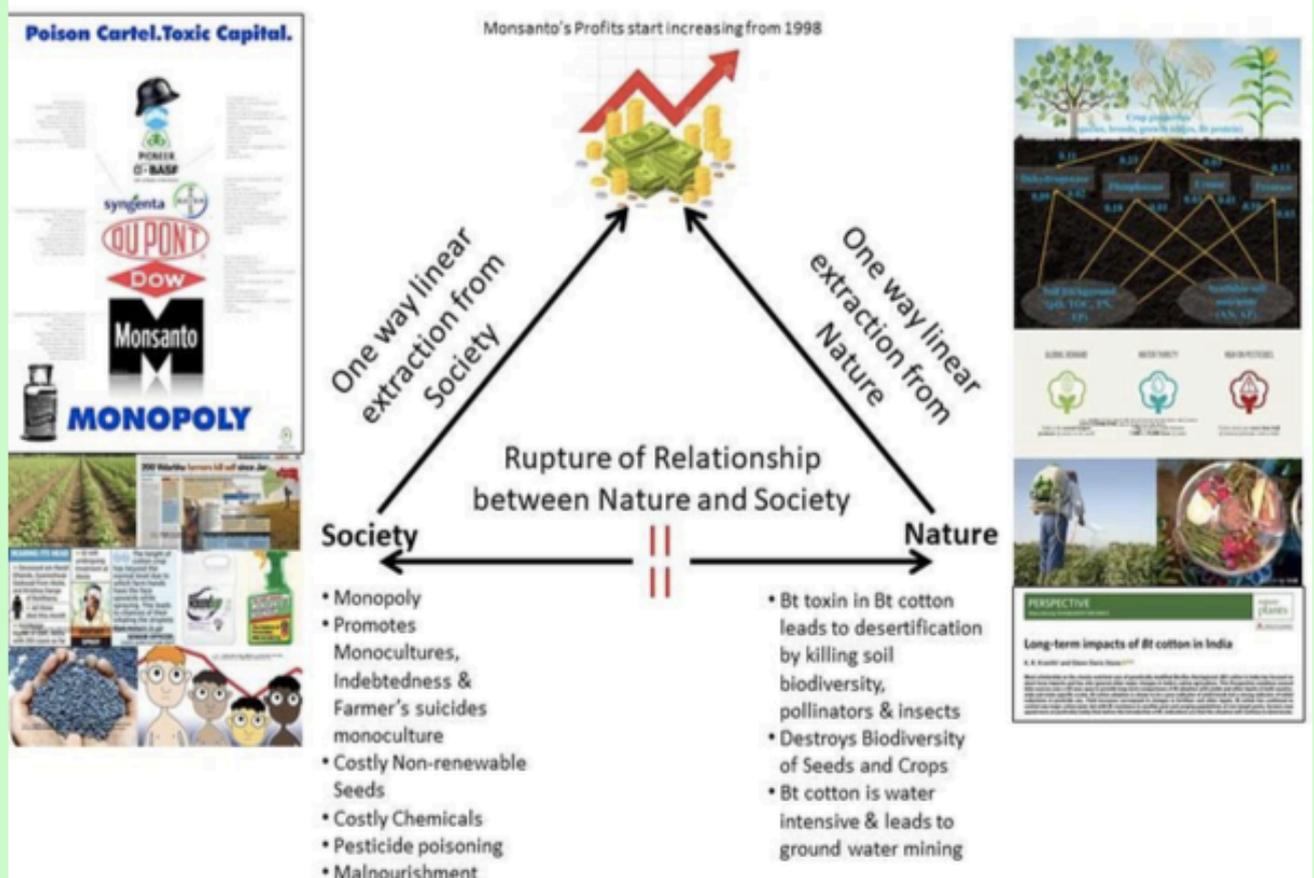
following in Gandhi’s footsteps of the Charkha, the spinning wheel. We are creating economies of permanence by practicing nonviolence.

## From Seeds of Suicide to Seeds of Hope

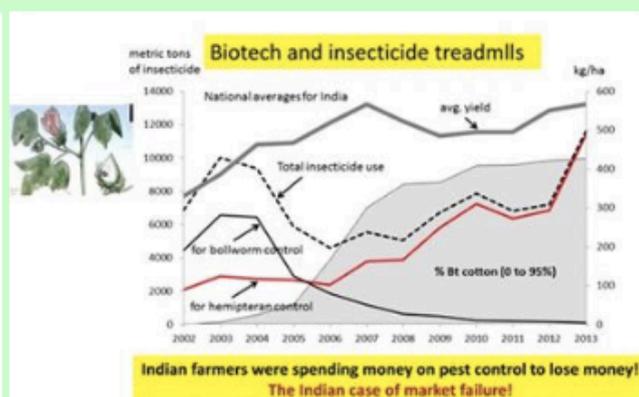
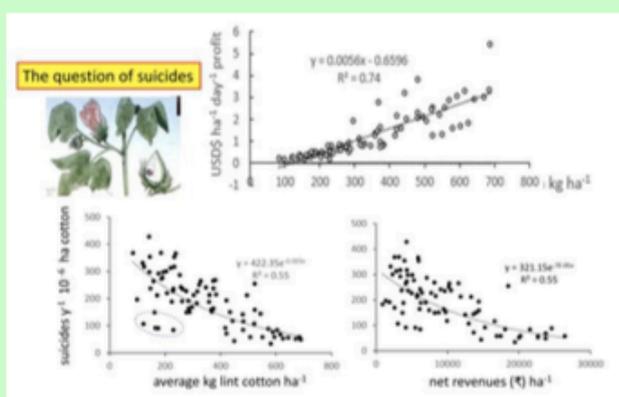
Seed is the basis of Farmers' livelihoods, the basis of agriculture, and the basis of life. In a span of 2 decades Monsanto plundered the diverse indigenous cotton varieties of Indian farmers and introduced Bt cotton extracting extravagant royalties from the farmers. The indigenous varieties of cotton were lost along with the other diversity of food crops that included millets, oilseeds and pulses that grew very well in the dry regions such as Vidarbha.

Monsanto entered Indian farmlands illegally in 1998; by the early 2000s Monsanto depleted all the indigenous varieties of cotton and forced farmers to grow monocultures of Bt cotton. The price of cotton seeds rose from ₹5 - ₹9/KG to ₹ 1600 for 450 gms, which accounts to approximately 80000% increase. The Bt cotton came with a package of pesticides, Herbicide and fertilizers. The Bt cotton package trapped farmers in a vicious cycle of debt and crop failures. 300,000 Indian farmers committing suicide, of which 84% of are attributed to the Monsanto's Bt cotton.

### Monsanto's Extractive Economy of Bt Cotton & Round up



Bt cotton was introduced with the intention to earn profits extorted from farmers under the garb of controlling cotton Bollworms infestation by introducing Bt toxin producing gene from *Bacillus thuringiensis* into the cotton. BT cotton has poorly failed. The bollworms became resistant and secondary infestation also occurred. The improved BT cotton using the American technology was boastfully claimed to be resistant to Bollworms, Red bollworms and Mealybugs. However, BT cotton crops got heavily infested by Pink bollworms in the subsequent years. This only increased the additional inputs in form of pesticides and fertilizers increase. It rendered once living soil destroyed and left the farmers in heavy debts that pushed them to suicide.



In its study carried out in Amravati district in Vidarbha, Navdanya found that the costs of Bt cotton production was 3 times higher than that of the indigenous variety. Besides Bt cotton monocultures depleted the food diversity of Vidarbha leaving farmers and their families malnourished.

Study by Navdanya showed that Bt cotton cultivation was negatively impacting farmers economies.

Bt Cotton	
Inputs	INR/acre
Seeds	1616
Pesticides	1545
Irrigation	356
Nominal total Revenue Generated	15375
Miscellaneous	1608
Total Costs	6554
Total yield	(2.17 qt/acre) <sup>a</sup>
Gross revenue per Acre (2013)	9960
Net Income per Acre (2013)	3402
Net Income per Hectare (2013)	8403

Organic Cotton (desi kappas)	
Inputs	INR/acre
Seeds	1616
Irrigation	670
Miscellaneous	3695
Total Costs	4765
Total yield	(2.88 qt/acre) <sup>a</sup>
Gross revenue per Acre (2013)	14375
Net Income per Acre (2013)	9610
Net Income per Hectare (2013)	23737

a – unit is quintal per acre

Source: Shiva, 2014: Wealth per Acre

Desi cotton varieties (LEFT) grown organically cares for the Earth and sustains the living soil. Bt cotton (RIGHT) on the contrary comes with a suicide package of pesticides, fertilizers and debts. This package that damages farmers rights to the seed, living soil which in turn requires further addition of fertilizers, pushing the Soil and the Farmers towards the death.





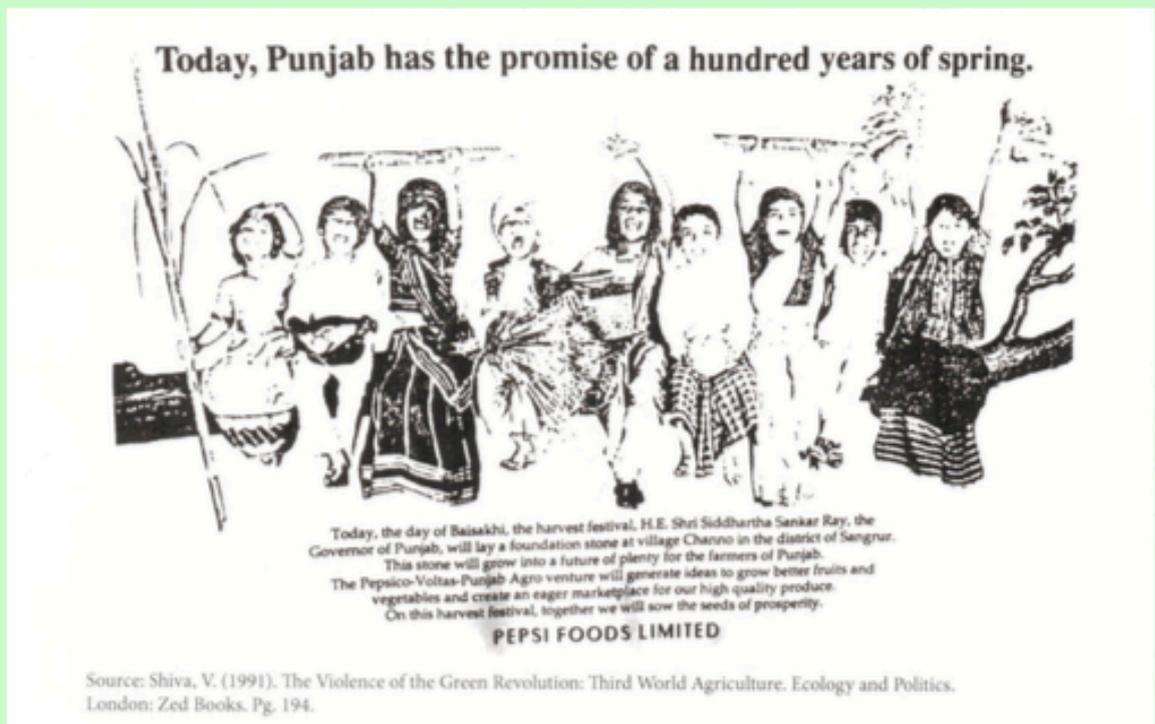
To improve the nutrition of women and their families through diversity in food, Navdanya introduced the Gardens of Hope, Gardens of Nutrition, which brought back the nutrition into the plates of women farmers and their households.

With the local Ghani in Viadarbha, Navdanya helped farmers also to revive their indigenous desi oilseeds such as linseed, til and groundnut across 100 acres. The oil produced in natural, pure and high in nutritional value. The demands for this oil has increased with consumers from local to national level.

Navdanya helped revive their indigenous seeds of cotton through the 'Fibers of Freedom'. This also encouraged the revival of the traditional Weaving Artisans. Farmers started growing organic desi cotton. It rejuvenated their soil and brought back indigenous pest resistant cotton varieties. Farmers started to save their own desi seeds. The Fibers of Freedom transformed the lives of the farmers from the vicious cycle of Seeds of debts and suicides, from the unemployment and poverty to livelihood, Atmanibharta self-reliance with the desi cotton Seeds of Hope.



## How Pepsi's Contract Farming for tomatoes and potatoes destroyed our biodiversity, health and farmers livelihoods



After the 1984 Punjab crises,

On Baisakhi in 1986, Pepsi entered Punjab with the Slogan:

“Today Punjab has the promise of a hundred years of spring Pepsi entered India with the slogan “A Hundred years of Spring”

It introduced contract farming to tomato and potato. This experience shows that contract farming creates new problems in a country of diversity and small farmers. Contract farming involves a contract made between the company and the farmers. The contract that Pepsico made stated that the company reserved the right to reject the crop in case quality standards are not met by the producer or when the harvested seed is damaged and becomes qualitatively unacceptable due to rains or disease. Even in these cases, the farmer was not allowed to sell the seed outside, he or she had to sell it to the company. The company specified that its decision regarding the seed quality ‘will be final and binding on the producer’ and in cases of doubt, farmer was left with no recourse to any other dispute settlement option.

Contract farming for the agro-processing industry was a shift from food crops to cash crops. This weakened the food security even more. The crop and the variety to be planted were determined by the corporation with the sole aim of making profits and not feeding the hungry. Pepsi suggested the idea of contract farming in Punjab, with the main objective being to create a surplus of tomato in the market, so that the corporation could meet its plant’s requirements at low rates. Creating a surplus through contracting ensured that the raw material can be purchased at a predetermined price.

### How did Contract Farming fail?

The experiment proved disastrous for both Pepsi and the contract farmers. Pepsi gave them the seedlings as a loan. The farmers had to use higher doses of fertilizers and pesticides, again supplied by the company. Pepsi's rates for the tomato were lower than market rates. The company paid Rs. 0.80 per kg in 1993 while the market rates were Rs. 2 per kg. When the cost of seedlings and the other inputs was subtracted, the farmers were left with nothing, falsifying the myth even more that industrial agriculture served the farmers' interest. Furthermore, rather than creating a surplus to meet local demands and maintaining low prices for themselves, Pepsi's tomatoes were rejected by the people as the skin was too hard for domestic use. Hard skin is a requirement for transportation and for agro-processing.

Thus, the Pepsi solution to the 'failed Green Revolution' failed in its promise once again. Neither did it bring more food nor did it bring more prosperity for the farmers. It only brought more hunger for our people and more debt for our farmers. In spite of the Punjab failure, the Pepsico model of growing tomatoes and potatoes for the junk food industry as a raw material instead of staple foods for people and for the food security of the country, was imposed nationwide through the World Bank Structural Adjustment of 1991, and the economic reforms since then. Pepsi potatoes have spread across the country and with monocultures of potatoes grown as raw material, prices of potatoes have collapsed.

In 2019 Pepsi sued 4 Indian farmers for 1 crore each for saving potato seeds.

<https://www.businesstoday.in/top-story/pepsico-seeks-rs-1-crore-each-from-four-farmers-it-sued-for-patented-lay-potatoes/story/340858.html>

Pepsi cannot have a patent on potatoes because Art 3 j of India's patent act does not allow patents on life and patents on seeds.

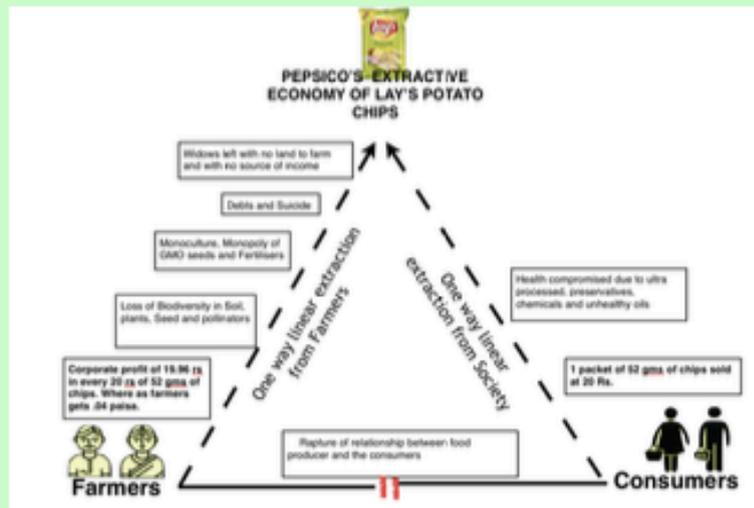
Article 3(j) excludes from patentability "plants and animals in whole or in any part thereof other than microorganisms; but including seeds, varieties, and species, and essentially biological processes for production or propagation of plants and animals". Pepsi does have breeders right on its potato variety. India's law titled Plant Variety Protection and Farmers Rights Act 2001 has a clause on Farmers Rights.

"a farmer shall be deemed to be entitled to save, use, sow, resow, exchange, share or sell his farm produce including seed of a variety protected under this Act in the same manner as he was entitled before the coming into force of this Act"

When this clause on Farmers rights was brought to the notice of the courts through Anand Yagnik, the lawyer defending farmers, Pepsi was forced to withdraw its case against the farmers.

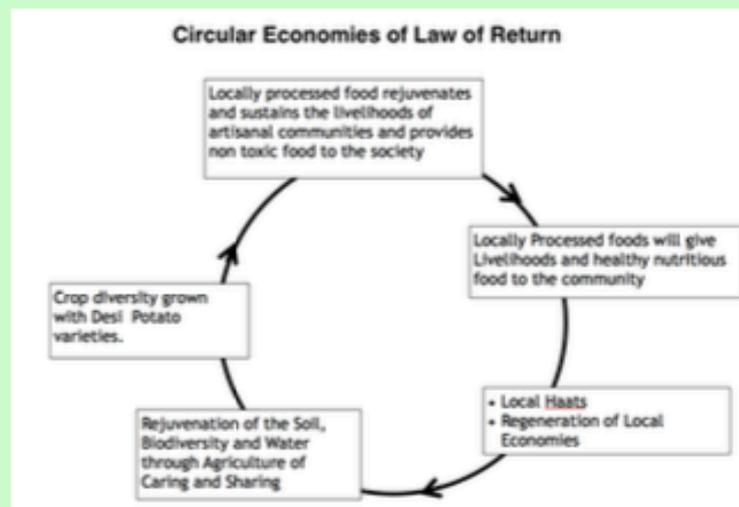
<https://www.amazon.in/ORIGIN-Corporate-War-Nature-Culture/dp/8181583108>

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/pepsi-withdraws-lawsuit-against-4-indian-potato-farmers-spokesman/articleshow/69147396.cms?from=mdr>



The linear Extractive Economy of Pepsico Lay's potato Chips that destroys biodiversity, health and farmers livelihoods

We do not need to sell potatoes to Pepsico as raw material when we can grow and process food creating more health and wealth as circular economy.



## 9. REGENERATING LIVING DEMOCRACY

- We are members of the Earth family
- Living democracy is participatory and grows from the ground up, from the inside out, respecting the freedom of all beings, including humans
- Women's Bija Swaraj, Women's Anna Swaraj, Women's Gyan Swaraj, Women's Arthik Swaraj are elements of Earth Centered and Women centred Swaraj.

**We are members of the earth family. Living democracy is the democracy of life, democracy in everyday life. Living democracy is mindful and caring participation in processes that regenerate life. We are regenerating democracy by regenerating life and wellbeing.**

Real democracy is living democracy respecting the freedom of all beings, including humans to evolve in diversity, integrity, health, wellbeing and freedom from harm. Living democracy is participatory and grows from the ground up, from the inside out.

It grows through Swaraj, Self-rule, Self Organisation.

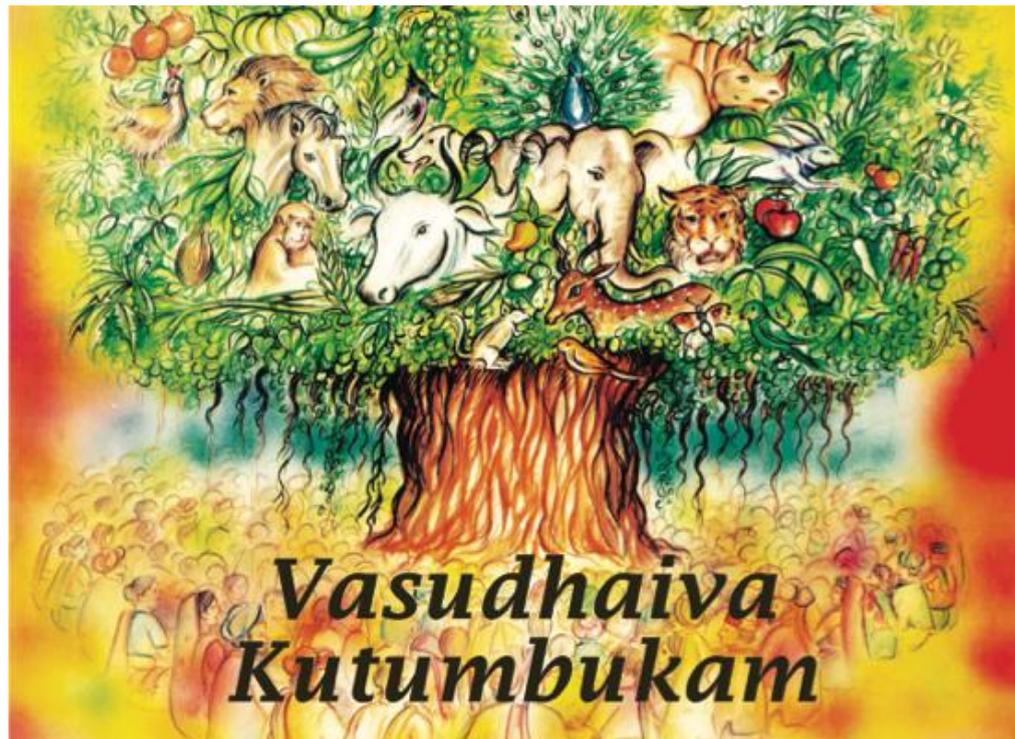
We are shaping a future of interconnected freedom by creating alternatives to Corporate Control over our Food System. We are creating Living Democracy beginning with food democracy.

In a globalized world, what we eat and what we wear, or whether we eat or not is being decided by a handful of giant corporations and billionaires who are only looking at their profits. Profits are made by destroying regenerative local circular economies and imposing extractive economies which deepen hunger, poverty, unemployment, and diseases and undermine our democratic and constitutional rights. To regenerate our food and agriculture, our ecology and economy, our health and wellbeing, we are reclaiming and regenerating our democracy. Real democracy grows from the bottom up. Hind Swaraj grows from Gram Swaraj, Gram Swaraj grows from Mahila Anna Swaraj, an Earth Centred, and Women Centered Food and Agriculture system. We are sovereign Earth Citizens conscious of our duties to the earth and society, and our rights to food, health, work and freedom.

We are growing living democracy through caring and sharing - our seeds, our knowledge, our local cultures. We are growing living democracy by cultivating community. We are growing living democracy by reclaiming our commons.

Healthy food is the currency of health and life, and can overcome the rift created by capitalist patriarchy, between humans and the Earth, the city and the country, between producers and consumers. When consumers make conscious choices for the earth, farmers and their health they become part of the earth community, a food community, an Anna Swaraj circle.

Living democracy is cultivated through coproduction, coin vestment. Investment is not only in terms of money. When we invest care and solidarity, we regenerate the earth, her biodiversity, our health and the wellbeing of all. Each community can create local circular economies through creating Local living democracies (Jaiv Panchayat) based on participation, care for the commons and the community, and protection and rights of the last person (sarvodaya). Living democracies support living economies so the wellbeing of all is at the centre of concern – “*Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah*”. Extinction is not inevitable. The power of love and compassion, of caring and sharing has proven to us that the power to create in nonviolent power is a deeper, more resilient, more lasting power than the power to destroy.



Women exercise their power and autonomy when they make decisions about the seeds they save and use, the agriculture systems they use, the crops they grow, the food they eat. Women’s Bija Swaraj, Women’s Anna Swaraj, Women’s Gyan Swaraj, Women’s Arthik Swaraj are elements of Women centered Swaraj.

Seed by seed, community by community from our local Living Democracies, we are sowing the seeds for an Earth Democracy, to live in peace and wellbeing as one Earth Family- Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam.

# Women are Shaping a Self Reliant, Food Sovereign, Atma Nirbhar Jaivik Bharat

Women Farmers are at the heart of creating a Self Reliant, *Atma Nirbhar* Jaivik Bharat based on Seed Sovereignty (Bija Swaraj), Food Sovereignty (Anna Swaraj) Knowledge Sovereignty (Gyan Swaraj) Economic Sovereignty (Arthik Swaraj).

Education and research .Article 28 refers to marketers and fairs. Article 5 refers to local government. “Earth Rising, Women Rising” was drafted by women farmers of Mahila Anna Swaraj through a participatory, bottom up process, during the COVID emergency and the COVID lockdown. The practice and knowledge of women farmers has enabled us to face multiple shocks and emerge stronger. It has evolved on the principles self organisation, diversity and decentralisation which allowed local communities to have resilience in times of the emergency, and are the principles on which India’s ecological civilisation and the Indian Constitution is based.

Mahila Anna Swaraj paves the path to meet the SDG goals, specially

**SDG 1** to End Poverty in all its forms everywhere

**SDG 2** End Hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

**SDG 3** Ensure Healthy Lives and promote Well Being for all at all ages

**SDG 4** Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all women and girls

The *Mahila Anna Swaraj Movement of Women Farmers for Seed Food and Health Sovereignty* endorses the 2008 Draft Policy on Women in Agriculture of the National Commission on Women and call on the Government to implement it keep in view the constitution obligation of the state to ensure the Right to Food and Right to life of all its citizens.

All government policies related to Agriculture, Food, Health, Nutrition must include the objectives of:

- *Recognising that most farmers are Women*
- *Recognising that Seed and Land Rights and Sovereignty of Women farmers are the foundation of Household and National Food Sovereignty*
- *Recognising women’s indigenous knowledge as the basis of seed and food*
- *Sovereignty, and as solutions to the multiple crises we face, protecting, promoting and upgrading through appropriate training programmes traditional knowledge in agriculture, livestock breeding, fisheries, growing of medicinal plants etc. possessed by women;*
- *Making women’s indigenous agroecological knowledge the basis of a transition from an industrial agriculture model which is degrading the environment and people’s health to a agroecological regenerative agriculture which regenerates natural resources and people’s health.*

- *Making food and agriculture nutrition sensitive, and shifting from nutritionally empty monocultures to nutritionally rich biodiverse systems*
- *Recognising that women farmers participate in a diversity of Markets from local Haats, to Regional Mandis and national markets*
- *Ensuring that women's artisanal healthy food processing is not subjected to industrial pseudo safety standards, and women and women's groups create self reliant systems of food safety which protect our food heritage, women's livelihoods and community health.*
- *Making a transition from industrial extractive globalised economies which have reduced food to a commodity, increase the profits of seed corporations agribusiness corporations, trade and commerce corporations, and the junk food industry to circular, regenerative local food economies to address the triple crisis of the ecological emergency, the livelihood emergency and the health emergency.*
- *Ensuring women's control over seed for increasing diversity, nutrition and climate resilience women's access to and control over resources, namely land including land rights, water, pasture/forest/biodiversity resources including seed, fodder, fuel and raw materials for artisan products, to address their labour and livelihood issues, recognizing single women such as widowed, abandoned, separated, unmarried women in women-headed rural households as well as other women in all rural households as farmers/agricultural workers and giving them equal wages for equal work as well as equal access to all benefits that may accrue to farmers/agricultural workers,*
- *Safeguarding the food security of the country by ensuring minimum support prices and other incentives for primary producers and at the same time, by providing sufficient foodgrains good healthy food at affordable prices for all, so that malnutrition particularly among women and children may be eliminated,*
- *To ensure that displacement of women and children or any loss of women's livelihood for reasons of development does not take place without the explicit consent of concerned women as well as men, and without acceptable and viable alternative livelihood being provided for them,*
- *To see that all laws such as the Recognition of Forest Rights Act, 2007, the Food Safety Act and the Bio-diversity Act etc. are formulated/ amended and implemented in a way that recognizes the interests of women as food experts, food producers and primary producers.*

## **WOMEN'S POLICY PRIORITIES**

Towards a women centred agriculture policy for protection of the earth, farmers livelihoods and people's health

- a) Since it is women's collective knowledge and expertise embodied in seeds and biodiversity, there should be no patents or IPR monopolies on seeds. Article 3j of India's Patent laws which prohibits patents on animals, plants and seeds should be defended from corporate attacks. The Plant Variety Protection and Farmers Rights Act should recognise the important role women farmers play as conservers, breeders, producers and distributors of food. The TRIPS Agreement of WTO must be reviewed from a gender perspective and the mandatory review that should have been undertaken in 1999 should be completed. New bilateral and multilateral agreements should exclude patents on seeds, and include recognition of women farmers rights as breeders.
- b) Food is a human right, not a commodity. The PDS system needs to be strengthened and decentralised, with women's household food security as the foundation. The PDS systems needs a guaranteed MSP and public procurement at diverse levels, from the local to the national, with each level empowered in terms of rights and resources. Trade and technology policies must protect the environment, livelihoods and public health and nutrition and knowledge of women in agriculture. The Agreement on Agriculture of the WTO (AOA) must be reviewed with a gender perspective.
- c) Agriculture and trade policy needs to be guided by the objectives of sustainability, livelihood and income security, and food security, nutrition and health. These objectives also serve the interests of women.
- d) Livelihood and income security creates the imperative to protect agriculture from dumping of artificially cheap subsidized products. These needs reintroduction of QRs (Quantitative Restrictions). The right to countries to protect special products, and introduce Special Safeguard Measures must be used to protect the livelihoods and incomes of women in agriculture. The Covid crisis has revealed how a wasteful ever expanding agribusiness model which needs limitless supply of commodities for biofuel, animal feed and nutritionally empty food leads to invasion into forests and emergence of pandemics and disease epidemics. Industrially grown and processed foods have also contributed to the chronic disease epidemic. Local, biodiverse, ecological small farms grow more nutrition and provide more healthy food.

- e) Women's work in agro processing is both an important source of livelihoods and important source of safe and culturally diverse foods. Food safety laws designed to destroy household and community based agro processing need to be changed. The Sanitary and Phyto Sanitary (SPS) Agreement of WTO and the FSSAI standard must be reviewed with women's livelihoods and expertise of agro processing in focus. Women's Self organisation in upholding our rich indigenous food traditions and providing healthy, safe food to their families and communities must be recognised and respected.
- f) Women's knowledge and productive roles in agriculture need to be recognised, Biodiversity based Organic farming based on Agroecology and women's indigenous knowledge need to be promoted to decrease health hazards from toxic chemicals, and avoid the drain of scarce family incomes to pay for unnecessary chemicals which is the primary reason for farmers debt and farmers suicides while increasing the production of diverse nutritious food for all.

Diversity of crops ensures balanced nutrition throughout the year.

To address the climate and health emergency, we have to reduce the heavy ecological footprint of the industrial food economy patterns that are destroying the earth's biodiversity and destabilizing her climate systems, and increase the heart print, head print and handprint of the economy to regenerate the earth and society. Through our heads, hearts and hands we are creating a Self Reliant Jaivik Bharat, an India free of hunger, disease and waste, an India rich in the diversity of her food cultures.

Diversity is the Hindustan Way.

The seeds of a Self Reliant, *Atma Nirbhar Bharat* lie in an *Anna Nirbhar Bharat*, a Food Sovereign India based on Seed Sovereignty (Bija Swaraj), Food Sovereignty (Anna Swaraj) Knowledge Sovereignty (Gynan Swaraj) Economic Sovereignty (Arthik Swaraj) in the hands of women. A future of a food Sovereign, Food Secure, Livelihood Secure India lies in shifting from globalised linear extractive economies based on nonrenewable fossil and mineral resources, piracy of our knowledge and biodiversity, and extraction of the wealth we create through our work to circular, regenerative biodiversity economies based on biodiversity, cultural diversity, people's ability to create and produce real wealth, circulate it in society for the wellbeing of all by strengthening community, solidarity, cooperation, compassion.

Principles of ecological and social justice guide our practices to take back our seeds, food agriculture, knowledge, economies and democracies and create Seed Sovereignty, Food Sovereignty, Knowledge Sovereignty, Economic Sovereignty We are laying the foundations for food sovereign communities and regions and country. We are creating an *Atma Nirbar Jaivik Bharat*, a Food Sovereign, livelihood Secure India free of hunger, debt and farmers suicides, beginning with Self Reliant and Sovereign individuals, households, villages and regions.