



Nature-Positive Farming  
& Wholesome Foods Foundation (N+3F)



# NATURE-POSITIVE FARMING & WHOLESOME FOODS FOUNDATION (N+3F)

ANNUAL REPORT  
2023-24



## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	01
<b>Progress during 2023-24</b>	01
<b>1 Strengthening and broad basing the partnership</b>	01
<b>2 Building the capacity of the staff</b>	02
<b>3 Developing and Deepening N+FFS Program Components</b>	
3.1 Facilitating The Adoption Of N+FFS By A Large Number Of Farmers	03
3.2 Supporting Development of N+FFS Regional/Territorial Value Chains	06
3.3 Developing and Promoting N+FFS Guarantee Systems (NGS)	09
3.4 Carrying out user-friendly research and policy advocacy	11
<b>Acknowledgement</b>	

# NATURE-POSITIVE FARMING & WHOLESOME FOODS FOUNDATION (N+3F)

## ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

### Introduction

#### 1. About N+3F

The Nature-Positive Farming & Wholesome Foods Foundation (N+3F) is a Section 8 non-profit organization promoting Nature-Positive Farming and Food Systems (N+FFS) at scale across India. The N+3F was initiated on March 13, 2021 and it builds on the mandate of the NPM (Non-Pesticidal Management of agriculture) Network to promote pesticide-free, sustainable agriculture and food systems. N+3F has been collaborating with 25 partners, working closely with about 50,000 smallholder farmers on about 62,000 acres, in different agroecological regions of Central, Eastern and Southern India. More details on N+3F can be seen at [www.np3f.in](http://www.np3f.in).

#### 2. Focus Areas for the Year 2022-23

1. Strengthening and broad basing the partnership with CSOs and other organisations with similar mandates
2. Developing and deepening the program components
3. Mobilizing resources

### Progress during 2023-24

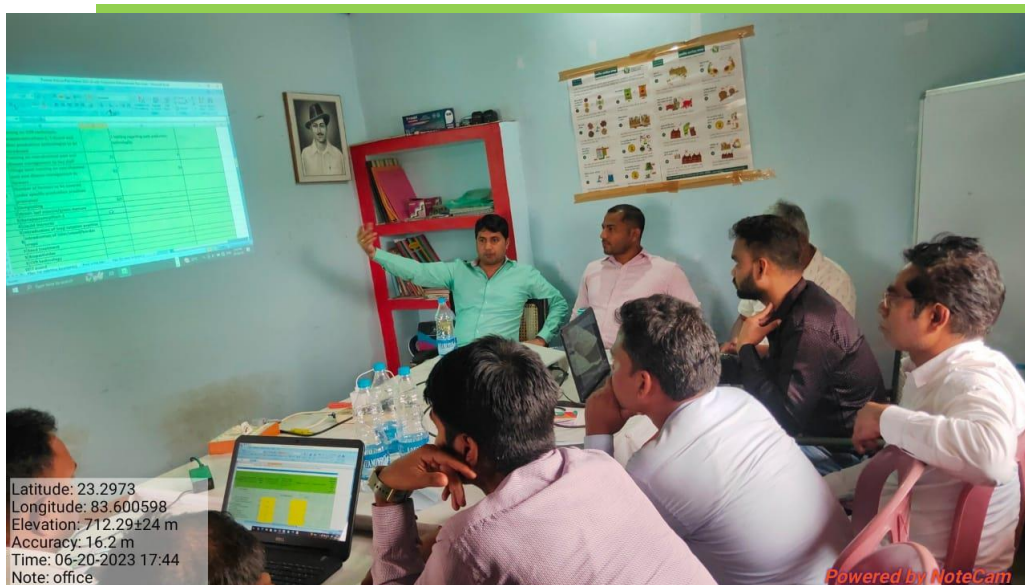
#### 1. Strengthening and broad basing the partnership

During the reporting period, N+3F has identified and built working relationships with the various partners, as described below:

##### 1.1 Intensifying partnerships with existing implementation partners

Annual plan process was facilitated for 21 partners on a one-to-one basis by N+3F team. A one-day Annual Planning Workshop was organised with the core team of each partner. The core team was oriented about the Nature-positive production cluster approach and planning, Key Production Practices and new production technologies as preparation for the formulation of the annual plan. Efforts were taken to focus on the following as part of the annual plan of partners: (i) strengthening the basics of nature-positive agricultural program, (ii) scaling up the operations and (iii) deepening of program interventions. Partners attempted to creatively integrate the nature-positive agriculture program with the existing projects and initiatives.





*Fig. 1: Annual plan workshop with core team of SGVS, Chhattisgarh*

With the SEWA, Lokadrusti, GSS and MJVS, collaboration was strengthened through signing an MoU. A note on areas of engagement with SPS was developed and shared with the SPS team for discussion.

## 1.2 Building partnerships with new implementation partners

- The N+3F Team visited People Science Institute, Green Foundation, Pragati and VIEWS to build rapport with the team members, understand their nature-positive agriculture initiatives and identify the joint interventions.



*Fig. 2: Visit to community Seed bank and TRC of PSI*



*Fig. 3: Discussion at Pragati Koraput office*



*Fig. 4: VIEWS bioformulation marketing outlet*

- A MoU was signed with the Green Foundation, Madhya Pradesh, Pragati, Odisha and VIEWS, Odisha for collaboration.
- Discussions were held with Indian Grameen Services, Deepak Foundation and Amrudha Welfare Society, Himachal Pradesh Natural Farming Project for exploring partnership.

## 2. Building the capacities of the staff

N+3F invested in building the capacities of the staff through following activities:

- An exposure visit was organised to sustainable agriculture interventions of Centre for

Sustainable Agriculture at Andhra Pradesh covering the package of practices promoted, farm service centres, certification systems, FPO value chain interventions and carbon credit project.

- Interaction was organised with agencies providing carbon credit services and with an agency offering support for NGOs in initiating carbon credit projects for better understanding of the carbon credit mechanisms.

Besides the above, internal trainings were organised on the following topics: i) N+FFS Production Cluster development, ii) Internal NPM Guarantee Manual preparation and iii) certification procedures. Furthermore, the team members were capacitated through their engagement in developing training materials and offering training on new themes like mode of action of bio-formulations, agroecological weed management, etc.

A manual on human development policy was developed for N+3F with the support of a consultant.

### 3. Developing and deepening N+FFS Program Components

#### 3.1 Facilitating the adoption of N+FFS by a large number of farmers

Based on the needs of the partners, focus was given to the following two aspects:

1. *Facilitating the adoption of 'total system interventions' by focusing on Key Production Practices, and context-specific package of practices.*
2. *Promoting viable production clusters by building capacity on saturation approach, workflow, organisation structure, MIS, etc.*

Initiatives taken in this direction include:

##### 3.1.1 Development of resources on Nature-Positive Farming

###### a) Resource documents

- **A comprehensive training manual for orientation on Nature-Positive Farming and Food Systems covering the following**
  - a) A detailed note on Total System Interventions** at farm and landscape level- The English version developed was translated into Hindi.
  - b) An operational note on Key Production Practices (KPPs) and grading of farmers** for improving their adoption of KPPs and recognizing well performing farmers; [Pictorial illustration of KPPs](#) was developed.
  - c) A detailed note on Nature-positive Production Cluster** along with a template for planning of Nature-positive Production Cluster interventions.
- **Operational note on**
  - a) Assessment of Bio-Resource Centres and planning operations** for a crop

season.

- b) **Promoting a cadre of resource farmers** for strengthening the nature-positive agriculture program.
- **Resource document on**
  - a) **Do-It-Yourself (DIY) bioformulations** with a detailed chapter on their ingredients and mode of action building on the available research results.
  - b) **Agroecological weed management.**

### 3.1.2 Capacity building of partners

- a) Focused onsite efforts were made to educate the staff of partners on Total System Interventions, Key Production Practices and grading of farmers by the beginning of the kharif season. By the end of the kharif season, three partners were visited to help them try out scoring of farmers in the field. Partners in turn organised 375 trainings at the farmers-level on location specific POPs.
- b) Partners were nudged to shift towards Production Cluster approach for promotion of nature-positive farming and food systems. An orientation was organised for the team of each partner. Later they were facilitated for preparing an action plan using the template which involved defining the production clusters in their working area and planning the related interventions. Related to this, promotion of farmers group in a compact area/patch of land was encouraged among the partners.



*Fig. 5: Training to MJVS team on KPP and scoring of farmers*

- c) The following online training sessions were organised during the reporting period:



- Soil health management
- Preparation and use of Ganajeewamurtham Type 2 and CVR Technology, and adoption of the Dabholkar method of green manuring
- Deploying Do-It-Yourself Growth Promoters for enhancing crop performance
- Innovations in weed management
- Agroecological weed management
- Agroecological pest management in cauliflower, tomato, chilli and brinjal
- Village-level Technology Resource Centre by the People Science Institute
- Orientation to Krishi Mitra Software by SPS
- Experience sharing on promoting BRCs of different scales by the Green Foundation and on BRC management by Abhishek, an entrepreneur from Andhra Pradesh

### 3.1.3 Implementation support

Need-based support was offered in the on-field implementation of the following interventions by the partners:

- 1 Introduction of the FFS method by SPS in its working locations.
- 2 Demonstration of CVR Technology for pest control by a few partners.
- 3 Initiation of three small-scale Bio-Resource Centres by two partners.
- 4 The Bio-Resource Centres (BRCs) of CYSD, SEWA, GSS and MGVS were visited to assess their performance and offer suggestions for their improvement.



*Fig. 6: Assessment of BRC supported by SEWA, Odisha*

Some of the results of these initiatives include,

- **Adoption of pesticide-free agriculture** by 64069 farmers in 41691 acres during the Kharif 2023 and 32894 farmers in 19642 acres during rabi 2023 season in the production clusters managed by 19 partners.
- **Initiation of new Production Clusters:** Harsha Trust has initiated a pesticide-free agriculture program in 12 production clusters with the support of N+3F. During the Kharif season, they have enrolled 15,783 farmers and in rabi season they have enrolled 5,327 farmers. SEWA, GSS and MJVS extended their pesticide-free agriculture program to new production clusters.
- **Adoption of key production practices (KPPs):** Sixteen partners ensured the adoption of KPPs by farmers. Among the KPPs, seed treatment, the use of liquid manure and biopesticides were adopted largely by the farmers across the partner locations.
- **Introduction of appropriate technologies:** Ghanajeewamrutha 2, T guard and diverse



cropping systems (with inclusion of intercrops, mixed cropping, border crop and trap crops) were adopted to an extent in many partner locations. Lokadrusti introduced nipping in redgram, MJVS introduced waste decomposer and four partners introduced CVR technology.



*Fig. 7: Application of CVR technology in Brinjal crop*



*Fig. 8: Formation of thin soil layer on leaf due to application of soil solution*

- **Supply of bioformulations by BRCs:** A range of bioformulations were supplied to 48065 farmers in nearly 123 villages by the 75 BRCs set up by the partners with the support of N+3F. Gaining from the experience of running the BRCs supported by N+3F, a few partners like SIDI, CYSD, SEWA, SSS, Lokadrusti and JMA have setup new BRC units on their own with support from various agencies.

## 3.2 Supporting development of N+FFS regional/territorial value chains

Focus was given to the following two aspects in the second year:

1. Strengthening FPOs
2. Supporting FPOs and CSOs to move up the value chain for pesticide-free foods

Initiatives taken in this direction include,

### 3.2.1 Development of resources on Nature-Positive value chain development

Translation of the following two manuals in Hindi was done:

- i. Training Manual for Improving Quality of Grains during Harvest, Storage and Handling
- ii. Guidance manual on non-chemical management of pests in storage, processing and handling of foods

### 3.2.2 Support for formation and strengthening of FPOs

- a) **Exposure cum training on FPO formation and management for four days:** Two such events were organised for five NGOs in collaboration with SPS and RRPPCL at SPS campus covering i) overview of FPO, ii) statutory compliances under the

Companies Act and iii) managing an FPO with the focus on human resources and finance.



*Fig. 9: Training on FPO formation & strengthening organised with SPS and RRPPCL at Bagli*

- b) **Support to PSI:** Two orientations were given to PSI staff on steps in FPO formation, role of different stakeholders, benefits from FPO formation, registration process, etc.
- c) **Support to GSS:** A two days training program was organized to GSS team as they were planning to form new FPO in Satna district covering i) purpose of FPO, ii) roles of FPO members, Farmers Interest Groups, BODs, CEO and GSS staff and iii) possible business opportunities.

Gaining from the support offered by the N+3F, PSI, GSS and MJVS have applied for financial support to form FPO; Besides these, exploratory discussions were held with VIEWS and Harsha Trust on strengthening of FPOs; VIEWS has sought support for business plan preparation for FPO.

### 3.2.3 Capacity building on value chain development

- a) **Training to NCNF partners:**  
N+3F built the capacities of key staff of 25 NGOs in Madhya Pradesh engaged in promoting sustainable agriculture on ensuring high quality agricultural produce on-farm, aggregation, storage and handling and non-chemical storage pest management as part of the training organised by National Coalition for Natural Farming (NCNF), Madhya Pradesh.



*Fig. 10: Training on improving produce quality during harvest, aggregation, storage and handling*

- b) Two online training sessions were organised on 'Post harvest management in Non-perishables' covering Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for harvesting, storage at different levels, transportation, drying and sampling.

### 3.2.4 Implementation support

- a) Setting up processing units:

- SSGVS, Chhattisgarh, was supported with a mini oil processing machine by N+3F for processing mustard. Onsite training was provided on installation and running of the machine.



*Fig.11: Inauguration of oil processing unit by SSGVS, Chattisgarh*

- GSS, Madhya Pradesh, was supported for procurement and installation of the millet processing unit.
- b) Follow-up was done with the partners for assisting them in running the processing units supported earlier.
  - c) Facilitation was done to build linkage between partners and the buyers of pesticide-free produce.
  - d) AJSA, Odisha, was supported for the vending cart to market pesticide-free vegetables in their working region. Follow-up support was given to Lokadrusti, MJVS and AJSA for planning and operating the vending cart.
  - e) RRPPCL was supported to develop customized Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
  - f) Partners were informed about the relevant funding opportunities for building value chains for pesticide-free produce like IFAD call for Grant for Agroecology Program, Harit Bharat Fund, FAO call for Expression of Interest to GEF-FOLUR project, etc. and support was given for some of them in proposal preparation.



Some of the results include:

- **Strengthening of FPOs** by the partners in terms of increase in number of shareholders and share capital and increase in turn over; improvement in meeting compliances; two partners have got FSSAI license and one has applied for the same.
- **Adoption of hermetic storage technology** by SEWA on their own.
- **Building working relationship with buyers of pesticide-free produce** like Safe Harvest Private Ltd., Heart & Hills, etc. by the partners
- **Initiation of bulk marketing** of unprocessed produce by 10 partners
  - Marketing of pesticide-free chilly by SEWA: N+3F facilitated the procurement of pesticide-free chilly by ITC from SEWA, Odisha. ITC provided packaging material, and met the residue testing and transportation cost for the produce.
- **Initiation of direct marketing** of pesticide-free produce in the local area using vending carts by Lokadrusti, AJSA
- **Marketing of processed pesticide-free products** by MJVS, SEWA, and GSS to the tune of 1305 quintals. Partners also used the cart for participating in exhibitions thereby bringing more visibility to pesticide-free produce.
- **Mobilisation of resources:** One of the partners was shortlisted for Grant for Agroecology Program and another mobilized loan from SAMUNATI; five of the partners have approached their funding agency for marketing support.



Fig. 12: Marketing of pesticide-free chilly to ITC by FPO promoted by SEWA, Odisha



Fig. 13: Marketing of pesticide-free produce in the local area by AJSA

### 3.3 Developing and Promoting N+FFS Guarantee Systems (NGS)

Focus was given to the following two aspects in the second year:

1. Facilitating the establishment of Internal Control System, (ICS) for pesticide-free agriculture and foods
2. Strengthening certification services for pesticide-free agriculture and food chains

Initiatives taken in this direction include,



### 3.3.1 Development of resources on certification systems

The following resources were developed during the reporting period:

- a) **A template for Internal NPM Guarantee Program Manual** was developed for building the capacity of the partners and streamlining their group certification efforts. This manual was translated into Hindi language for ease of use by the partners.
- b) **Reference Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for food business operators** developed.

### 3.3.2 Support for the initiation of Internal NPM Guarantee Systems (INGS)

Continuing the efforts of the last year, N+3F undertook the following efforts to build the capacity of the partners for initiating INGS in their working locations:

- Few training sessions on Internal NPM Guarantee System and preparation of a manual for the same were organised for interested partners; As a follow-up one-to-one support was given to 13 partners for INGS manual preparation. Availing the support from N+3F, SPS, SGVS, Adhikar, SSS, JMA, BGS, CYSD, Lokadrusti, Janasahajya, MJVS, GSS and AJSA prepared the INGS manual for their organisation.
- INGS implementation training conducted for Central India and Eastern India partners.
- Onsite training cum demonstration of internal auditing were organised for SPS team. One class room and one online training sessions were organised for four Eastern India partners (SEWA, Lokadrusti, JMA and SSS).
- Training offered to RRPPCL and Nandini Agro on developing Standard Operating Procedures for their operations.

### 3.3.3 Strengthening certification services for pesticide-free agriculture and foods

#### 1. Development of documents

- A set of documents including Standards, Standard Operating Procedures, Work Instructions, Forms and other documents needed for initiating external certification of individual producers, large area certification (farmers group operating in default pesticide-free areas), wild collection, processors, traders, and input suppliers were developed.
- Fee structure was developed for group certification and processor and shared with potential clients.

#### 2. Promotion of certification services

- Flyers on certifying [producer organisations](#) and [food business operators](#) were developed and shared widely through website and social media.
- Orientation on external certification was offered to 12 Eastern India partners.
- Pre-certification orientation offered for RRPPCL and Nandhini Agro.

### 3. Offering certification services

- Group certification under Zero Pesticide Use Agriculture and Foods Standards (ZPUAFS) was offered to SPS, SGVS and SSS and certification is in progress with four operators.
- Food Business Operator certification was offered to RRPPCL and work is in progress for Nandhini Agro.



*Fig. 12: Inspection of RRPPCL, Bagli, Madhya Pradesh*

## 3.4 Carrying out user-friendly research and policy advocacy

Some of the initiatives taken under this program component include:

### 3.4.1 Action research on N+FFS

The following need-based action research initiatives were taken up to advance the N+FFS interventions of partners:

- Trials on the adoption of the NPM approach in garden land-based chilli cultivation in Bhikangaon, Madhya Pradesh, with SPS; these trials indicated that chilli cultivation is not only feasible using NPM practices but also leads to significant savings in the cost of cultivation, leading to a higher net profit for the farmers.
- A pilot on digital MIS and traceability of pesticide-free agriculture and foods in



*Fig. 13: Pilot on adoption of NPM approach in chilli by SPS at Bhikangaon, Madhya Pradesh*



collaboration with four partners to develop a suitable MIS meeting the requirements for better implementation of the agricultural program and certification.

- c) Review of Krishi Mitra Software, a MIS software developed and used by SPS, for improving the data captured and its functionality.
- d) Exploration of different sustainable agriculture interventions:
  - i) Carbon credit: Efforts were taken to understand the modalities of carbon credit initiatives in agriculture through interaction with service providers, a facilitating agency and a CSO enrolled in the scheme. As it was found to require high investment and scale of operations, the piloting was postponed.
  - ii) Farmer service centre: Exploration was done to understand different model of farmers service centres implemented by PSI and CSA; piloting will be taken up in the near future.
- e) Concept notes and interview schedules developed for the following research studies:
  - 1) Study of the process of transition of farmers to Pesticide-Free Agriculture
  - 2) Study on the results of transition to Pesticide-free Agriculture
  - 3) Periodical monitoring of transition to pesticide-free agriculture

### 3.4.2 Documentation and dissemination of salient practices

- An article on the experience of N+3F titled "[Small scale Bio-Resource Centres For better adoption of agroecological practices](#)" was accepted by LEISA for publication in the June 2023 issue.
- N+3F contributed to the online consultation "New Food System Integrated Program to support the transformation of food systems into nature-positive, resilient, and pollution free system" organised by the Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition (FSN Forum) of FAO.
- N+3F contributed to the article 'Five reasons why plant health and agroecology are inextricably linked' developed by the Agroecology Coalition, which was published on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter.
- N+3F contributed to the "[Call for experiences, best practices and scalable solutions for the integration of biodiversity into agriculture](#)" organised by FSN Forum of FAO.
- An article titled 'Certifying pesticide-free agriculture and foods, a crucial step for the wider availability of safe and wholesome foods' was developed based on the experience so far and shared with a few publishers.
- A short video on pesticide-free agriculture and food systems initiative of MJVS is being developed by Green Hub.
- Additional resources were added to the 'Resources section' of the website.



## Acknowledgement

We are deeply thankful to Caring Friends for their continuous support for the past three years, which has been profoundly helpful in building the team, strengthening the partnership, positioning the organisation and shaping up the program components. We are also profusely thankful to Shri Nimesh and Shri Ashish Kacholia for their generous support during the reporting period. We also acknowledge with gratitude the contributions and continuous support of our partners to our joint initiatives on promoting nature-positive farming and food systems on a large scale.