

BEST PRACTICE 2

1. Title of the Practice:

Harithakedaram- Promoting Green Initiatives for Environmental Sustainability

2. Objectives of the Practice

- Propagate the message of Organic Farming among the stakeholders of the College.
- Sensitize the students to contribute towards the social goal of preserving nature.
- Render awareness to the students to engage in environmentally sustainable initiatives.
- Offer a means to share the knowledge bank of senior experienced farmers with the youth.
- Provide practical training to students in traditional farming techniques.

3. The Context

Established in the year 1964 to cater to the holistic development of the rural agrarian youth of central Travancore, Deva Matha College Kuravilangad has always remained committed to the well-being of society through pro-environmental initiatives. The evidences of adverse climatic changes occurring in the state over the last decade has prompted the college to think in the direction of a nature centred policy. The harrowing floods that hit Kerala in its entirety in 2018 and 2019 have underscored the relevance of a commitment of this kind. In the larger picture, the unprecedented climate changes and the depletion of natural resources at the global level have resulted in an imperative sensitization of the global community to seek measures to protect the environment. Providing waste management awareness to students was felt as the need of the hour. Joining hands with the Subhiksha Keralam project of the Government, the College decided to make the students self-reliant in growing vegetables and crops. To implement organic farming initiatives the college decided to gain inputs from the alumni and the local indigenous farmers.

4. The Practice

Harithakedaram is a multifaceted project focused on developing a culture of sustainable environmental practices through the coordinated efforts of various departments, clubs and forums. The following are a few chief initiatives worth mentioning.

- **Sustainable Green Campus Clean Village Initiative**
- **Model organic paddy cultivation** on a 2-acre land
- **Model vegetable gardens** in the adopted villages, LP and UP schools of Kuravilangad
- Promotion of **protein-rich diet** in **adopted villages**
- **Hands-on training** in **organic farming**
- **Waste Management Project** that includes Separation & Segregation of
 - Plastic Waste- Green Army Panchayath
 - Degradable Waste- Biogas Plant
 - Portable waste management system
 - Training in adopted E-waste
 - **E-waste management**- Regular electronic waste collection drives, selling them to external recycling agencies.
- The college maintains a **Polyhouse** to engage in Precision Farming. The vegetables cultivated are peas, Salad cucumber and Tomato.
- Engages in promoting a **clean environment** by striving for enhancing the cleanliness of the surroundings.
- **Rainwater harvesting** to preserve water to be used at times of water scarcity.
- **Save the River** programmes-**Ini Njan Ozhukatte**
- **Awareness programmes** for sensitizing students on preserving nature and planting trees.
- **Going Digital** by reducing printed documents following a policy of no paper is the greenest paper.
- **The energy audit** is conducted to find opportunities to cut down consumption.
- **Training in LED Bulb making** for the stakeholders

- **Solar Energy promotion- Use of renewable energy** through the installation of solar panels.
- The College conducts **Green Audit** occasionally to ensure adherence to environment-friendly practices.
- **Add on course on Organic Farming** is given free of cost to all students with an opportunity to learn the basic aspects of organic farming and experience it by themselves.

5. Evidence of Success

The efforts of the College in promoting environmental sustainability have been taken up diligently by the students and the community. The Organic paddy farming was a great success and as a result more farmers were inspired to rely on organic methods in the community. In view of the various projects to promote Organic Farming the institution was honoured with *Jaivakalalaya Puraskaram*. The College has a well-maintained polyhouse. The students were promoted to cultivate kitchen gardens in their households during the lockdown period of the pandemic and were well assisted with webinars on farming techniques. Training in Mushroom farming helped many stakeholders to have access to a greener source of protein rich food at a very economical price point. The incorporation of nutritious, organic diet helped many students to develop better immunity and lessen complications associated with lifestyle diseases.

To avoid the excessive use of print and paper materials the college has shifted completely to a Smart -IT mode of communication. The Waste Management mechanism of the college is a successful example and is followed by many households in the adopted villages. The regular E-Waste collection campaigns organised by the college have spread awareness on the environmental hazards of indiscriminate dumping of e- waste. Exemplary practices of this kind effectively lead to a set of cleaner and greener environmental practices in the local community of Kuravilangad. The College is a recognized SESREC institution. Suchitwa Mission awarded an A grade for the energy, environment and green initiatives pursued by the College.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

The major hindrance faced in the attainment of fruitful results was the want of time for cultivation. Climatic changes also affect the proper growth of crops. Making the students conscious of waste management and environmental protection required a collective and tedious effort. Some students were not interested in following the organic farming and as it was not financially viable. Greener practices can only be strengthened through proper research and by adopting sustainable mechanisms. The plastic waste management plants put in place by the local administrative bodies struggled to process the vast volume of waste brought to them.



Principal
Deva Matha College
Kuravilangad - 686 633

