

## **NOTE on e-Krishi**

"A market - fed Agricultural Initiative through IT - enabled Agribusiness Centre in Kerala" (Commonly known as e-krishi) is a project of the KSITM by UNDP/NISG. The vision of the project is to "establish a connected farmers community through out Kerala who have access to information on Market Demand, Prices, Good Agricultural Practices, quality agricultural inputs supported by a technology enabled transaction platform that facilitates all their off line activities." The project was piloted at Malappuram District of Kerala. The project is being piggy backed on the Akshaya ( CSCs) and has the active support of the Department of Agriculture, Kerala Agriculture University Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management, Krishi Kendra, CPCRI, Commodity Boards etc.

Activities done includes :

- Development of e-Krishi portal on Java and MySQL.. This is the the platform used by farmers and business community for posting their products and requirements with a lot of features..
- Upgrading Akshaya Centres as e-Krishi Centres
- Formation of Bhoomi Club
- Toll Free Call Centre
- Integration with back end processes and Capacity Building Programmes

The project was very successful and between March 2008 to Feb 2009, the amount for which transactions were conducted was Rs.12,04,72,228 which gave an additional profit of Rs.2,71,04,145 to the farmers. Though the e-Krishi project sanctioned to KSITM by UNDP/NISG was only for Malappuram District noticing the success of the project and the benefits to the farmers the project was rolled out in Kannur District during October 2007. Subsequently during 2008-09 the project was also extended to more districts vis. Kasaragod, Kozhikode, Ernakulam and Kollam with the active participation of the local bodies. Detailed project plan to roll out to all districts is under the consideration of the Government of Kerala.

During 2008-09 financial year 126 Panchayaths (including 25 from Malappuram) included e-Krishi as one of the projects of the people plan programme. The project has contributed to the change in the mindset of farmers with respect to traditional practices and marketing and opened up a window of opportunities to include new ICT tools for improving quality of agricultural practices.

The experiences gathered during the implementation of e-Krishi as a pilot and now looking for a complete rollout would put before the participants of the workshop issues needed to be addressed like the policy level decisions on technological choices, scalability of the appropriate technology being used, acceptance, capacity building, security aspects etc... for an efficient and effective implementation of initiatives undertaken in the public sector.