

**Consultation on Food Future Initiative project with Farmer's Cooperative Society,
Darjeeling as on 27th May 2020**

Name of the organization: Kanchanzanga Honey and Agro processing Industrial Cooperative Society Ltd., Darjeeling Dist.

Location of the organization: Located in Darjeeling Dist. and extends over 2 blocks - Rangli Rangliot and Pul- Bijanbari Development Block.

State: West Bengal

District: Darjeeling

Block: Rangli Rangliot Development Block, Pul- Bijanbari Development Block

Villages:

- 1) Dabaipani Bhutia Busty
- 2) Bhutia Busty Sumandhura
- 3) Singritam Busty
- 4) Lalung Busty
- 5) Lingding Busty
- 6) Rampuria Forest Busty
- 7) Rampuria Khashmal Busty
- 8) Puboong Busty
- 9) Lamahatta Busty
- 10) Mungpoo Ghorawal Dhura
- 11) Rambhi Forest Busty
- 12) Rangli Hum Busty
- 13) Soreng Busty

The organisation is newly formed under Kanchanzanga Honey and Agro processing Industrial Co-operative Society Ltd. for ***Village Industry Institution***.

Processing activities:

Honey and Agriculture.

Products: Honey, broom, cherry pepper, tomato, tea, cabbage, cauliflowers, squash, mandarin orange, pulses, dairy products, bamboo products etc.

The organisation is formed with 8 members committee and registered as a Co-operative Society with Regd. No 7/MSSME WB 2019 in the name of "Kanchanzanga Honey and Agro processing Industrial Cooperative Society Ltd".

Details of the registered body:

- 1) LB Raut: Chairman
- 2) Puran Khawas: Vice Chairman
- 3) Kiran Rai: Director
- 4) Prem Newar: Director
- 5) Nabin Magar: Director

- 6) Resma Thapa: Director
- 7) Robin Rai: Executive Member
- 8) Prakash Tamang: Executive Member

They have a total of 84 Share holders presently.

Recommendations and feedback from the Cooperative Society for Food Future Initiative Project:

- Study carrying capacity of tourist in this region and formulate guidelines for food tourism. Check and control unplanned tourism.
- Enforce the guidelines so that all Environment Impact Assessments- EIAs parameters are followed properly by all the stakeholders including tourists
- The food future initiative project should encourage farmers to adopt Climate Smart Agriculture system so that it can also deliver mitigation co-benefits, directly through sequestration of carbon in on farm perennials and soils. It therefore holds significant potential in the context of a larger sustainable landscape concept.
- Promote zero waste strategy.
- Training on sustainable harvesting of wild edibles.
- Promote cultivation of climate friendly agroforestry and intercropping for optimum utilization of land and maximum production per unit area.
- Road accessibility, hygiene and hospitable environment to be given most priority. Food safety and hygiene are more important. Site hosting the food experience should be clean and well maintained. It is important to understand the differences in hygiene standards and to include good practices.
- Support for collaboration with premium hotels and travel agencies around Darjeeling, Siliguri and Kolkata.
- Develop online market base with web site. Develop Communication materials to educate the promoters-hoteliers and travel agencies.
- Food tourism should include activities and services that brings an authentic and a memorable experience to the tourist.
- Besides including the local ingredients, focus should also be on demonstrating the customs, cultures, religion and habits of the people related to food. Most of the ethnic foods, both fermented and non-fermented, have therapeutic values and eaten for prevention of illness.
- The tourist should be highlighted about the worth indigenous knowledge they possess, and biological significance and medical values of their foods so that importance of ethnic foods will gain for generation to generation.
- There is a need to add value to food tourism by introducing more activities to the itinerary like a short village walk, harvesting your own food directly from the garden,

cooking classes, interaction with the producers if any i.e honey, dairy, etc will add value to the food project. Develop a day long itinerary for food tourism.

- The activity should be able to provide tourists and travelers something more beyond eating. Learning about the food we eat and our cooking habits will provide a clear understanding and appreciation among the tourist.
- Provide details of the ingredients with its importance in local culture, environment, health etc.
- For food initiative to function well, Capacity building of the host at the rural sites is very important. They should have the culinary abilities, possess a hospitable behavior and good communication skills
- Document and develop a food database on traditional knowledge and practices.
- Develop **rural infrastructure** including marketing links, storages and processing facilities. Agro-processing industries and industries based on resources of the region are extremely important. Development of markets will reduce exploitation by middlemen, and in the process improves livelihoods of people in remote areas by enabling them to market their products at higher prices.
- Post-harvest processing and Value addition with participation in trade fairs, exhibitions should be promoted. There is considerable scope for promoting small-scale, agro-processing units like oil-extraction, and ginger and turmeric processing. The products from this region have a unique quality and texture and there is considerable scope for marketing them all over the world.
- Encourage the formation of **Farmer Producers organisation (FPO)**, Self-Help Groups comprising local fruit, vegetable and flower growers, and to arrange facilities for their training and micro-finance support
- Encourage the practice of water conservation techniques. Improve and strengthen water management systems to overcome prolonged periods of water stress by constructing rain water harvesting structures, installation of community tanks and bench terraces, repairing damaged channels, creating micro irrigation system etc.
- It is also recommended to expand the area under cultivation by bringing under the cultivable waste and fallow land.
- Capacity building and demonstration of making low cost Fodder development. A major limitation in raising dairy cattle is insufficient feed, especially during the dry season. Farmers are very familiar with the use of crop by-products as animal feed, but less familiar with forage conservation. This will enhance the Livestock development of this region which is very essential for input supply of compost and farm yard manure required for growing agriculture crops. Additionally, Milk and Milk product plays an important role in the daily diet of the rural population of Darjeeling Himalayas.
- Encourage production of leguminous fodder crops that require less management systems in a mixed cropping system.
- Develop fodder banks to ensure fodder availability in winters. Undertake mineral mapping in different regions to assess mineral status and accordingly supply specific mineral mixture to farmers.

- Improve cattle sheds so to maintain better hygienic conditions and maintain body temperatures in a warming scenario.
- For preventing bacterial growth and improvement in quality of milk, establish milk cooling facilities at suitable locations.
- Undertake programme to conserve threatened indigenous breeds of livestock, horticulture and agriculture crops.
- Support development of moisture stress resistant organic local seeds and hence develop appropriate infrastructure for storage and seed testing in every location and undertake training of farmers to produce quality seeds that can be certified to minimize dependence on outside / external source.
- Ensure conservation of soil through efficient management of bench terraces and application of organic inputs based on soil test reports.
- Make crop insurance mandatory through Kisan Credit Card and/or encourage taking of crop loans to automatically insure crops.
- Encourage the formation of Farmer Producers organization (**FPO**), Self-Help Groups comprising fruit, vegetable and flower growers, and to arrange facilities for their training and micro-finance support.