

Improving Lives of Small Farmers  
Through  
Revival of Traditional Seeds and Food  
**Activity Report**

October 2019



**Presented by**

**Uttarakhand Jan Jagriti Sansthan**

Supported by

**Himalaya Resources**

**&**

**Wild Geese Foundation**

## Improving Lives of Small Farmers Through Revival of Traditional Seeds and Food

Himalaya Resources and the Wild Geese Foundation supported Himalayan communities through Uttarakhand Jan Jagriti Sansthan (UJJS) team for the revival of traditional Himalayan seeds and food. UJJS has formed a venture of small and marginalized farmers /peasants called “SAMOON” meaning “a gift” to make this mission a reality.

Since 2015 UJJS and its Pan Himalayan Gandhian network organization Himalaya Seva Sangh have been taking small steps to move forward in this direction of supporting and strengthening the mountain communities for the revival of Himalayan “Springs and Seeds”. Friends at Himalaya Resources and the Wild Geese Foundation joined us in strengthening these little initiatives by supporting projects to rejuvenate Himalayan Springs and Seeds.

This support for focusing on the traditional organic Himalayan seeds and food is taking a very positive shape and is boosted by the enthusiastic community response of the people UJJS is working with. Interested people from outside the community have also shown their willingness to join and strengthen this initiative. The SAMOON extension work for marketing / sharing the mountain seeds and food in the metro city of Delhi through the Himalaya Seva Sangh network space is also picking-up well and would do better if more supports and people join this venture.



## Food Center – Mountain Food Connect

UJJS through this venture of SAMOON and the Mountain Food Connect (MFC) has opened up a restaurant to revive and bring back traditional mountain recipes and tastes at Khadi on the Delhi-Rishikesh-Gangotri National high way. MFC has started displaying and creating different recipes made out of traditional Himalayan millets, pulses, species and grains. This Food Connect has successfully started promoting the traditional organic food / recipes made by local traditional farm produces.



A Family enjoying Traditional meals at Mountain Food Connect

The opening of the Mountain Food Connect on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 has got a good public and media response at the local level and is also getting good wishes from people across the country showing willingness to visit and join this venture.

**पारंपरिक बीज और अनाजों को बचाने की जन जागृति संस्थान की अनोखी पहल**

## फास्ट फूड को टक्कर देगा समूण सेंटर

नई दिल्ली, 15 सितम्बर (स.ह.) : पारंपरिक बीज और अनाजों को संरक्षित करने के लिए जन जागृति संस्थान खाड़ी अनोखी पहल करने जा रहा है। ऋषिकेश-चंबा-गंगोत्री हाईवे पर संस्थान पहाड़ का भोजन और स्वाद लोगों और चारधाम यात्रियों तक पहुंचाने के लिए 'समूण-द माउंटेन फूड कनेक्ट' आउटलेट केंद्र स्थापित करेगा। इसका मकसद पारंपरिक लजीज पकवानों को बढ़ावा देना और फास्ट फूड व जंक फूड का विकल्प तैयार करना है।

चंबा क्षेत्र की हेंवलघाटी बीज बचाओ आंदोलन के प्रणेता विजय जड़धारी, प्रसिद्ध पर्यावरणविद् धूम सिंह नेगी, सुदेशा बहन, स्व. कुंवर प्रसून, स्व. प्रताप शिखर जैसे लोगों ने पारंपरिक बीज और अनाज को बचाने की मुहिम चलाई थी। पहाड़ों में पलायन का प्रमुख कारण खेती और उद्यानीकरण

### ■ दशहरे से होगी शुरुआत पेश किए जाएंगे उत्तराखंड के लजीज व्यंजन

में आशातीत सफलता न मिलना है। पहाड़ी उत्पादों झंगोरा, मंडवा, कौणी, चिंगा, चौलाई जैसे अनाजों में प्रचुर मात्रा में पौष्टिक पदार्थ होते हैं। इन फसलों के उत्पादों का प्रसंस्करण कर स्थानीय लोगों और यात्रियों तक पहुंचाने को जन जागृति संस्थान खाड़ी अब दशहरे तक एक आउटलेट केंद्र खोलने वाला है। संस्थान के अरण्य रंजन का कहना है कि स्वाद और पौष्टिकता से भरपूर उत्पादों को बनाने के लिए निकटवर्ती क्षेत्रों से फसल और बीज खरीदे जाएंगे। इससे जहां बीज और अनाज का संरक्षण होगा, वहीं पलायन रुकेगी। संस्थान ने खाड़ी में ही

### ये पहाड़ी उत्पाद मिलेंगे

अरसे, रोटाना, दाल के पकौड़े, फाणा-भात, चैसू, पट्टंगी, स्वाब्ळा, इंडा, दाल के भरे परांटे, स्थानीय मौसमी सब्जियां, इंगोरे की खीर, रोट आउटलेट सेंटर में बेचा जाएगा। इसके अलावा यदि कोई यात्री ज्यादा मात्रा में उत्पादों की डिमांड करेगा, तो उन्हें डिमांड के अनुसार स्थानीय उत्पाद तय समय तक दिए जा सकेंगे।

गेहूं के आटे, सरसों का तेल और मसालों के लिए प्रोडक्शन यूनिट लगाई है। दशहरे से शुरू होने वाले आउटलेट सेंटर में सभी सहयोगी स्थानीय लोग ही रखे जाएंगे।

A News clipping Says "SAMOON Center will challenge the Fast Food Culture"

It is interesting to note that a friend has helped us putting up the Mountain Food Connect restaurant on the Google map the link of which is as follows - <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Mountain+Food+Connect/@30.281742,78.3658872,17z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x3909198c4ea54eff:0xee6d479c7aa1ce8f!8m2!3d30.281742!4d78.3680759>

*Lalu Lal* of village *Tipali* came to the MFC restaurant at Khadi and asked for maggi noodles and such other fast food and responding to his request he was offered the traditional *Jhangora* (Barnyard Millet) along with a butter milk curry to which he happily agreed. This recipe also was prepared in a very good time for *Lalu Lal* and he was happy to have it as a locally available and healthy fast food. He said to us that although all the ingredients of *Jhangora* with curry were available at his home he was having this dish after many years and promised to help in reviving this tradition. Since then *Lalu* visits us often for food and refreshment while crossing our restaurant.



**Lalu Lal enjoying his traditional Meal Barnyard Millet and butter milk curry**



**Mr. Shishram Kanswal enjoying his meal**

A senior advocate in Uttarakhand Mr. Shishram Kanswal after seeing a social media post connected with the MFC team and visited the restaurant with his family for a meal and was very positive and supportive for this venture. Mr. Kanswal and his son Jay Prakash also shared encouraging social media posts contributing towards this campaign.

Some road construction engineers and workers visited us demanding for some quick snacks and we had sprouted Grams and *Urad Dal Pakauda* to offer them and they were happy to get this locally prepared dish as a quick snack. They have become our regular visitors for snacks, breakfast, lunch or dinner.

Mr. Mohan Chouhan an artist and teacher has been visiting our restaurant frequently while crossing Khadi from village Kharsada where he teaches in an Inter College which is more than 50 kilometer from MFC for snacks and meals liking this concept a lot. Mr. Chouhan also shared positive stories and pictures on social media and has been sending other teachers and friends for SAMOON products and MFC dishes. One of Mohan's teacher friend came and had a nice meal and then got a meal packed for dinner as well. He also ordered for the special local sweet called *Arsa* made of hand pounded rice and Jaggery with mustard oil that we process in SAMOON's processing unit.



**Mr. Mohan having breakfast with a fellow teacher**

These are some of the little stories that have boosted the moral of the SAMOON / MFC team with a hope that this venture will grow step by step supporting other community programs of UJJS.



**The MFC Kitchen**



**A section of MFC Restaurant**

## Semi Processing Unit – SAMOON Production Unit

UJJS has successfully installed the three processing machines for oil, spices and seeds at the SAMOON Production Unit supported by Himalaya Resources and the Wild Geese Foundation. All three of them are fully operational and local villagers are coming in good numbers to process their produce. SAMOON and MFC center are also processing the procured seeds for further marketing at this Unit itself. Members of SAMOON have got trained in using/operating and maintaining the equipments. SAMOON also has identified local experienced mechanic to check and repair the machines as and when needed.



**Oil Extraction by SAMOON volunteer at Production Unit**

SAMOON production unit is maintaining regular data since August this year and is happy to share that the processing unit is slowly becoming self sustaining while covering all the costs of electricity, maintenance and other operating costs. Some pictures are given here sharing the shape of this working unit.



**People visited SAMOON Production Unit**

## Seed Bank – SAMOON Seed Bank

The supports extended by Himalaya Resources and The Wild Geese Foundation for setting up the SAMOON seed bank has been extremely useful in reviving and revolving the traditional mountain seeds of the region. UJS and its SAMOON team developed a good linkage and network of women farmers in the villages and covered more than 300



**SAMOON Farm Products displayed for sale in Delhi**

farmers encouraging them to re-establish their traditional banks at home and community level. The SAMOON center becomes now a focal place for this network to process and market their farm produce.



**SAMOON Farm Products at a Fair in Delhi**

SAMOON has branched out the Himalayan organic farm produce through its network organizations in Dehradun, Goa, Ludhiana, Hariyana and Delhi like the Rasyan, Himalaya Seva Sangh, Uttarakhand Lok Parv, SAMTA retreat, Devang, Desi Kheti etc.



**SAMOON Volunteer Processing Food Grains**

UJJS and its Gandhian networks organization Himalaya Seva Sangh are trying to further improve and strengthen the capacity of SAMOON seed bank and its marketing capacities / capabilities to grow in slow and sustained manner. Friends at Himalaya Resources have been actively involved in helping and building up the technical skills of UJJS / HSS team while introducing and developing digital data keeping techniques for SAMOON data keeping.



**SAMOON Volunteers Processing Food Grains**