



# Policy Brief

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## Skilling School Students on the Establishment of Nutritional Garden through Convergence- A successful Extension approach

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### Summary

This policy brief presents the interventions of Directorate of Extension Education through KVKs of Cuddalore, Tiruppur and Villupuram in association with Govt. Schools in skilling of school students in establishing Nutritional gardens in their backyard. The project was funded by State Development Policy Council under State Balanced Growth Fund and implemented during the year 2020 -21 and 2021-2022.

360 Govt. Schools students from Cuddalore, Tiruppur and Villupuram districts were trained through KVKs of Cuddalore, Tiruppur and Villupuram on establishment of Nutri-garden by the students in their backyard. Seed kits, garden tools and necessary guidance was provided to the students.

Increased knowledge and skill on establishment of Nutri-garden, cent percent adoption in establishing Nutri-garden by the students, effective convergence among KVK Scientist- School teachers was achieved during this project. The policy brief recommends the following:

- Skilling school children on agricultural aspects will enhance agricultural production and improves employability among youth
- Special programmes on skilling youth in agriculture shall be promoted

### Introduction

This policy brief is based on the Externally funded Research Project on " Empowering School Students on Establishment of Nutritional Garden in their backyard through Virtual training by Krishi Vigyan Kendras in Villupuram, Cuddalore and Tiruppur districts of Tamil Nadu during COVID-19 Pandemic".

### Rationale

The COVID-19 Pandemic had forced school children to stay indoors leaving the schools closed. In order to use their time effectively and to improve the nutritional status of the rural households, this project is proposed.

The SDPC- SBGF funded project was implemented during the year 2020 to 2022 during Covid pandemic with an objective to empower school students of Kandamangalam block, Villupuram district, Mangalore block, Cuddalore district and Kundadam Block, Tiruppur district in establishing nutritional gardens in their backyard for nutritional security and to learn skill on growing their own greens and vegetables during the covid 19 pandemic.

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The project was implemented by the Directorate of Extension Education, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore through ICAR- Krishi Vigyan Kendras of Villupuram, Cuddalore and Tiruppur District in association with School Education Department and Government Schools.

## Objectives

The project was implemented with the following objectives:

- To provide training to the school children for establishing a nutritional garden in their home backyard for producing greens and vegetables.
- To sensitize students and general public on the importance of nutritional garden in improving the nutritional intake in the diet of the family.

**Implementation mode:** The project was implemented in convergence with school education department, with the full support of the Government Schools of Kandamangalam, Mangalore and Kundadam blocks of Tamil nadu. Also, the scientists' team of KVKs of TNAU had provided technical support.

## Project Interventions

- Identification of 360 interested school students for establishing nutri-garden at their backyard with the help of education department in the identified blocks
- Educating students on the establishment of nutri-garden by KVKs in three select blocks in three identified districts
- Establishment of Shadenet and model nutritional garden in 3 KVKs
- Establishment of nutri-garden by the school children in their backyard / lands facilitated by scientist of KVKs

## Project accomplishments

- Skill imparted to 360 students on establishment and management of Nutrigarden project
- Established Shade net nursery in KVKs of Tiruppur, Cuddalore and Villupuram
- Seed kits and garden tools distributed to 360 students
- 360 students established Nutri-gardens in their backyard

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## Project outcome

- 360 school students identified for imparting skill on establishment of Nutri-garden from three districts (Tiruppur, Cuddalore and Villupuram)
- School teachers acted as facilitators and guide in motivating students
- Three shade net nutri-garden nurseries established and provided training to students
- Model nutri-gardens established at KVKs of Tiruppur, Cuddalore and Villupuram
- Seed kits and garden tools provided to 360 students
- All 360 students established nutri-gardens in their backyard with the support of scientists, parents, teachers and fellow students.
- There is a marked increase in intake of vegetables and greens among the students and their families
- The project scientists of KVKs continue to provide advisory/ technical support to students through WhatsApp

Publication in tamil and English on importance of nutri-gardens, cultivation methods and nutritional importance were published and distributed for the knowledge transfer among the students and general public

## Impact of Nutri-garden project

- School Students who are not covered in the project also got motivated and started nutri-garden in their backyard by seeing the nutri-garden grown by their fellow students.
- Majority of the students continue to grow nutria-garden even beyond the project period and also, the students continue to post their harvest and contact KVK scientists for advisory.
- The vegetable intake among the families of the students grown nutri-garden increased.
- KVKs of TNAU which are not covered in the project have also started similar interventions in schools through Frontline Demonstrations (FLDs) in their respective districts.

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- The teachers who got oriented through this project on establishing nutri-garden continue to support students in similar initiative.
- Skill level of students on cultivating nutri-garden increased and lead to sustainability.
- Convergence with school education department and schools facilitate capacitating school children on establishment of nutri-garden successfully
- Empowers school children in establishing nutri-garden in their own backyard

- Increased awareness among children on the importance of Nutritional Garden
- Majority of the students continue to grow vegetables and greens even after the project was completed, this shows the sustainability of the project.

## Policy recommendations

- Skilling school children on agricultural aspects will enhance agricultural production and improves employability among youth
- Special programmes on skilling youth in agriculture shall be promoted

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The Directorate of Extension Education, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore is responsible for coordinating, monitoring and facilitating the frontline extension education activities of the University besides facilitating the extension programmes of the state development departments through its ICAR Krishi Vigyan Kendras of TNAU and through other TNAU Centres. This policy brief is based on the results of the externally funded development research of DoEE as part of monitoring of KVK of TNAU. The authors would like to acknowledge the Director, ICAR- ATARI, Hyderabad and Principal Scientists of ICAR ATARI, Hyderabad and all the respondents, Programme Coordinators, Scientists, Programme Assistants of KVKs who had contributed for this research and policy brief. Special thanks to The Director, CARDS and The Professor & Head, Dept. of AE& RS, TNAU, Coimbatore for moderating the research activity through the sub- project. The authors acknowledge the State Delopment Policy Council, State Balanced Growth Fund (SDPC - SBGF) for sponsoring the project

The views expressed in the Brief remain thous of the author(s).