

# Coleus Farmer's Day

June 18, 2005

Today when I stand in front of you all, I am reminded of the days when we had started this coleus cultivation in Salem with a handful of people. Today, I feel very proud that more than 5000 farmers have joined our family.

Sami Labs and its associated company in the US discovered that the active chemical in coleus broke down the fat in the body without affecting other tissues. This means its an ideal product for weight management. Subsequently, we got a US patent for this discovery and the demand for this product increased.

But the raw material for this product was not available. It was then Sami Labs started experimenting cultivation in various parts of the country and actively co-operated with the agricultural universities. Over a period of time the required agro-technology and planting material was developed. We researched on upgrading the cultivation practices and developing superior variety of Coleus forskohlii . Shri Palanivel and MGP group has been instrumental in developing this.

Our hard work has born fruit. Salem was the terrain where we explored the prospects of involving the farmers in cultivating Coleus for us. Though we encountered a few difficulties in the beginning, those were tips for bettering or evolving better agricultural practices. Today farmers in India are coming forward to cultivate coleus and other herbs for us. Whereas in the international market ForsLean<sup>®</sup>, our brand for Coleus forskohlii extract is the most accepted supplement for weight management.

Dear friends, I can say with full confidence and pride that the Sami Model of Coleus Cultivation carried in association with MGP and Palanivel has evolved over a period of relentless effort into a model unique to Sami Labs alone. This is an example of the successful participation and association of farmers, our research laboratories and

finally the international market. I repeat , it is the successful association of farmers, research labs and the international market.

Other dimension evolved with our model of cultivation is that we have opened the world market to our farmers. Since we buy the products directly from the farmers, the farmers are benefited. But with our agreement with our farmers, they will produce the crop for us and we will buy their entire produce. In other words, we have entered into a strong buy-back agreement with the farmers and the farmers are assured of the best price for their crop. Additionally, we support the farmers by supplying them with the planting material, facilitate loan for them and assure insurance protection to their crops.

Let me take this opportunity to highlight the fact that our success, that is yours and ours is a very valuable one. We must not do anything contrary to our commitment to disrupt it.

In business, short term gains are transient. In an agriculture based business long term trust and interdependence is the core of business. As I trust that all of you will work with us, let me reassure you that Sami Labs and Palanivel will work with you to protect your interests also.

The best of ideas will not come to fruition unless there are committed people. Sami Labs had a commitment and a desire. Palanivel made it a reality through his sheer commitment to me, the cause and the farmers of Tamil Nadu . Palanivel , words cannot describe our profound appreciation of you. The people you assembled to assist you are a class apart and very devoted.

State Bank of India is a source of strength in our efforts. Their support for the farmers made this day possible. On behalf of all of you, I thank them. Special mention to UTI Bank, who came forward with a credit line of Rs.10 crores to assist the farmers at an extremely reasonable rate. United India Assurance has also played a major role in assisting the farmers through crop protection insurance. My deep appreciation for their efforts and thank you all.

Finally, the day belongs to the farmers of Tamil Nadu , who along with Palanivel has written the first chapter in the organized cultivation of medicinal plants in India .

Salem , my dear friends is just not the place to cultivate Coleus, but over the years I have realized it is also a place which has given birth to a very sincere and committed working community, and a model for India for medicinal plants cultivation.

It is because of the visionary effort put forward by you , Shri Palanivel , that Sami Labs is going to extend the herbal cultivation practice to other parts of India as well. Shortly we will be implementing our cultivation practices in Maharashtra , Chhattisgarh , Kerala , Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and other parts of Tamil Nadu as well.

I am glad to announce the formation of a fund for the Coleus farmers in Tamil Nadu . This will be known as the Sami -Farmer's Fund. This fund is exclusively for you, your family, your children and your parents. Hereby, I announce that I have set apart Rs 10 lakh to this fund.

I would conclude by saying that Sami Labs has created a niche for itself by entering into a tie up with our farming community. Secondly we stand apart through our innovative research where we have merged our traditional knowledge with modern science. As a result of our innovation we have been granted 19 US and 5 International patents. I am also proud to state that we are the recipients of several national and international awards, including the National Award for R&D in 2002 in India and the prestigious Thomas Alva Edison Patent Award for 2004 in the state of New Jersey , United States .

It is a journey we have started together. Let us continue to be partners hereafter also.

Vanakam .... Nanri .

**JAI HIND**