



SEACON co-organized the SEA Regional conference on System of Rice Intensification on 25 – 28 May 2015 in the state of Kedah, also known as “the Rice Bowl of Malaysia”. The event was hosted by the Northern University of Malaysia (UUM). In attendance at the conference were 200 participants from academic, industrial, governmental institutes as well as NGOs, Farmer Networks and independent farmers representing ASEAN countries in addition to Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, USA. Malaysia being the host country, was represented by farmers from various states that included Selangor, Kedah, Kelantan, Sabah and Sarawak.



The conference, held under the theme of “*Innovating Shared Values*”, provided insightful debate on various aspects of the application of SRI approach for sustainable production of rice in the region. SRI is a sustainable agricultural practice that relies on reduced chemical input and systematic management of rice plantation on field. The benefits of SRI have been noted to include improved efficiency of limited resources, enhancing farmer’s income, improving environmental safety, and offering consumers value for money.

The diverse group of speakers were all sharing their experiences on SRI practices, as well as discussing innovations of the practice. Panel discussions and group sessions offered the participants opportunities to engage in discussions on innovations in mechanization, social restructuring, financial incentives and most importantly strengthening the network within the region. Questions of scaling up SRI were also addressed, with suggestions including strategic and long-term thinking; building on achievements, strength and potential; team-work; and enhanced communication and learning.

SEA Regional Conference on SRI 2015: Looking back

Written by admin

Wednesday, 03 June 2015 17:42 - Last Updated Wednesday, 01 July 2015 17:39



Participants in attendance at the conference at TH hotel and at SRI-Lovely

During the second day of the conference, all of the participants had the opportunity to visit an award winning practitioner of SRI in Kedah: SRI-Lovely organic farm. This farm adopts SRI for holistic production of organic rice, and operates under the auspices of a local cooperative which ensures social welfare of the employees at the farm. Although the participants were no strangers to the practice of SRI, this visit allowed them to observe as well as participate in the ongoing activities at SRI-Lovely, which included the production of biopesticides and biofertilizers, use of Solar Bubble Dryer (LINK) for drying grains, mechanization approaches for effective weeding and nursery management of rice seedlings.

Rice producers within Malaysia as well as within the region were intrigued by the Solar Bubble Dryer for postharvest management of dry grains, as rain and other environmental factors were reported to be a major hindrance in the successful drying of grains. Moreover, a discussion on indigenous practices for the production of biofertilizers and biopesticides saw the participants exchanging notes on a range of resources that are easily available for the use of farmers with an interest for organic management of their farm.



Demonstrations at SRI-Lovely on 1. Biopesticides and biofertilizers, 2. Postharvest management, 3. Mechanisation of weeding; and 4. Nursery management

SEA Regional Conference on SRI 2015: Looking back

Written by admin

Wednesday, 03 June 2015 17:42 - Last Updated Wednesday, 01 July 2015 17:39

SEA Regional Conference on SRI 2015: Looking back

Written by admin

Wednesday, 03 June 2015 17:42 - Last Updated Wednesday, 01 July 2015 17:39

Towards the end of the field visit, all of the participants were invited to assist in planting the freshly prepared and marked SRI field with rice seedlings. This was yet another exciting opportunity for the comparison of SRI practices and rice cultivation activities in general between the different regions, as soil conditions and irrigation practices were seen to be amongst the most basic differences.



The delegates of the conference engaging in SRI cultivation of paddy at Sri-Lovely

SEA Regional Conference on SRI 2015: Looking back

Written by admin

Wednesday, 03 June 2015 17:42 - Last Updated Wednesday, 01 July 2015 17:39

Apart from SEACON, main organizers and sponsors included University Utara Malaysia, University Kebangsaan Malaysia, University Putra Malaysia, KEDA, SRI-Lovely, SRI-Rice (Cornell University, USA), BERNAS and Felcra Training and Consultancy (FTC). The participants, sponsors and organizers were all united in their call for commitments from policy makers and governmental institutes to support sustainable agricultural production systems by direct support of farmers and encouraging engagement of the private sector as well as offering support to research and academic institutes.