



**NATURE-POSITIVE FARMING &  
WHOLESOME FOODS  
FOUNDATION (N+3F)**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2025-26**



# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	01
<b>Progress during 2025-26</b>	02
<b>1 Strengthening the partnership</b>	02
<b>2 Building the capacities of the staff</b>	03
<b>3 Deepening N+FFS Program Components</b>	03
3.1 Facilitating the adoption of N+FFS by a large number of farmers	03
3.2 Supporting development of N+FFS regional/territorial value chains	10
3.3 Promoting household consumption of pesticide-free wholesome foods	11
3.4 Developing and promoting N+FFS Guarantee Systems (NGS)	11
<b>Other developments</b>	13
<b>Acknowledgement</b>	14

## NATURE-POSITIVE FARMING & WHOLESOME FOODS FOUNDATION (N+3F)

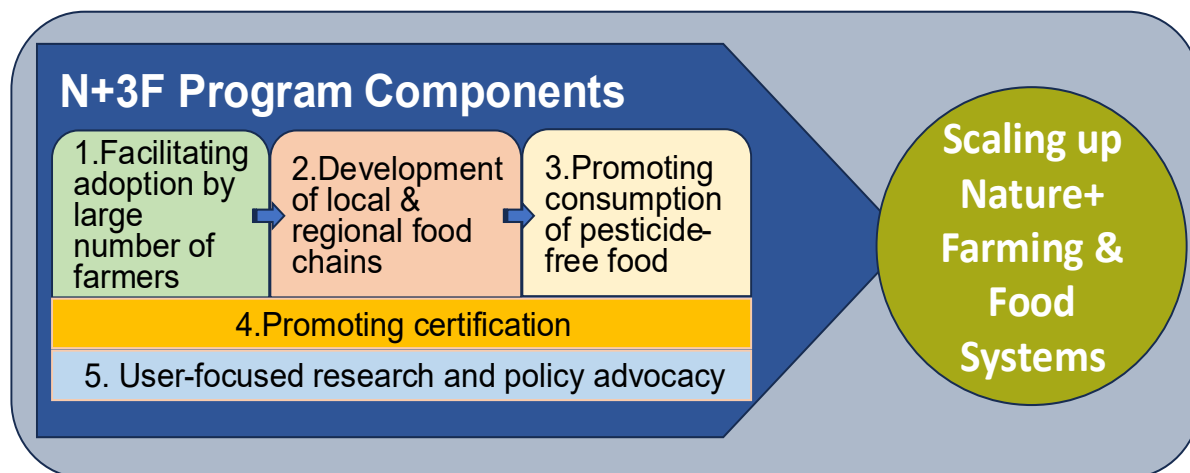
### PROGRESS: 2025-26

#### Introduction

##### 1. About N+3F

The Nature-Positive Farming & Wholesome Foods Foundation (N+3F) is a Section 8 non-profit organisation initiated on March 13, 2021. It strives to promote Nature-Positive Farming and Food Systems (N+FFS) at scale across India in a co-creation mode with interested partners. N+3F builds on the long experience of the NPM (Non-Pesticidal Management of Agriculture) Network & its partners to promote pesticide-free sustainable agriculture and food chains in different agroclimatic regions across India with smallholder farming communities.

N+3F espouses a multi-scalar ‘farm-to-plate’ approach covering producers, value chain actors, and consumers for wider adoption of N+FFS, as indicated by its first three interrelated program components illustrated in the diagram below. The fourth and fifth program components on certification and research and policy advocacy, respectively, cut across the first three program components.



More details on N+3F can be seen at [www.np3f.in](http://www.np3f.in).

##### 2. Focus Areas for the Year 2025-26

1. Strengthening and broad basing the partnership with organisations in sustainable agriculture and safe food space
2. Deepening and scaling up the program components
3. Mobilising resources

## Progress during 2025-26

### 1. Strengthening and broad basing the partnership

The focus areas for the reporting period and the concerned initiatives of N+3F are shared below:

1. **Building a set of partners as centres of innovation** to gain contextual understanding & deepen the N+FFS interventions.

Samaj Pragati Sahayog (SPS), Madhya Pradesh, one of the founding organisations of the NPM Network, was identified as a regional resource organisation. N+3F has been engaged with SPS in various N+FFS interventions, and the learnings generated are shared with other partners and stakeholders. During the reporting period, N+3F worked with SPS on **pilots on the adoption of diversified cropping systems and nature-positive package of practices**. N+3F submitted many proposals with SPS to potential funding agencies to mobilise funds for implementing advanced N+FFS interventions. N+3F has been exploring such possibilities with Manav Jeevan Vikas Samiti (MJVS), Madhya Pradesh and Lokadrusti, Odisha. It also wrote joint proposals to mobilise funds for implementing working models on N+FFS interventions.

2. **Engaging with organisations other than partners** to increase the contributions of N+3F to the sector, preferably on a payment basis.

N+3F started working with organisations other than partners. It engaged with Arya Tech Platforms Private Limited, Noida, Uttar Pradesh, as a technical support partner under Project Unnati to develop PoP for Climate Resilient Agriculture (CRA) in the states of Bihar and Jharkhand. N+3F is currently engaging with Vasundhara, Odisha, to strengthen their livelihood and collective enterprise initiative with the forest-dependent communities.

Besides the above, the following efforts were taken to strengthen the partnership.

#### 1.1 Facilitating annual and seasonal plan preparation

N+3F facilitated the annual planning process through collective online sessions focusing on the adoption of diversified cropping systems and an improved nature-positive package of practices (PoP). It also engaged with Sarguja Gramin Vikas Sansthan (SGVS), MJVS, SPS and Gram Sudhar Samiti (GSS) on a one-to-one basis.

#### 1.2 Built capacity of staff and farmers in partner locations

N+3F organised need-based collective and one-to-one training sessions and workshops for different partners on production and certification interventions. In-person events, online sessions and webinars were organised.

#### 1.3 Preparing joint proposals

N+3F developed nine joint proposals with SPS, MJVS, Lokadrusti and the Indian Institute of Soil Science (IISS) during the reporting period for submission to potential funding agencies.



*Fig. 1: Interaction with women farmers of Dheemarkheda Block, Katni, along with the MJVS team*

#### 1.4 Exploring partnerships with new organisations

N+3F also explored collaboration with SAMPARK, Madhya Pradesh, Vrutti and the Consortium for Agroecological Transformations (CAT). For proposal preparation, N+3F, along with SPS, has explored collaboration with FACHIG Trust, Zimbabwe, and BARCIK, Bangladesh.

As of March 2026, N+3F was partnering with 30 organisations in Central, Eastern and Southern India.

## 2. Building the capacities of the staff

N+3F invested in building the capacities of the staff through the following activities besides regular one-to-one capacity building:

- Participation in Kissan Swaraj Sammelana 2026, organised at Mysore by the ASHA.
- Sharing relevant videos and reading materials on the emerging science of regenerative agriculture and agroecology.
- Building the capacity for organising training sessions and workshops through learning-by-doing. Training the staff of partners and the farming community was consciously made into a robust learning opportunity for the staff.

## 3. Deepening and scaling N+FFS Program Components

### 3.1 Facilitating the adoption of N+FFS by a large number of farmers

During the reporting year, focus was given to the following aspects:

1. *Building the knowledge of partners on the science of nature-positive farming systems and its connection to the nutrient density of foods*
2. *Educating on how to practically apply the above learnings at farm level*

3. *Participatory action research on adoption of DCS and other nature-positive production practices*
4. *Engaging with other key actors in the space through consultancy and other modalities*

Initiatives taken in this direction are shared below.

### 3.1.1 Development of resources on Nature-Positive Farming Systems (N+FS)

A set of resource documents and training materials was developed on understanding and applying the science of Nature-Positive Farming Systems (N+FS) and improving the nutrient density of foods, in continuation of the initiative to develop a comprehensive set of documents on this topic in the previous year. The specific documents developed are listed below:

1. A note on ***Critical Points of Influence (CPI) in a crop cycle and key interventions for improving crop performance***; it was translated into Hindi.
2. ***Developing a robust Nature-Positive Package of Practices (POP) – A Note***: The earlier note on PoP was improved by effectively integrating i) the salient features of N+FS<sup>1</sup> and the Total System Approach (TSA) and systemic, planned and reactive strategies. The nature-positive PoP ensures ‘nutritional and microbiome integrity’ of the crop and helps in accelerating the ‘transition towards vibrant and resilient agroecosystem at the farm level’; this document was translated into Hindi.
3. ***Reference PoP for nature-positive, climate-resilient cultivation of paddy, finger millet, maize, chilli, and brinjal***, which can be improvised for developing location-specific PoP.
4. A set of documents for assessing the prevalent cultivation practices of a crop in a location and developing a location-specific PoP.
5. ***Tools and methods for smallholder farmers to understand and act on soil health and crop health – A resource document***.
6. A set of formats for documenting the practices and results of diversified cropping systems.

Besides these, the following efforts were taken:

- a. Co-develop training modules on Non-Pesticide Management (NPM) with BRLF – N+3F staff contributed to the writeshop organised by BRLF at Bhubaneswar.
- b. Translating the ‘note on measuring Brix to understand crop health’ into Hindi.

### 3.1.2 Capacity building of partners

#### a) Training on understanding and applying the science of N+FS

##### 1) SGVS and GSS

An online training was organised on diversified cropping systems separately for SGVS, Chhattisgarh, and GSS, Madhya Pradesh.

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<sup>1</sup> Salient features of N+FS include a) Mimics nature, b) Views crop as a holobiont, c) Maximise photosynthesis, d) Enhance inherent strengths to self-organize and thrive, e) Aims to reach the production potential of cropping systems, f) Considers ‘biodiversity’ as the foundation, g) Aims for enhancing non-commodified ecosystem services in productive agriculture, h) Avoids practices that are not compatible with natural processes and hinders them and i) Follows a medium- and long-term perspective.

## 2) MJVS

An online training was organised on nature-positive PoP preparation and adoption for the team members of MJVS, Madhya Pradesh.

## 3) SPS, Madhya Pradesh

### i. Third-phase training for SPS team

This two-day in-person training session built on the themes of the earlier two sessions and covered the following themes: i) Review of the diversified cropping system (DCS) interventions taken up during Kharif 2025; ii) Documentation and data collection on DCS; and iii) Designing the DCS options for Rabi 2025. Twenty-four agriculture professionals from nine locations of SPS participated in the session.



Fig. 2: Third-phase training for SPS staff

### ii. Training on CPI and PoP preparation for chilli

A two-day training session was organised to enhance the knowledge and skills of the SPS team from Bikangaon on i) critical points of influence in a crop cycle, ii) developing PoP for nature-positive cultivation of chilli, and iii) the application of synergistic foliar formulation. In this session, two agriculture professionals and eight CRPs/Mithans participated. As part of the training session, the preparation and application of a synergistic foliar stack was demonstrated in a chilli field.



*Fig. 3: Training on CPI and PoP for nature-positive cultivation of chilli for Bhikangaon team*



*Fig. 4: Synergistic foliar preparation & application*

### iii. Location-level training on adoption of diversified cropping systems

A one-day training session was organised for the staff and key farmers in six locations of SPS, covering the following themes: i) Key learnings from the diversified cropping system (DCS) interventions taken up during Kharif 2025; and ii) Designing the DCS options for Rabi 2025. In each location, 30-35 persons participated.



*Fig. 5: Training at Kantaphod location*



*Fig. 6: Training at Barwaha location*

### iv. Location-level training on Nature-Positive Farming System (N+FS)

A one-day training session was organised at Melghat for federation members. The topics covered include i) what are N+FS, ii) the need for shifting to N+FS, iii) how to make our agriculture nature-positive, iv) understanding the plant-microbe relationships, v) the benefits of diversified cropping systems, vi) the effect of our cropping practices on soil and plant microbiomes and soil health, and vii) realising prosperity with nature-positive farming systems. Three agriculture professionals, six Mithans and 30 members participated in the training session. Another one-day training session was organised for new Mithans at Udainagar.



*Fig. 7: Training at Melghat in progress*



*Fig. 8: Training at Udainagar in progress*

## b) Webinars organised

The following webinars were organised to build the capacities of the partners and to aid them in preparing for the interventions during Kharif and Rabi 2025:

- Adoption of Diversified Cropping Systems in the Kharif season
- Preparing a package of practices for nature-positive cultivation of crops
- Understanding the Critical Points of Influence (CPI) of a crop & acting to realise optimum yield
- Designing effective, impactful Synergistic Foliar Sprays as part of N+FS
- Designing nature-positive Package of Practices (PoP)
- Nature-positive PoP for maize
- Understanding Crop Health Management and Plant Defence Mechanisms
- Fending off Pests and Diseases through Nutrition

## 3.1.3 Implementation support

### a) Kharif plan preparation with partners

Preparation of the Kharif plan was facilitated for six partners through one-to-one online sessions.

### b) Preparation of Package of Practices (PoP) for Climate Resilient Agriculture (CRA) in Bihar and Jharkhand

N+3F signed an MOU with Arya Tech Platforms Private Limited, Noida, Uttar Pradesh, as a technical support partner under Project Unnati to develop PoP for Climate Resilient Agriculture (CRA) in the states of Bihar and Jharkhand. A review of secondary data was carried out for Bihar and Jharkhand on climate change trends, climate-resilient agriculture initiatives, and paddy and finger millet cultivation with a focus on Purnea and Katihar districts in Bihar and Khunti district in Jharkhand. Based on the learnings, the N+3F team developed formats for collecting information on the trends in climate change, how they are affecting the farmers and the focus crops, and prevalent practices of paddy and finger millet. A reference climate-resilient nature-positive PoP was developed for paddy and finger millet to guide the preparation of location-specific PoP preparation. The N+3F team visited the Purnea and Katihar districts of Bihar and the Khunti district of Jharkhand to understand the field conditions and to interact with the farmers and local staff. They also interacted with a scientist from KVKs in Katihar and Purnea and two market players. Based on these studies, a location-specific PoP for paddy and finger millet was prepared for Bihar and Jharkhand locations, respectively, and shared with the Arya team. A training was given to the Jharkhand team on the practices listed in the PoP. The N+3F team attended the project launching workshop organised at Bihar by the Arya Tech team.



Fig. 9: Focus group discussion with farmers at Khunti



Fig. 10: Sharing PoP in the workshop at Purnea

### c) Facilitating adoption of diversified cropping systems (DCS) by SPS

As mentioned earlier, N+3F built the capacity of agriculture professionals, Mithans and key farmers on the need for shifting to DCS and how to practically adopt DCS in the prevailing crops, including the selection of crops from four or more numbers of families, their functions and their field planting configuration. The field team was also trained on collecting the data on the practices adopted, the benefits realised by the farmers and the challenges faced by them. The field teams prepared DCS configuration drawings for their locations, which were vetted with the farmers. They also organised training sessions for farmers and organised seed supply for certain crops. IEC materials like posters, leaflets and wall writings were developed in the local language and disseminated to selected farmers. Seeds were sourced and supplied to farmers. Sowing was taken as per the crop configuration after seed treatment. Demo plots were monitored regularly, and inputs such as *Panch patti kada* and Warkhem bioformulations were supplied on time from the nearby BRC units in some locations. N+3F visited four locations of SPS to understand the adoption trials on diversified cropping systems carried out by the location team and to support them in collecting data.

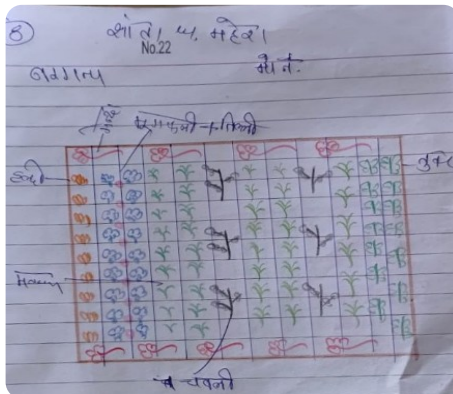


Fig. 11: Configuration of maize-based DCS, Barwaha



Fig. 12: Interaction with maize DCS farmer

### d) Soil health assessment by SPS

An online discussion was held with the SPS team on the assessment of soil health under agroecological and NPM practices. Further, N+3F facilitated testing of soil samples from the SPS area by IISS.

### Some of the results of these initiatives include

- **Development of an additional set of training materials** on understanding and application of the science of N+FS.
- **Capacity building** of around 450 persons, including agriculture professionals, CRPs/Mithans and key farmers.
- **Wider understanding and appreciation of the science of nature-positive farming systems** and how to apply it through improved PoPs among the partners.
- **Adoption of diversified cropping systems (DCS) by the partners and learnings generated.** The N+3F team and the partner team learnt significantly from the DCS adoption attempts. It was observed that the crop combinations varied with the location. The maize-based cropping system of Kantaphod consisted of redgram as a border crop, cowpea, greengram, blackgram (short-duration legumes), and gingelly as intercrops, and sunflower grown sparsely to attract the bees and birds. Whereas, the same cropping system at the Bagli location had redgram as a border crop, groundnut, turmeric, cowpea, and gingelly as intercrops, marigold as a trap crop, and random planting of sunflower. Farmers gave positive feedback about the DCS trials and the crop combination suggested. In a few cases, greengram got infected by yellow mosaic, causing 100% damage; even then, the farmer was able to recover the loss due to the presence of other intercrops sown along with the main crop. Earlier, farmers used to harvest only maize or redgram under monocropping; with DCS, they were able to harvest many crops more than once. This helped them in getting diversified food on their plates as well. It was observed that farmers realised concrete benefits in terms of overall yield and reduction in crop loss due to vagaries of weather. Some farmers considerably increase the income realised from their farm plots. They wanted to increase the extent of the area under DCS in the upcoming cropping season. Some of the key learnings from the DCS trials are: i) Farmers select the crop combinations based on their need, availability of water and soil suitability; ii) On-field demonstrations were more effective in sharing the learning with the fellow farmers; iii) Regular field visits by CRPs are needed to support the farmers in a timely manner and to boost their confidence; iv) Crops such as sunflower and marigold helped in monitoring the pest incidence; and v) Farmers realised benefits such as the availability of diverse foods and fodders, apart from the increase in income.
- The proposal preparations helped enhance understanding on
  - **The interconnections between nature-positive agriculture and climate change:** Developed understanding of how agriculture activities in the locations contribute to pollutants that cause climate change and how they can be reduced considerably by adopting context-specific nature-positive farming and food system interventions.
  - **Frontier areas of research for advancing the N+FFS.**
  - **Interconnections between nature-positive agriculture, nutrient density and nutrition security and conceptualising a farming-for-nutrition working model.**

### 3.2 Supporting development of N+FFS regional/territorial value chains

Focus was given to supporting FPOs and NGOs to move up the value chain for pesticide-free foods. Initiatives taken in this direction are shared below.

#### 3.2.1 Development of resources on nature-positive value chain development

1. Updating the reference standard operating procedures (SOPs) for food business operators (FBOs) engaged in pesticide-free operations
2. Updating the toolkit for developing customised SOPs by FBOs in pesticide-free space

#### 3.2.2 Value chain development

##### a) Facilitating market linkages for pesticide-free produce

- KissanSay, an agency marketing safe food sourced from authentic sources through co-branding, approached N+3F for connecting with its partners. The N+3F team had an interaction with the KissanSay. Following that, a discussion was organised with six partners to explore possibilities of marketing their produce with KissanSay. N+3F facilitated sending produce samples to KissanSay by the interested partners.
- Safe Harvest Private Limited was supported for exploring the inclusion of roasted finger millet flour as part of their product portfolio. Dr Malleshi, one of the Directors of N+3F, helped them in connecting with a food enterprise in Tamil Nadu engaged in the production of finger millet flour.

##### b) Other initiatives

##### Assessment and review of livelihood initiatives of Vasundhara, Odisha

Vasundhara, an action research organisation, has been working on Community Forest Management initiatives in Odisha for many decades. It has engaged N+3F to assess and evaluate its livelihood and community enterprise development initiatives, focusing on the institutional model, functioning, impact, and sustainability of producer groups and producer



Fig. 13: Interaction with producer group members engaged in collective marketing of MFPs at Dasballa, Odisha

group federations. As part of this engagement, N+3F has studied the Producer Groups (PGs) and Producer Group Federations (PGF) of forest-dependent communities in Odisha promoted by Vasundhara and shared an assessment report with the Vasundhara team. Following that, the Vasundhara management team organised an in-person meeting to discuss the findings and recommendations and to develop an action plan. A one-year action plan was developed. Vasundhara has entered into an MoU with N+3F, and N+3F will offer technical support for implementing the action plan. Vasundhara and N+3F have started work on the action plan components. This engagement gave N+3F an opportunity to learn about the development issues of forest-dependent communities, the Forest Rights Act (FRA), minor forest produce (MFP)-based value chains, and collective marketing of MFPs.

### 3.3 Promoting household consumption of pesticide-free wholesome foods

N+3F took efforts to understand the interconnections between agriculture, food systems, nutrition and health. It reviewed and curated resources on i) The role of soil and plant microbiomes and the farm management practices on the nutrient density of crop outputs, ii) The connection between soil and plant microbiomes and that of animal and human microbiomes, iii) Decline in nutrient density of crops over the years, iv) Redesigning farming systems to enhance the nutrition of the rural communities, and v) Dietary recommendations related to different food groups by the National Institute of Nutrition and the dietary trends in rural and urban India. The preparation of a farming-for-nutrition proposal for sharing with the Tata Trusts facilitated these efforts.

As part of these efforts, N+3F has developed the following resources:

1. Interconnections between agriculture & nutritional quality of foods
2. A note on the half-acre food-for-nutrition model

N+3F also offered in-person training and a webinar on the following topics:

1. Understanding connections between agriculture & nutritional quality of foods
2. Experience of the Bionutrient Association in assessing the nutrition variations of commonly consumed crops and the relationship with varieties, region and farm management practices.

### 3.4 Developing and Promoting N+FFS Guarantee Systems (NGS)

Focus was given to the following aspects in the reporting period:

1. Strengthening the Internal Control System (ICS) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of different stakeholders
2. Fine-tuning the standards and modalities related to the certification of producer groups and food business operators

Initiatives taken in this direction are shared below.

### 3.4.1 Support for strengthening Internal NPM Guarantee Systems (INGS)

#### a) Capacity building of clients/partners

##### Orientation On Community-Centric Group Certification

1. A two-day training on certification was given to the location team in Melghat, SPS, for the newly joined agriculture professionals and Mithans. The topics covered included i) what is community-centric group certification, ii) associated production and value chain risks, iii) steps involved in INGS, iv) internal NPM standards, v) non-conformities and corrective actions, vi) internal inspection procedures, and vii) external certification modalities. Two agriculture professionals and eight Mithans participated in the training session.



*Fig. 14: Training of Melghat staff in progress*

2. A one-day training session on “Community-Centric Group Certification” for new Mithans at Udainagar, SPS, was offered by N+3F.

### 3.4.2 Offering certification services

#### a) Group certification

Group certificates were issued to five sets of agricultural units of SPS for the Rabi 2024. Inspection of the Kharif season crop was completed in five sets of agricultural units of SPS locations; following that, inspection reports were shared with the operator.



*Figure 15: External inspection of Redgram Kharif 2025-26*

### b) Certification of Food Business Operators (FBOs)

N+3F certified Safe Harvest Private Limited, one of the leading food business operators in the pesticide-free space, for the second year.



*Fig.15: Inspection of Safe Harvest Private Limited Hub at Hyderabad in progress*

### 3.4.3 Promoting certification services



*Fig. 15: Logo for foods certified 'pesticide-free'*

- Two orientation sessions were organised for 12 central India partners of Vrutti on community-centric group certification.
- Sampark, Madhya Pradesh, has shown interest in group certification. An online discussion was organised with the Sampark team on group certification, and a quote for setting up ICS and group certification was shared with them.
- **A logo on pesticide-free foods was developed and registered by N+3F.**
- **Pesticide-free Agriculture and Foods Certification, a crucial step for the wider reach of safe and wholesome foods** - An article on the need for pesticide-free agriculture and food certification and the experience of N+3F in offering such a certification was shared through social media and the N+3F website.

### Other developments

- N+3F received approval orders for the renewal of 12A registration for 10 years and 80G registration for five years.

## Acknowledgement

We are deeply thankful to Caring Friends for their continued support during the reporting period, which has been profoundly helpful in continuing the program interventions and improving them. We are also profusely thankful to Shri Cyriac Babu Joseph for his generous support during the reporting period. We also acknowledge with gratitude the joint engagement and contributions of our partners in promoting nature-positive farming and food systems.