Breaking Down Barriers Between Farmers and People

Some people spend their lives in service of others — working in the background, discharging responsibilities that have great implications — and they do not ask for much, perhaps, just a thank you, or a smile and an acknowledgement of their service. That is how the farmer lives. He toils under the burning sun, day after day, year after year, feeling the world, involved in the social fabric and yet, out of sight. He is a part of our everyday life, and yet, a part of your dinner table conversation. It’s about time that changes.

The ‘Be a FarmerFirst’ initiative

It aims to bring the invisible farming community back into our social consciousness. To inspire people — urban, rural, young and old — to experience what a farmer does, in a small way. What it is like to feel the thrill of the warm earth between one’s fingers. The joy of starting a seed and waiting for it to lift. The humility of knowing that the earth will reward the effort put in. And finally to feel the thrill of harvesting a crop. It aims to celebrate the farmer in the public sphere and create an environment of admiration and respect towards the farming community.

The hope is that in the process of cultivating a small patch of land, people will empathise with the farmer who toils the earth, by cultivating love.

What they did?

On the move, TAFE — Tractors and Farm Equipment, are the second largest manufacturer of tractors in India and the third largest worldwide, with a presence in over 15 countries, manufacturing some tractor brands. They go well beyond farming and into community building. Their commitment to the farming community is entrenched within its DNA that, in 1991, they established Aar Mann — an adaptive agri-research center, playing a proactive role in increasing farm yields, viability and sustainability, empowering farmers with new tools and technology in propagating, planting and protecting a variety of crops. Aar Mann has helped farmers increase their yields.

Who they are?

TAFE’s mission has been singular — to help farmers overcome the world’s need for food, in cultivating the world. To be the first choice of the farming community, they realized that they had to place the farmer at the heart of their strategy. From this insight grew one of the most exciting and innovative collaborations between manufacturer and end user: because when you set out to cultivate the world, they challenged the minds of the soil — empowering them to learn and helping them to change.

They utilized the years of market expertise that they have accumulated and endeavored to improve agriculture at the grassroots. In order to ensure that sustainable farming becomes a common practice world over.

What exactly is ‘cultivating the world’?

It is not just a slogan or a tagline. Being so closely intertwined with farmers for more than 60 years, they have brought the farmer to the forefront, while educating the people about the world they do. The only way to capture the world is to get everyone involved in breaking down walls and barriers that prevent farmers from being able to communicate with the rest of the population. The ‘Be a FarmerFirst’ initiative is about an extension of this mission.

With your help, TAFE’s resources and the personalization of farmers believe that they can take this message forward and hopefully bring the farmer to the forefront and get the credit he rightfully deserves.

How does one become a FarmerFirst?

Take a step. Pick it with earth. Plant something in it. Nurture it, care for it, watch it grow and delight the fruits that come while doing so. Look after a few boxes and do it with them for a glimpse into their world. Find their stories and pictures on the Aar Mann’s Facebook page. The company is actively engaging with FarmerFirst across all social media platforms. Post pictures and videos of the plants you are growing at home as well. This initiative is an invitation because anybody who wishes to participate can — age, social standing, financial standing, gender, geography are not barriers.

The launch of the ‘Be a FarmerFirst’ initiative

Earlier this month, was a mall campaign in Chennai to raise awareness and enable people to participate. A massive stall was set up in a popular mall, where a patch of farm was recreated, complete with a tractor. Visitors were engaged with greenery and further intensified the idea behind the initiative. A seed kit was distributed amongst the mall goers. The kit contained seeds with specific seeds and the importance of their new vocations, as farmers and in the community.

Are you interested? Can I participate too?

If you feel you are thinking about where to start, what and how to do unable to procure seeds or relating any other advice, write to them on their Facebook page. Spread the word about the initiative in friends, family, colleagues. The farmers are looking for help. Is the activity restricted in India? Not at all. Anyone is welcome to participate, no matter where they reside. All they have work is to impact the world through our Facebook page and spread the word further. Support and respect is not restricted, nor denied to the nation it serves. Welcome to the ‘Be a FarmerFirst’ initiative.