

Hydro for Hunger

by Peggy Bradley

The Institute of Simplified Hydroponics (ISH) Reaches out to India

The Institute of Simplified Hydroponics has helped launch a division of the organization in India.



The Pet Bharo project, meaning full belly, is an initiative created from the vision of CV Drakash.

India has the largest population of poverty stricken people of any country in the world, with about 200 million going hungry.

The ISH has been making efforts to establish a training center in India for over a decade, and has finally completed the task. Two ISH board members, Peggy Bradley and Andrew Loughrin, spent 10 weeks on a training mission to India, helping to establish the national office and demonstration garden at a rural school's homeless shelter in Bangalore.

The shelter offers the space, labor and water supply for a 131 square foot garden. The small shelter houses 15 children, and training on garden set-up and operational protocols and procedures are provided to the children and a few teachers.

Ruth Vidyasagar, the matron of the Sandra Ricketts School in Bangalore, established the shelter to help abandoned children. Before too long, 15 children were housed in a small two

room shelter. The cost of feeding these children became a tremendous burden, and when prices of vegetables doubled in the last year, Ruth became increasingly anxious about supporting the shelter.

"I was able to get the neighbor across the street to donate the use of his land for a small garden. If we planted in soil, we could only produce a pound of food a day. But, with simplified hydroponics we can now grow eight pounds of food a day."

Pointing to a family of three children under the age of five, Ruth explains, "These angels come from Nepal. There are 10 children in the family and their parents could not afford to feed them. If we can teach them to grow food with hydroponics, they could go back to their family and contribute to the family food supply."

Ruth has a vision of building a larger shelter for more children, and helping all homeless children. When she mentions having to turn children away because she has no room, her eyes well up with tears.

The India project is an initiative of Pet Bharo TM, meaning "full belly", and it is the vision of CV Prakash, a former Lieutenant Commander of the Indian Navy.



Tomato vines grown in hydroponics.

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