

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
Forest Department.

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Office of the Chief Conservator
of Forests, A.P.Hyderabad.

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(Social Forestry).

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Sub: Farm Forestry - Agro Forestry - Demonstration Plots
raising of with Subabul - Regarding.

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Under some of the Social Forestry Programme being implemented in the State, there is provision for raising small demonstration Plots (about half hectares and below) on lands belonging to small and marginal farmers, to demonstrate the beneficial effect of growing trees along boundary, or in strips etc., on the marginal agricultural lands, in conjunction with seasonal agricultural crops. This programme has however not been implemented so far satisfactorily in any district, inspite of repeated instructions. It is proposed that atleast from 1984 rains, this programme of raising demonstration plots should be take up sincerely, at atleast one demonstration plot raised in each panchayat samithi block in a district.

2. The ideal tree species for such agro-forestry demonstration plots is Sub-ababul (*Leucaena leucophles*) which can be raised in a single row with the plants about one meter apart in the lines, and a spacing of atleast 3 metre (4-5 meters better) between (2) successive subabul lines where inter-cultivation of usual food crops is practised. The demonstration effect, is to prove that tree species like-su-babul which can improve the soil fertility (through nitrogen formation in the bectrical nodules on its roots) while providing very good leaf fodder and fuel-wood on fairly short relations, will be an ideal species for combining with annual agriculture, or in short Agro Forestry practices. The subabul can be planted as 3-4 month old (50-60 cm tall) bag plant at the commencement of the monsoon rains, almost simultaneously with raising of agricultural crops during the Knarief season. The subabul plants can be allowed to establish themselves and grow during the whole of the first year, while the interpace between the rows of subabul, is cultivated with agricultural crops suitably for that area. After the Knarief Agricultural crops are harvested in the case of rain-fed agriculture, lands the usually remains fallow till the next rainy season. The subabul with is planted in mound will grow up meanwhile and provide adequate cover to the soil during the hot months and also be mapped to some extent to provide fodder. In order to see that the subabul rows should be allitned East to West. The established Su-babul saplings could be pollarded at an height of about 50-60 cum with the commencement of the second year monsoon rains, when sowing for raising agricultural crops is done after ploughing the intervening strips of land. Polarding of the su-babul plants tgus subsequently as and when required will help in elemination the shade on the agricultural crops during the period when the agricultural crops are going on the land. If necessary, a second or third polarding may also be done upto the same being if the polarded shoots have grown up to tall and causing shade to the detriment of the agricultural crops before they are harvested. The subabul plants will be

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allowed to grow and are lapsed during winter and summer to provide fodder, and provide protection from hot sun and wind erosion. With proper spacing of rows of su-babul it will be possible to grow agricultural crops in between perpetually as a classical example of agro forestry with the same land simultaneously used to grow trees and agricultural crops, Su-babul seedlings are affectively protected in the rainy season till the Agricultural crops are harvested as cattle are not allowed to enter the field.

If small marginal farmers are not coming forward to allow the department to raise demonstration plots on their lands, such demonstration plots may even be raised on lands belonging to slightly better off farmers. But a target of atleast one demonstration plot covering about half a hectare for each Panchayat Samithi block should be achieved during the 1984 rains. It is learnt that this type of agro forestry practiced with subabul in combination with agricultural crops is being practiced very successfully in the drier districts of Maharashtra State commencing from 1982. The farmers there seems to have realised the advantages of agro forestry with subabul as the main tree crop, since subabul in addition to being a good coppicer (pollard is a fast growing leguminous tree that can be harvested) from the second year itself. There is therefore, no season why the same practice can not be introduced successfully in the dry districts for Andhra Pradesh also in the rain fed agricultural lands with considerable benefit to the farmers. All the D.F.Os. are requested to take special steps with immediate effect and see that demonstration plots are laid in all the Panchayat samithi blocks during 1984 rains.

4- Growing su-babul in contour strips at wide spacing will also be a most viable solution to the pernicious practice of shifting cultivation in the tribal areas at elevations below 1000 mts. subabul could be planted in all such cases in stripes at spacing of upto 10 meters so that the tribal can cultivate his land in between without any interference from the tree crop. Whenever subabul is growing too fast, it could be pollard coppied to reduce the shade and provide poles for hutments as well as good leaf fodder.

5- All the Conservators of Forests are requested to take special steps to see that this programme is implemented fully and satisfactorily during 1984 rains through issue of suitable instructions to all their Divisional Forest Officers after thoroughly discussing this programme with the D.F.Os. and also explaining the same to the Range Officers in the field.

Sd/- A.L.Rao,
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