KRISHI JAGRAN

AGRI100
AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP LIST
100 VISIONARIES AND INSTITUTIONS
SHAPING THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE

MESSE MÜNCHEN

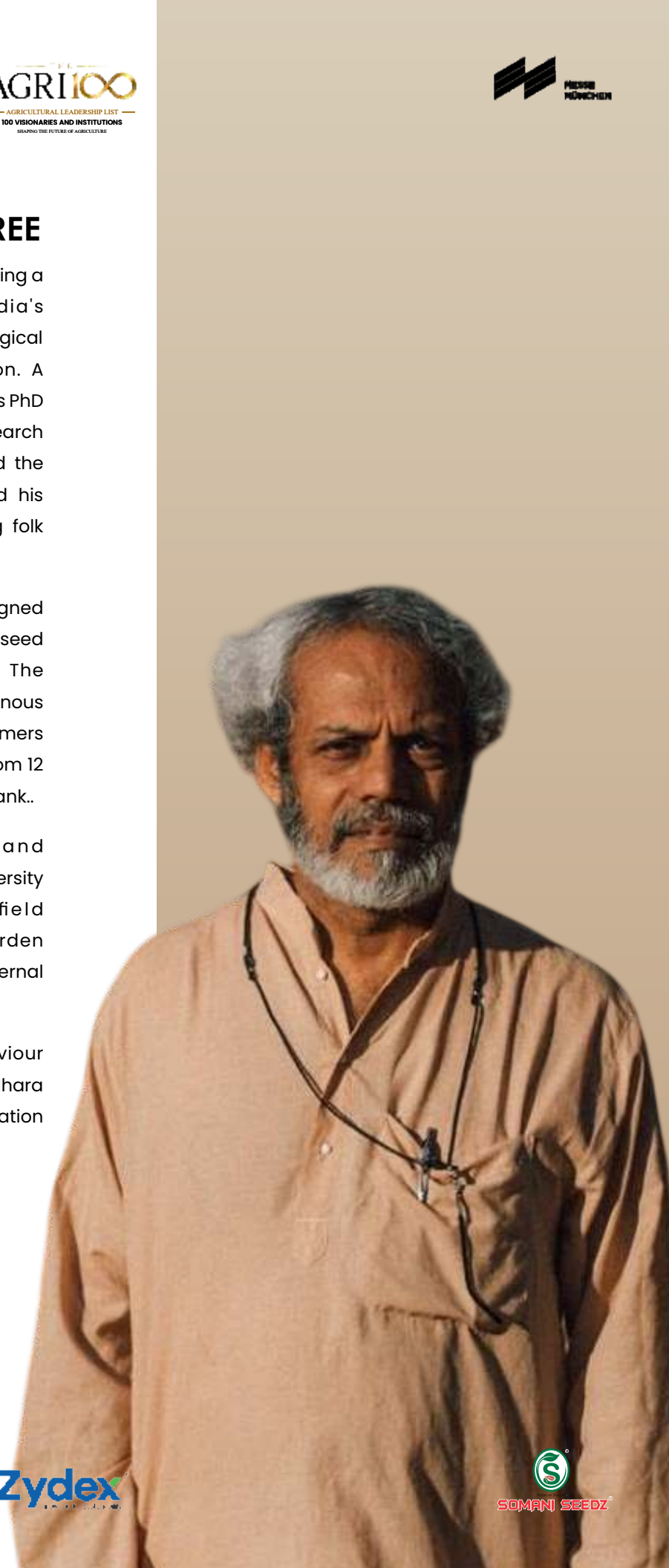
THE AGRI100 | 2026 HONOUREE

Dr. Debal Deb has spent nearly three decades building a farmer-oriented system for conserving India's indigenous rice diversity while combining ecological research with practical, on-farm conservation. A biologist and ecologist by training, he completed his PhD at the University of Calcutta and post-doctoral research at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, and the University of California, Berkeley. He later shifted his principal effort towards conserving disappearing folk crop landraces.

In 1997, he established Vrihi, a living seed bank designed around farmer-led cultivation, multiplication and seed exchange rather than conventional storage. The collection now conserves more than 1,400 indigenous rice varieties, with seeds distributed freely to farmers across 12 Indian states. More than 8000 farmers from 12 states have received seeds directly from the seed bank..

At Basudha, his 1.7-acre conservation and demonstration farm in Rayagada, Odisha, crop diversity is maintained through cultivation and field experimentation, with an agroecological garden growing more than 30 crop species without external inputs.

A recipient of the National Plant Genome Saviour Recognition Award (2009) and Kirloskar Vasundhara Sanman (2020), Dr. Deb's farmer-centred conservation model makes him THE AGRI100 | 2026 HONOUREE.



Dr. Debal Deb

Farmer-Conservator
Basudha Farm
Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies (CIS) / Vrihi

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