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Innovation The Research Concept

Success Cases in Indian Farming: Managing by Learning

Abstract

There is a clear need for well-sourced and researched information on agriculture sector. Set in this backdrop, paper is designed to capture information on policies, perspectives, problems, people, trends and good practices through case study interventions. Mainstream media gives little space to agriculture and rural issues. We do not see much in social media as well. Popular media too tend to focus more on the urban than rural. There are small endeavors to capture and disseminate information on agriculture, they are not enough. The present paper is a sincere attempt to establish a platform where people can exchange their information, ideas, and resources to contribute to the discourses in agriculture domain.

Keywords: Success Stories Indian Farmers, Case Study Approach.

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Introduction

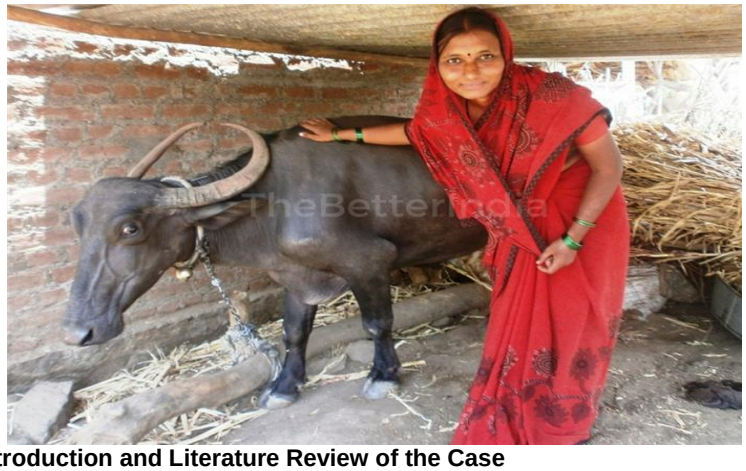
Success Story-Case 1

A Case of Vanita Balbhim Manshetty

Date : 06 January, 2017

Objective

To Explore the Success Story of a Woman Farmer from Maharashtra Growing 15 Crops in a Year Using the One-Acre Farming Model in the case



Introduction and Literature Review of the Case

Vanita Balbhim Manshetty, a 35-year-old farmer, resident of Chiwri village in Osmanabad district of Maharashtra , took up the one-acre farming model in 2014. Today, as an independent farmer, she is happy to provide her family with nutritious, organic food.

“By cultivating crops under the one-acre model, I have been doing what the doctor does for people – providing good health,” says Vanita Manshetty

She has four daughters. The eldest is doing her graduation course, while the youngest is in Class 7.Vanita and her husband are farmers. Her husband Balbhim Manshetty generates off-farm income through civil contracts such as laying roads, constructing water harvesting structures, land levelling, etc. Around 50% of annual household income comes from this work and the rest comes from farming and dairy activities.

Vanita’s husband suffers from high blood pressure and diabetes. Concerned about her family, she took up organic farming to provide healthy food for them and not for selling in the market.

She felt that toxins like chemical fertilizers and pesticides in the agricultural produce purchased from the market are the prime reasons for various diseases. Theoretically, since she had land, she could grow healthy food crops for her family.

Methodology and Results

Vanita came to know about the one-acre farming model when she participated in a training programme organized by Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) and Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) for women farmers and agricultural laborers. SSP is an organization that promotes sustainable community development through empowerment of women in entrepreneurship and leadership roles. The participants went for an exposure visit to an organic farm in a place called Siddhagiri. There they witnessed a typical one-acre resilient agricultural model wherein more than hundred crops are grown on a single acre of land. Almost all the crops that were required to ensure the nutritional security of a household were grown there. Looking at the biodiversity on this little farm, Vanita felt that she should also grow as many crops as possible in this way to ensure that her household is self-sufficient.

She says, "Normally in one acre we get only one quintal. But through organic inputs we got four quintals of crop."

In early 2014 the family took two more acres of land on lease. Vanita took an undertaking from her husband that she would cultivate an acre of land on her own. And there she cultivated cereals, pulses and vegetables besides helping her husband in the other two acres to cultivate soybean and grapes to be sold. This continued in 2015 as well, which happened to be a drought year.

In 2015, the couple grew a total of 15 crops under the one-acre model. All the three food crop categories – cereals and millets, pulses and vegetables (including leafy vegetables) were taken up. In more than 68% of the land, she raised crops in the rainy season (Kharif) as well as in winter season (Rabi).

Farming is done either for family consumption or to earn an income from selling the produce, or for both the purposes. Vanita cultivates mainly for domestic consumption and sells only onions and brinjals; that too after retaining some for domestic use. This helps her ensure food security for her family.

Vanita reaped more than 3900 kg of produce during the year 2015. Around 25% of the total production was used for household consumption. In terms of value, the amount of produce consumed fulfils 75% of the food requirements of the family. Vanita incurred a total expenditure of Rs. 9,600 per acre in cash, to raise the crops supplemented with the manure she produced from the cow dung from her farm, which was worth Rs. 6,000. Hence, her net income was Rs. 44,550 for two seasons, which amounts to nearly Rs.18, 000 per acre.

Conclusion

"My dream is to develop my land with better water conservation techniques and start horticulture," she says.

Even before joining SSP, Vanita's husband used to consult her in taking decisions. But since she knew very little about farming, she was not confident enough to suggest new techniques. However, after becoming a part of the producer group, she is more confident. She is now able to take care of the farm on her own, thereby providing free time for her husband to expand his civil contracting business. Due to two autonomous earning members in their family, their household income has also increased. Her husband supports her in all farm related decisions. Even children work on the farm and help her in cultivation.

"I understood the importance of healthy food owing to ill health of family members. I have also received support from my family in this regard. My children respect me more, while my daughter treats me as her role model. In addition to all these, the other villagers treat me as a progressive women farmer," she says.

Vanita feels that she has been cultivating grapes using chemicals and has been selling the same in the market. Now that she is able to give good quality food to her family, she would like to offer good quality organic grapes to the market as well.

Success Story-Case 2

A Case Study of Carrot Farmers

Date : 12 August, 2016

Objective

To Know how a Carrot Farmer Earned Rs.2.22 Lac per Hectare in the case.

Introduction and Literature Review of the Case

As seeing is believing, better performance of Pusa Rudhira in terms of higher productivity and profitability also interested other farmers of the village. During winters of 2012, another 20 farmers requested the seed of Pusa Rudhira and 200 kg seed was provided on cost basis. Consequently, Pusa Rudhira spread in about 60 percent area (90 acres) under carrot cultivation in the village within a year of its introduction.

Methodology and Results

Enthused with the profits from Pusa Rudhira, carrot farmers adopted mechanized cleaning of carrots by procuring three cleaning machines on community sharing basis, which facilitated faster washing and also minimized damage to carrots.

Higher productivity of Pusa Rudhira coupled with premium price in the next season provided farmers with an impressive net income of Rs 2,22,690.00/ha. Popularity of Pusa Rudhira has spread to different markets in Delhi and NCR.

In Rabi 2013-14, 120 acres (75 percent) of carrot area was under this variety. In years to come, Pusa Rudhira is expected to cover more and more area and remain dominant variety.

Soodna village on the outskirts of newly carved Hapur district of western Uttar Pradesh is poised to become 'carrot village'. Thanks to Pusa Rudhira, an improved carrot variety developed and introduced by Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi.

Soodna is one of the four villages adopted by IARI in the year 2010 for improving farm production and profitability in an integrated manner and to develop it into a 'model' village. Conventional cropping pattern of wheat-rice-sugarcane-vegetables was prevalent there. Farmers of this village were growing carrot among many other vegetables.

However, carrot cultivation was not much remunerative before the introduction of Pusa Rudhira. Keeping in view the potential of carrot cultivation in the village, the IARI in 2011-12 introduced Pusa Rudhira on a small area of 1.75 acres of Sh. Charan Singh, a marginal farmer in the village.

Regular advisories were provided to optimize use of farm inputs in the crop. The farmer could harvest a bumper crop of Pusa Rudhira yielding 393.75 q/ha, which is about 10 q/ha higher than the prevailing variety. It provided a net return of Rs 2,64,286.00/ha, which was 37 percent higher than that of local variety.

Superior quality traits of the newly introduced variety led to 18 percent higher price in the local market. Pusa Rudhira fetched higher price of Rs 928.00/q which was Rs 140.00/q higher than prevalent variety, due to its attractive long and deep red roots, red coloured core, uniformity in shape and size and more sweetness having TSS value of 9.5 oBrix.

Consequently there is increasing demand for Pusa Rudhira. Sh Kamal Singh and Sh. Jaibhagwan Saini also marginal farmers, ventured to take up the seed production of the variety. The IARI scientists provided technical guidance and support. An extra income of Rs. 58000.00 is expected from sale of Rs 145 kg of carrot seed, which was produced in last year. No wonder these farmers are potential entrepreneurs of tomorrow.

Conclusion

Pusa Rudhira is also nutritionally rich as compared to other carrot varieties. The variety was tested to have higher levels of carotenoid (7.41mg) and phenols (45.15 mg) per 100 g. The primary benefit of these substances lies in their antioxidant property that guards against certain types of cancer, apparently by limiting the abnormal growth of cells. Pusa Rudhira is a boon to farmers and consumers as well.

Success Story-Case 3

A Case Study of SHG -Date : 20 August, 2015

Objective

To Examine the Woman Power for a New Horizon through SHG Model in the case

Introduction and Literature Review of the Case

Yagrung is a remote village in district Pashighat of Arunachal Pradesh, nestled in the lap of lofty mountains and naturally endowed with an abundance of gurgling streams. This sleepy village can only be reached by crossing two rivulets and becomes largely inaccessible during the monsoon months. Amidst this natural splendor, quiet revolution is taking place here as fifteen women reshape their lives.

Methodology and Results

When the Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) launched their intervention for Self Help Groups (SHG) in the area, enterprising women of Api Bekang ,SHG participated in the project wholeheartedly. They received training on cultivation of tomato, strawberry, passion fruit, soybean and flowers. They also learnt to prepare a soybean based health drink which tastes like Horlicks.

In addition, they gained expertise in making pickles and sweets. They then participated in two exposure visits to Shillong and the North- East Kisan Mela at Mizoram. These were valuable trips that educated them about the immense opportunities available to them, and helping them to realize their potential. The women set up stalls for selling their products at these events and received tremendous response from visitors.

Conclusion

The ventures made them ambitious to become economically more self- reliant. Soon, they started a micro- savings programme and accumulated an amount of Rs. 45,000. This amount was used as a revolving fund to give small loans to the members for purchasing raw materials and for meeting other expenditures. As one of the ladies of the group said, "Once you learn to help yourself through collective action, you ensure a life of dignity for all times to come."

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