

# Celebrating Women Farmers – The Custodians of Our Fields

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**Rajendranagar, Hyderabad – 500 030, Telangana, India.**



**Celebrating Women Farmers:  
The Custodians of Our Field**

**Edited By**

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In this e-book, the readers will be introduced to success stories of fruitful women entrepreneurs of their innovative technologies and practices that are transforming agriculture with a gender-inclusive approach. In the context of the UN has declared the Year 2026 as the “International Year of Women Farmers”. This book projects the women entrepreneurs’ success and their role in agriculture showcasing equality but also contributing in increasing productivity, food security, and sustainability. It is on the eve of Mahila Kisan Diwas to motivate in bridging the gender gap in agriculture, empowering women farmers, entrepreneurs, and agri-professionals to become key contributors in the agri-food systems of tomorrow.

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## Preface


Agriculture in India has long been the backbone of our economy, sustaining millions of livelihoods and contributing significantly to national growth. In recent years, a silent yet powerful transformation has been unfolding within this sector — the rise of women agripreneurs and agri start-ups led by women. These pioneers are not only redefining traditional agricultural practices but are also driving innovation, sustainability, and inclusivity across the agri-value chain.

This e-book, “**Celebrating Women Farmers: The Custodians of Our Field,**” is a humble tribute to the indomitable spirit, resilience, and ingenuity of women who have emerged as change-makers in agriculture and allied sectors. Their journeys encapsulate the essence of perseverance, leadership, and commitment to rural development. Through their ventures, they have demonstrated how modern technology, entrepreneurial vision, and a deep connection to the land can together create impactful models of growth and empowerment.

Released on the occasion of **Mahila Kisan Diwas**, this compilation aims to inspire policymakers, institutions, and aspiring entrepreneurs to recognize and support the pivotal role of women in transforming Indian agriculture. Each narrative in this volume stands as a beacon of hope and motivation — a testimony to the boundless potential that women possess when provided with the right opportunities and support systems.

It is our sincere hope that this e-book will serve as both a source of inspiration and a valuable reference for those committed to advancing gender equality, innovation, and sustainable development in the agricultural sector.

**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2025

  
(Sagar Hanuman Singh)  
Director General  
MANAGE, Hyderabad.

## Success story of a Pahadi Woman of Dev Bhoomi – Ms. Punni Devi

**Name:** Punni Devi

**Village:** Gumma P.O,

**Tehsil:** Gumma, Jogindernagar

**District:** Mandi

**State:** Himachal Pradesh

This is a success story of a middle aged Pahadi woman of Dev Bhoomi who has not allowed her illiteracy and poverty to drag her down. Like many other women she also had a dream to become financially independent but being very less educated and having negligible economic support from family and friends, she found it very difficult to stand on her feet but deep down she had a burning desire to economically support her family.

Luckily, one day her husband Sh. Ram Lal visited Government Trout Farm Barot and met with the officials of the fisheries department and understood the basic concepts of Rainbow Trout farming and found it a very lucrative business and decided to adopt it as he has a small piece of land near a cold water perennial stream. He constructed two number trout raceways with the financial assistance under Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Fisheries Development Board in the financial year, 2013 -14. In the initial stages he faced challenges and sometimes suffered losses also due to lack of knowledge and experience but his wife Sh. Punni Devi, stood beside him like a solid rock and supported him in every way. Persistent efforts of the couple showed them good results and they started making profits.

With the increase in trout fish production, came new challenges of marketing also. But believing in the old saying that “God help those who help themselves”, Smt. Punni Devi applied for subsidy under Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana – a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for construction of Fish Kiosk to overcome the marketing challenges in the financial year, 2020-21 and as per the budget available, her subsidy case was sanctioned by the State Fisheries Department and a financial assistance to the tune of Rs.4.0 lakh was provided.

She has constructed the Fish Kiosk at Muhal Gumma along Mandi-Pathankot NH-154 and managing it very successfully with the support of her husband. Now, she is very happy and satisfied as she is not only earning enough to feed

her family and but also given employment to her son and daughter-in-law in this family venture.



Fish Kiosk is always occupied with customers mostly tourists during summers. During this time trout sale increases to 300 kgs/ month. She sells both the freshly caught raw trout fish from her husband's trout farm as well as fried trout fish and besides fish, other food items are also sold to increase the footfall of the customer. Family manages to save 2.5 – 3.0 lakh per year after meeting all their expenses.

She is happy as she has become self-reliant and economically independent and she thanks the Department of Fisheries for support and cooperation. She has truly become the source of inspiration to others.

## Jai Kali Maa V.O.

**Name:** Jyoti Devi

**Village:** Akhli Bhutan,

**District:** Reasi,

**State:** J & K

Jyoti Devi is a young, enthusiastic Self Help Group (SHG) leader and entrepreneur. She has leadership qualities and leading her group on various platforms. She is associated with Jai Kali Maa SHG, located in Akhli Bhutan (Reasi). She is working as Cluster trainer in the NRLM and giving training to rural women. She has 6 years of experience to manage self-help groups and marketing the SHG products.

Jai Kali Maa SHG was formed under NRLM-Umeed at Akhli Bhutan a rural village of district Reasi. With the help of NRLM, she assessed the economic and unemployment situation of her panchayat. It was observed that the women of Akhli Bhutan were not having any source of financial stability and self-dependency. It was observed that majority of women wants to become self-dependent and self-earning. Team NRLM encouraged women and motivated them to join SHG. She has 30 groups and 180 members in her area.

NRLM is providing Bank Linkage and Community Investment Fund (CIF). She received a capitalization in the form of RF, CIF-1, and CIF -2, to purchase raw materials, modern tools, and organize trainings to refine their skills and learn market strategies. Community Invest Fund (CIF) is a grant provided to Self Help Groups under the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) to improve the quality of life and address social needs of the members.

J & K Bank is providing basic financial support and loan to her group. With the funds she started “**Masala Tikki**” and “**Kalira Making**” units which provided employment to group members.

She is working in close contact with Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Reasi which is providing technical guidance to her group in the field of agriculture produce and value addition of the produce. KVK has provided solar drier, Grinder, Papad making machine and packaging machine to her group. With the help of these machines she is making ‘Papads’ and ‘Dried vegetables’.

KVK scientist Dr. Lalit Upadhyay registered her innovation 'Ghia Barfi' for start-up funding of 25 lac under Udgam Scheme of Rural Agri Business Incubation Program (RABI). 'Ghia Barfi' has healthy characters of bottle gourd and pure Milk and made up without adding preservatives.

NABARD, provided huge support of 5 lakh to her group in the form of MEDP and LEDP. NABARD also supporting a Rural shop for selling the products at Agar Jitto for her group. NABARD has also provided mushroom spawn to her group. It is helping to generate income and providing good health to rural families also.

Realizing the need for a digital presence, her SHG collaborated with private platforms and social media like Meta, Instagram and WhatsApp to showcase their products. Presently Jai Kali Maa SHG is selling products of more than a lakh per month and generating net income of Rs 3.10 lakh per annum.

Due to her commendable work, Jyoti Devi has been awarded by KVK, Agriculture University and many other organizations. She is working for the betterment of her fallow women of the rural areas. Her prime motive is to make women self-dependent and self-earning. She is also working to conserve the tradition of Dogra culture and traditions.

## **Mushroom Cultivation for enhancing employment generation among Farmwomen in Kathua District of U.T. (Jammu and Kashmir)**

**Name:** Shakti Sharma

**Village:** Palli

**District:** Kathua,

**State:** J & K

### **Background**

Ms. Shakti Sharma of in Kathua District of UT (Jammu and Kashmir) is now a successful and progressive mushroom entrepreneur wanted to find a better way for sustainable livelihood for her family as she could hardly get opportunity to earn income as she had to quit her academics after 12<sup>th</sup>. She married to Army Personal at very young age. After the retirement of her husband both husband and wife felt that the family pension was not satisfying their financial needs and entrepreneurial curiosity so they wanted to establish any enterprise to get extra income to fulfill the needs of the family. She started searching for viable avenues to establish her own enterprise. With the help of her husband she spent a lot of time surfing the internet for evaluation of different business ideas in order to establish a sustainable enterprise. After a lot of research she shortlisted few ideas including mushroom cultivation. Due to lack of proper technical expertise in mushroom farming she contacted scientist at KVK, Kathua for detailed technical knowhow and skill development on mushroom cultivation.

### **Selection Criteria**

Earlier the family of Shakti Sharma had poultry farm and the family was practicing poultry farming on mere subsistence basis. KVK, Kathua identified her needs and motivated her to transform the closed poultry farm into mushroom unit with low investment because she also had some prior-experience in intermittent growing of white button mushroom so she was selected as a suitable candidate to be groomed as a professional mushroom grower. She was advised to receive training on mushroom cultivation before starting mushroom cultivation on scientific lines and at economical scale.

## **Capacity Building**

Keeping in view her interest about mushroom cultivation, scientist at KVK, Kathua enrolled her in vocational training programme on mushroom cultivation during 2021. She was provided thorough training on cultivation of various type of mushrooms. KVK, Kathua also arranged exposure visits for this women entrepreneur for making her better conceive the idea of setting up a mushroom unit. It encouraged her to take up the enterprise of round the year mushroom farming in her village. KVK, Kathua also provided her spawn of white button, milky and oyster mushrooms for kick starting her enterprise of year round cultivation of mushroom throughout. In addition, polythene bags and coir pith were also provided her. Constant handholding the entrepreneur was done till she got fully proficient in handling all aspects of mushroom growing and marketing.

## **Process of entrepreneurship development**

The climate of Kathua district is congenial for production of three different types of mushroom i.e. button, milky and oyster mushrooms, therefore after providing thorough training and exposure to Smt. Shakti Sharma, KVK, Kathua, provides her critical inputs. She was encouraged to get lucrative returns of Rs 130-150 per kg for her produce.

Scientist in-charge, at the KVK further inspired and trained her to opt for value addition of different mushrooms along with other necessary skills for further scaling up her business and also for earning still better income and to mitigate the market risk. She was motivated and supported to participate in various exhibitions, Kisan Melas, Kisan Goshties organised by the Department of Agriculture and other departments.

Her journey so far has been very impressive, after training she started year round cultivation of mushroom starting from 800 bags to 4500 bags. She has different achievement in her credits. She has also been awarded for Lakhpati didi from Jammu region under NRLM. Her efforts and achievements has also been appreciated by Dr. Jitendra Singh, MoS for personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions of India during his visit for entrepreneurship through Startup. She also motivated other ladies from adjoining villages to start their carrier as entrepreneur in mushroom cultivation for sustainable livelihood.

## Overpowering the challenges

Mushroom is a highly perishable crop that requires proper care against various infestations, diseased and insect-pests. However, she regularly interacted with scientist concerned at KVK, Kathua and got information regarding management of diseases and insect pests of mushroom.



**Mushroom Unit of  
Shakti Sharma**



**Awards to progressive Farm  
Women in Kisan Mela, year 2024  
at SKUAST-Jammu**

The concerned scientist also advised her on various precautions on mushroom marketing in early phase of the business. Now, she is able to manage this problem and enhance the level of her production. She has set up a well-established marketing network for selling her mushroom.

## Impact analysis:

Particulars	Adoption after training
Name of enterprise	Mushroom cultivation
Size of enterprises (No. of bags)	4500 bags
Production (Kg/No.)	7000kg
Cost of Production / unit (Rs.)	382500
Gross income (Rs. / Year)	700000
Net income (Rs. / Year)	317500
Marketing	Local + Jammu Mandi
Position of Mushroom unit at present : 4500 bags	

### **Lessons for budding Entrepreneurs**

She is a young Mushroom Agri-entrepreneur in the district and became a role model for unemployed youth and young ladies of the district. She inspires rural youth and farm women from her village and district to start mushroom farming as a profitable enterprise. Moreover she also generated employment for poor farm women at her unit who helped in packing and harvesting of mushroom.

## Sweet smell of success in Floriculture

**Name:** Smt. Asha devi

**Village:** Gupwal,

**Tehsil:** Vijaypur

**District:** Samba

**State:** Jammu & Kashmir

Floriculture has been a major thrust area of diversification of horticulture. Growing of flowers and ornamental crop is a rapidly expanding global enterprise. The floriculture continues to generate employment opportunities to people in rural areas. An area under flower cultivation can support a family consisting of five to six members. Marigold flower cultivation is getting increasingly popularity among farmers. It is an important and popular flower of India and ranks third in number after roses and chrysanthemum. Area under the marigold cultivation in India is about 68.33 thousand hectares with the production of 60.97 thousand metric tons. The commercial cultivation of marigold is a source of income and employment to marginal farmers as well as large farmers.

Jammu city is also called as the city of temples so there is ample of scope of floriculture as an enterprise because large quantity of flowers are daily required for worship of God in the form of garlands and loose flowers. Samba district is situated on the foothills of Shivalik Hills alongside the National Highway at 384 meters above sea level on the bank of river Basantar. About two-third of the area of district Samba is rainfed. The area on the southern side of the National highway is irrigated through Ravi Tawi Irrigation Canal network and contributes towards cereal crops and other horticulture crops. District Samba is known for traditional crop rotation of Paddy and wheat, which is not profitable as it has been during the peak green revolution period. Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Samba came in to existence during 2017. The KVK has been playing vital role in transfer of technology to the farmers of the district since its beginning. Results of technology motivated the farmers for its adoption and it has been spread in more than 50 ha in the district.

### **Brief introduction of Farmwomen, Asha Devi:**

At present when the rural people are deviating from agriculture and village culture, Smt. Asha devi W/o Sh. Shiv Kumar, farm woman of Village: Gupwal, Tehsil: Vijaypur is emerged as role model for all the farm women and farmers community for whom agriculture is only the option of livelihood. Asha Devi is about 52 years old having academic qualification up to class tenth, with the farm experience of about 35 years. She has the land of 2.0 hectares. She was growing wheat and paddy and little amount of vegetables in the early year of his farming with traditional methods. She came in contact of KVK in 2021 in one of the farmer training programme and shared the problem of low production in cereal crops with less income. She was motivated by the scientist of Krishi Vigyan Kendra to go for diversification in the form of Horticulture especially floriculture. After that she had actively participated in several training courses on commercial floriculture and kept himself in touch with the scientists of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Samba and always tried the new technology for enhancing the net profit from her farm. With the technical guidance of KVK she started the journey of Marigold cultivation in the year 2020. KVK has provided quality seed and planting material to her. She started the marigold cultivation from one kanal and at present she is growing in more than 18 kanals. She used to grow the marigold around the year by using different varieties. In the first year she got the net profit of Rs. 9000/- and now her return from the marigold is more than 3.0 lakh. She got more profit during Navratri, Diwali other festivals like Shivratri and marriages etc. Adoption of package and practice maintain the quality of flower and attract the market without any bargain. Before adopting this venture it was very difficult for her to run her family. The problem was solved by introducing marigold cultivation in her cropping system and after gaining the knowledge from KVK she started her new journey.

Due to nursery establishment and crop production she is generating a handsome income from that unit and now she become self-employed. She is raising the nursery under protected structure and preparing the bio-rationals by her own to control insects –pests. She has engaged at-least ten labourers from her village and providing the employment to unemployed women, her hardworking motivate her to grasp and adopt the technologies at faster rate. She is actively involved in all day to day working of the farm and marketing. She can now identify important insects, pests and their management. The important thing in her life is that she became the role model for the other farmers of her village as well as for the farmers of the surrounding areas. She is the group

leader of women farmer and showing them the path of handwork. Now she has all the comforts of his life including all farm machinery, all gadgets, Pucca House, Vehicle and more over her well educated children.

### **Brief profile of the technology:**

Floriculture is an important and upcoming trade with potential both in domestic as well as in export markets world over. Considering the tremendous export potential of floriculture, the Govt. has accorded on extreme focus thrust area to floriculture. City of the temples has gained the importance of floriculture. Under commercial Floriculture, KVK Samba introduce the cultivation of marigold where scientific technology regarding marigold cultivation with special emphasis on nursery raising techniques, seed treatment, scientific cultural practices including pinching ,use of bio-pesticides, bio-insectides, right stage of harvesting, packaging, marketing, value addition and seed production. The flower cultivation does not require a large portion of land, it can be taken up on a small piece of land or in poly house also. Income from growing eight Kanal of any cereal crop is almost equal to the return getting from raising two Kanal of marigold.

### **Plan Implement and Support:**

After recognizing the importance of flower cultivation in uplifting the economy of small and marginal farmers, KVK Samba has planned to introduce the diversification in Samba district. For that all type of extension methods have been used to motivate the farmers towards floriculture. KVK conducted a number of programmes like farmer training programmes, vocational training programmes, and more over Skill Development training programme of thirty days on commercial floriculture for farmers, farm women, and rural youth. Beside this Front line demonstrations, On Farm Trials were also laid out at the farmer field in different locations to motivate the large number of the other farmers after seeing the performance of technology. Various other activities like Awareness camps, Kisan Goshthies, Group Discussions, farmer scientist interaction were organized to send the message among other farmers about the profitability of the technology. Radio talks, film shows, frequent media coverage, extension literature were distributed among the more number of farmers to motivate and aware them regarding the adoption of technology.

### **Impact of technology:**

With the technical intervention and guidance of KVK Samba the year around cultivation of marigold has been popularized among most of the farmers of Samba district. The front line demonstration and On Farm trial conducted by

KVK have resulted the stimulated effect in motivating the farmers of the district in adoption of marigold production as a supplementary source of income. KVK Samba could be able to make an exceptional impact in improving the livelihood status of farming community of the area. The success of Smt. Asha Devi also encourages the other farmers, farm women, rural youths of the surrounding area to grow marigold successfully and profitability.

### **Environmental impact**

The cultivation of marigold have tremendous environmental impact in term of saving fertilizers, irrigation water ,excessive use of insecticide and pesticides because the marigold also play a wonderful role in controlling fruit borer and root knot nematode. Consequently, it can significantly reduce the load of insecticides in the environment.

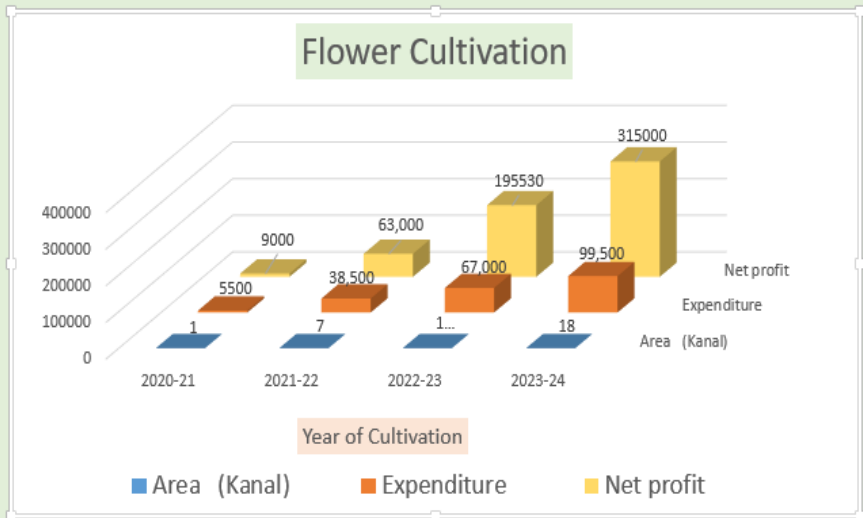
### **Recognition /Awards received by the entrepreneur**

In 2020-21 Smt. Asha Devi ji was awarded by best farmer award at Block level during Kisan Mela organized by Department of Agriculture under ATMA. Beside this he had also got various appreciation awards by SKUAST-Jammu, KVK and other departments also.



### Outcome of the farmer in term of profitability:

Type of enterprise	Year	Area	Expenditure	Net profit
Flower cultivation	2020-21	1 kanal	55,00	9000
	2021-22	7 kanal	38,500	63,000
	2022-23	12 kanal	67,000	195530
	2023-24	18 Kanal	99,500	315000



## Story of Mana Manyam Producer Co. Ltd.

As Director and Co-founder of Mana Manyam Producer Co. Ltd., a pilot initiative under the AP Agri Marketing Department, we support 100 small and marginal farmers from APCNF-Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (RYSS) by providing direct market access. We procure both perishable and non-perishable produce at fair prices through farm-gate pickups with digital payments. The produce is then processed, value-added, packaged, and sold under our “Avani Organics” brand across four retail stores in Visakhapatnam and other organic outlets. We ensure transparency, traceability for consumers, and dignified livelihoods—empowering farmers and providing direct employment to 45 women across our processing and retail operations.



## GIS Vizag



## Our Team

We're also developing a model farm in the heart of the city, within the Andhra University campus, to engage urban dwellers in sustainable farming practices. This hands-on learning space allows participants to experience composting, planting, and sowing a variety of seasonal leafy greens and vegetables—empowering them to grow their own food and reconnect with nature, right in the city.

Owner of Urban Eco Farms—During COVID-19, I started an innovative subscription based concept that brings customer close to the farmer and helps them to produce their own veggies following 100% natural farming techniques. Trained & E- launched by MANAGE – Centre for Innovation & Agripreneurship under RKVY RAFTAAR cohort 4.

Business model is in the idea of providing safe vegetables for customers who want pesticide free food and help the younger generation to connect to MOTHER EARTH.

Apart for this 6 acres farm is used for pulses production - custard apple, mango 3years, with inter crop of green gram, black gram and red gram, vegetables like cucumber, bottle gourd and pumpkin.

12 acres NPOP certified farm for fruits (cashew 5 years old and custard apple 4 years, drumstick and dragon fruit 2years) Cashew is at Avani stores after processing through pot roasted. This year we harvested around 3000 kgs of cashew and marketed as pot roasted cashew.

As a founding member of Rythu Mitra Trust, I work to motivate and support farmers in transitioning from chemical-based farming to natural, sustainable practices. We provide hands-on training at the farm level and actively engage schools by organizing farm visits—giving young minds a firsthand experience of how food is grown, from seed to harvest, helping them value the journey of food to their plate.

#### **Awards & Appreciations:**

- Felicitated by Hon. Shri J.P. Nadda ji, National president- BJP for voluntary work towards Solid waste Management, terrace gardening & organic farming.
- Star Women Entrepreneur Award from Vizag Chamber of Commerce & Industry. Pudami putra award by Gandhi global family, Gandhi Gyan Prasthan on the occasion of international pulses day.
- Best Achiever's Certificate and Award at the 5th National Conference of Resident Welfare Associations held in Mumbai.
- International Women's day celebrations 2020 – Agent of change award by Prajapitha Brahma Kumaris.
- Ananda Cityzen Best RWA award for solid waste management.
- Visista Seva Puraskaram award from Vasantha Mohana Foundation.

- Best inspirational award at the AP Federation of resident welfare associations.
- PEAS award for best vegetable gardening trainer.
- Green lady of Visakha, and several other institutional awards.
- DMDSC Type 1 Diabetes ambassador award on behalf of Diabetic child society

To conserve water, we use drip irrigation and micro-sprinklers at the farm level, along with rainwater harvesting for our terrace gardens. For sustainable transport, we rely on electric vehicles for farm-gate pickups and all transit between our processing center and stores—reducing both pollution and operational costs.

Moved by the Hudhud cyclone, I began sharing knowledge through workshops—teaching farmers to grow safe food and citizens to compost and grow chemical-free veggies. What started as voluntary work evolved into a social enterprise that now connects natural farmers directly with consumers, provides dignified employment to 45 women, and helps farmers earn better incomes—creating meaningful impact in many lives.

## Ms. Ramandeep Kaur – Progressive Woman Dairy Farmer

**Name:** Ms. Ramandeep Kaur

**Village:** Daulatpura,

**Block:** Rampura,

**District:** Bathinda

**State:** Punjab

Ramandeep Kaur, a postgraduate in Political Science from Village Daulatpura, Block Rampura, District Bathinda, comes from an agricultural family. Initially aspiring to move abroad, a chance visit to the PDFA Cattle Fair at Jagraon inspired her to venture into dairy farming instead. Family had limited resources but was hard working.

### Journey and Motivation

After visiting the cattle fair, her interest in dairy farming grew. She pursued a 15-day Animal Husbandry training from Dairy Training Centre, Sardulgarh and a one-month specialized course at GADVASU, Ludhiana. Motivated by her learning and support from family, she began her enterprise in her village. She was a post graduate and was seeking employment and was looking for other opportunities to settle.



93041-00003 5ਵਾਂ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਮੇਲਾ ਭੁੱਖੇ ਮੰਡੇ / ਨਵਾਂ ਅਨਾਜ ਮੰਡੇ / 95692

## Enterprise Development

Ramandeep started dairy farming in 0.8 hectares with only two cows. With diligence and adoption of modern techniques—such as milking machines and foggers—her herd grew to 28 cows, and her farmland expanded to 2 hectares. She utilized machinery and proper irrigation, improving productivity and economic status.

## Achievements and Innovations

- She supplies pure milk exclusively to the Verka center.
- Her landholding increased from 0.8 to 2 hectares and average monthly income increased to ₹4, 50,000 with average expenditure: ₹2, 50,000.
- She took a bank loan and pays an EMI of about ₹50,000. With all the expenses covered, her net monthly income: ₹1, 50,000.
- She won second prize at the PDFA, Jagraon, Ludhiana (10-Feb-2025).

## Contributing Factors

With family encouragement, ongoing technical training, and supportive marketing avenues were crucial in her success. Regular participation in seminars and fairs kept her updated with the newest dairy farming trends. It is the constant support from family and friends, she has kept herself updated with the recent advancements in this sector

## Impact and Recognition

Ramandeep inspires other local farmers by sharing her journey and motivating them to adopt modern dairy practices. Her efforts have uplifted not only her own family but have set an example for others in the community to follow.



## Key Takeaway

A blend of timely guidance, technical know-how, and unwavering determination transformed Ramandeep Kaur from a student with overseas aspirations into a leading example of women's enterprise in agriculture.

## Cooperative Initiative in Punjab

After returning from England madam Rashpal Kaur Sandhu and Mrs. Archna Shah motivated the ladies of village Beeka, block Banga to form a self help group (SHG). The group came into existence during 2011 under the name of Noor SHG. The group has total 10 ladies member. Every member of group takes responsibility to perform her duties. The group established an herbal soap construction unit with cost of 20 Lakh. The aim of this group is to make the women of S.B.S. Nagar self-independent. The group is making herbal soap, surf, body gel, body polisher, body scrubber, hand wash, and body moisture.

### Ms. Rashpal Kaur Sandhu working in her unit



Marketing group leader Mrs. Archna took training on aroma therapy, chemical free soap, and other herbal products from Mallinga Institute. They also took training from K.V. I. C. (Khadi and Village Industries Commission) Govt. of India, ministry of MSME (Mumbai). Madam Sandhu and Archna came in contact with NABARD. The group took training of making soap and detergents from Krishi Vigyan Kendra, (KVK) Langroya, S.B.S. Nagar.



### Group members shaping the soap pieces

The group members learnt the technique of product making, packaging and labeling under the guidance of scientists of KVK Langroya. The group conducted their product exhibitions at KVK Langroya and PAU, Ludhiana. Dr

Baldev Singh Dhillon (VC of PAU, Ludhiana) praised and appreciated their herbal products.

After they conducted exhibitions at Delhi Hut and got first position. They also exhibited their products at Delhi and Mumbai. For making of products various oils of Neem, Rose, Aloe vera and Jasmine are used. These oils are purchased locally and from Kerala and Mumbai.

The group is marketing their products under the name of Karmic at Punjab, Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta Hotels.



### **Packing of herbal detergent powder and ready products**

The group is also

- Expanding their marketing to foreign countries like Taiwan and England's motels, hotels/ herbal spa and saloons.
- Playing role in conserving environment because very less water is consumed while using these herbal soaps.
- All products are made by hand without use of any machinery.
- Manufacturing different types of soaps for different purposes.
- Left over material of soap is used for making body polishers body scrub and hand washers.



**Group leader facilitated by the then Chief Ministers of Punjab and Gujarat and Prime Minister of India**

The group is preparing approximately 20,000 pieces of soap and 2500 pieces of body gel, body polishers, body scrub, hand washers, body moisturizer per month. Net saving of group is Rs. 30 per piece of soap and Rs. 200 per piece of body polishers' body scrub and hand washers. The group is earning approx. Rs.1, 60,000 per month.

The thinking of group leader Rashpal Kaur Sandhu is to provide training to women of nearby villages for making herbal soap products with the help of KVK Langroya and ATMA scheme. This novel idea will help the unemployed village women to generate income for their livelihood.

## First Generation SHE-preneurs from Punjab - First Generation, Millet value addition SHE-preneur

Name: Shriya Maini

Place: Jalandhar

State: Punjab

Shriya Maini (25) is a budding she-preneur from has completed her MBA from Apeejay Institute of Management & Engineering Technical Campus, Shriya has been passionate about cooking since childhood. Apeejay Institute of Management & Engineering Technical Campus (AIMETC). Shriya has been passionate about cooking since childhood but she does not have any degree in Food science. After she decided to start her venture, she has been attending trainings, conferences and melas under various government and Private institution to learn new techniques to enhance her cooking skills and also to make the consumers aware about various options in which millets can be included in your diet. She took a 6-day training from PAMETI in February 2024 on Urban and Peri Urban Agriculture. She has registered her company as sole proprietorship than forming any group like FPO or SHGs.

It was her own experience with Diabetes as her father is diabetic, she started her own venture called Immuno Eats during the pandemic, so as to innovate with healthy millet-based sweet treats and savouries with no sugar or oil or preservatives. She uses ingredients like nuts, healthy seeds, raisins, dates, and natural oil produced from nuts to get a perfect combination of flavour and nutrients in her products. After extensive research on eating habits of the Indian Population, Shriya set out on a mission to encourage people to adopt a healthier diet without compromising on taste and satiating sugar cravings. To make her products, she came up with unique recipes which were formulated over time through trial and error. She asserts, "Through my sweets, I am trying to get people to include healthy ingredients in their day-to-day lives." The ones she is making now are mostly nut-based. "I am also making sweets from a single dry fruit without any additional flavours or

preservatives. Some of the ingredients I use are cashew, coconut, almond, etc. For sweetening, I use natural sugars like dates, raisins, berries, fig, and so on. In place of oil and ghee, I use natural oil produced from nuts. I also use a variety of healthy seeds in the sweets.”

### **Training and Implementation**

After coming in contact with PAMETI she has been guided to use social media to market her products. She has an Instagram page – Immuno eat.in and has also made a WhatsApp group where PAU faculty has been added so she can directly sell to them. She has a product range in namkeens, biscuits and healthy snacking options. She is also registered under SHE 2.0 program of Punjab State Council for Science and Technology (PSCST). This is an eco-system prepared by Government of Punjab to help startups of women entrepreneurs with mentoring, funding, IPR support etc. She has been assigned to GNDU & PAU as her technical partners for incubation.



(From top right to left) With Professor Shalini Bharat, Director, Tata Institute of Social Sciences; With SSP Chandigarh, Kanwardeep Kaur & Manisha Chaudhary; with Mrs Shubha Thakur, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture

Marketing of her products is mostly through exhibition and Mela organized by Government bodies. She has also showcased her products in G20 Global Summit held at Khalsa College, Amritsar, one of the first destinations to host the grand event.

The college successfully hosted an educational summit on the occasion alongside an exhibition.

### **Shriya awarded NCC by 15th President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu:**

Shriya started making products from her own house and her initial investment was Rupees Two thousand only. She participated in various

millet cooking contests and events and won prize money ranging from 2000 to 10,000/- All the money generated through the sale of the products was also ploughed back into her business. Over the period she started buying small packaging equipment to make the products look attractive and seal proof packets ensure longer life of the products. The major machines are on lease. This has reduced the cost of investment in the project.

She has employed one lady permanently who is store in charge and manages all operations when Shriya is busy attending conferences and events. She hires few helpers when she has to bulk pack for any occasion. This has also helped in managing the operational costs.

### **Marketing plan**

At present, it is direct marketing that is being used to build the customer base. Shriya makes the people taste her products so they can themselves experience the quality of the product. She has created an Instagram page to keep the customers updated about the products availability She is doing social media marketing, using WhatsApp business. Though she has not started reaping huge profits and still experimenting with product range, but it has become motivation for many other women, who are also motivated to explore their skills and start their own venture and become independent.

### **Amanpreet Kaur Luthra- venture in Hand made Soaps and Hair oils.**

Amanpreet Kaur Luthra has been a housewife for years. It was after covid, that she too came out of her home to support her family financially. Amanpreet has been an active sport woman and it was that sportsmanship that pushed her to find ways in which she could start her own venture from home. She attended many training courses and it was one such training course at KVK Samrala on “Preparation of Eco-friendly Cleaning Agents” in 2022, she started the journey of entrepreneurship.

She started the venture with an investment of Rs. 20,000. From her own kitchen. She crafted various recipes of soaps and the market for handmade soaps is also prospering. She has named her brand name as

“Raj Organo” after her mother’s name. As she was trained from PAU, she could participate in Kisan Melas and her earnings started increasing. Her products were liked by the local customers and demand for her products has started increasing. She has starting making other hair care products using traditional recipes.



She attended STRY in 2023 in PAMETI and she was nominated to Attend the CGIAR Gender Conference at New Delhi. She exhibited her products at the international conference “From research to Impact: Towards just and resilient agri-food systems” held from October 9<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> 2023. This increased her exposure and her products were liked by the International participants and this really boosted her morale. She registered her SHG as “Raj Self Help Group” and has about 10 ladies with her.

The orders have increased to 5000 per month and the sales have also increased. She has to refuse additional orders as the capacity is still limited. She is thinking of expansion and adding more product range to her existing ones.



There are numerous examples like Manjit Kaur who started with baking after attending a baking course and Ravinder kaur who took mushroom farming after she attended a 6 day STRY on Mushroom production in PAMETI. On analysing the various case studies many challenges were identified.

The first major challenge faced by any women entrepreneur is the society acceptance. There has always been a social expectation that men will be more successful entrepreneurs than the women. A woman needs to adopt an attitude of indifference against the people who do not encourage her.

The second challenge is raising funds. Though there are many governments backed schemes that give seed capital and even other financial help. The major issue that women do not have fixed assets like land or house in their name. Bank loans need collateral for loans.

There are many examples where women from small towns have come forward and started their ventures and they are using digital marketing and ONDC to sell directly to consumers. It is important that such women can be recognised at local level and used as an example to motivate others to take initiative and become independent. Recognizing and supporting the role of women in agriculture is essential for achieving sustainable development goals, improving food security, reducing poverty and promoting rural development.

## Natural Farming Products Available to Everyone

**Farmer Name:** Chukka Chinnammadu

**Address:** Palavalasa,

**District:** Srikakulam,

**State:** Andhra Pradesh

**Own/Tenant Land:** 5.00

**Natural Farming Area:** 5.00

**Total Cultivation Experience:** 15 Years

**Natural Farming Experience:** 12 Years

In addition to the produce grown on my own farm, I have encouraged ten other farmers to cultivate native paddy seed varieties. Our work goes beyond cultivation — the produce is also processed and marketed to ensure better value realization for farmers. At present, a total of sixty farmers participate in this initiative. They supply pulses, grains, rice, and vegetables, which are all purchased at prices higher than the prevailing market rate.

In the Peddapet Seed Development Area, the Agriculture Department allotted old buildings to serve as a stock point and processing unit. This facility has been developed into a fully functional processing center. Here, all types of pulses are cleaned, graded, and processed into dals and flours. Rice is milled into brown and single-polished rice, while sesame is processed into cold-pressed oil. Additionally, tribal farmers from nearby areas contribute products such as bobbarlu (cowpea), rajma, flaxseed, turmeric, and horse gram. Altogether, around forty different value-added products are produced under this integrated system.

### Product Marketing

The processed organic products — nearly forty varieties in total — are supplied to local shops and sold directly to consumers. Weekly stalls are organized, and sales are promoted through WhatsApp groups. Additionally, monthly subscription packs are distributed to consumers across five districts under the “Foot Basket” initiative.

The processing and marketing activities generate a monthly turnover of around ₹3.5 lakh, resulting in a net income of approximately ₹30,000 per month. Through this system, farmers’ produce is purchased, processed, and delivered directly to consumers, ensuring fair prices and transparency.

## **Methods of Natural Farming**

**a) PMDS Method:** Across her entire farm, she cultivate about 20 varieties of pulses, oilseeds, vegetables, and leafy greens throughout the year. My fields are never left fallow, even in summer. This diversified cropping system enhances soil fertility and ensures a steady source of income.

**b) Kharif (A-Grade Rice) Method:** During the Kharif season, I cultivate five acres of land with multiple rice varieties such as Navara, Mysore Mallika, Kuchi Patali, Patalya, Ma Pelai Samba, and Desi Basmati. Corn is planted along the ridges, while vegetables, greens, and fruit plants are intercropped. The ridge crops provide my family with sufficient vegetables throughout the season, reducing household expenses and improving our health.

**c) Rabi (RDS) Method:** In the Rabi season, I follow a multiple cropping system. In five acres, I grow yam, gongura, and sorghum as main crops, along with Pulses. I also continue cultivating ridge vegetables from the Kharif season, meeting household needs while earning additional income.

**d) Summer Crop (SDS) Method:** During the summer, I grow sesame along with other pulses, following the same multiple cropping approach. Vegetables continue to be cultivated along the ridges, ensuring year-round productivity and soil enrichment.

## **Difficulties Faced in Cultivation**

One of the major challenges I faced during cultivation was the inflow of water from neighboring fields where farmers practiced chemical farming. The runoff from those fields often entered my plots, affecting the soil health and disturbing the natural balance required for chemical-free cultivation. Managing this contamination and maintaining the purity of my natural farming system was a constant struggle.

## **Challenges in Promoting Natural Farming**

When I organized meetings with farmers in the surrounding areas to encourage them to adopt natural farming practices, I faced several challenges. Initially, many farmers were skeptical about the idea and hesitant to change from chemical-based methods. However, I assured them that if they adopted natural farming, I would help them market their produce and ensure fair prices.

Although this commitment increased my responsibilities and challenges, it also strengthened the collective effort toward sustainable farming in our community.



### **Inputs Used in Natural Farming**

In my natural farming practices, I primarily use Beejamrutam, Ghanajeevamrutam, and Dravajeevamrutam as core inputs. These traditional bio-formulations enhance soil fertility, improve microbial activity, and protect crops naturally. By following these methods, I have been able to grow high-quality vegetables that are both nutritious and chemical-free.

As a result, the health of my family has also improved significantly. Beyond my own farm, I regularly guide and motivate nearby farmers to adopt similar natural farming techniques. The vegetables grown through these methods are sold daily in our local store, providing a steady income and promoting healthy food among consumers. Additionally, we add value to the natural farming produce by processing and marketing them through our store, ensuring that both farmers and consumers benefit.

### **Use of concoctions**

So far, I have used only a limited number of natural decoctions, applying them as and when required. I prepare these formulations myself based on crop needs and seasonal conditions. These decoctions have proven effective in pest and disease management without relying on chemical pesticides, helping maintain ecological balance and soil health.

### **Suggestions for Expanding Natural Cultivation**

Chemical-based farming has gradually eroded the vitality of the soil, increased input costs, and reduced yields. Over time, this has led to mounting debts among farmers and even health problems due to exposure to chemical residues. To reverse this trend, farmers must be given greater access to MPM (Materials Procurement and Management) shops, where natural farming inputs are available.

Training and capacity-building programs should be organized so that farmers can learn and adopt natural cultivation practices confidently. Additionally, marketing support must be provided to ensure that naturally grown crops are sold at premium prices, offering farmers a fair return for their efforts. Promoting indigenous crop varieties is equally important, as they are more resilient and better suited to local conditions.

## Success Story of Smt. Yasoda Devi from Munger, Bihar

Name of farmer: Smt. Yasoda Devi  
Village: Ikari,  
Block: Satiya Bambar,  
District: Munger, Bihar  
Contact No.: 982529621  
Assets (Landholding : 25 Hectares  
(in ha.)/ Livestock) : Livestock: 1 Cow, 12 Goats

Smt. Yasoda Devi operates a diversified and progressive integrated farming system. Her enterprise combines modern crop cultivation over 2.25 hectares with several allied activities. Key components of her farm include the cultivation of wheat and lentils using Zero Tillage technology, pulse seed production, and the production of organic inputs like compost and vermicompost. Her primary innovations are Button and Oyster mushroom production and beekeeping, which have transformed her farm into a highly profitable venture. By integrating animal husbandry (dairy and goat rearing) with sustainable agricultural practices like crop residue management and the use of bio-fertilizers, she has created a model of a self-reliant and resilient farming enterprise.

### **Achievement of the farmers**

Smt. Yasoda Devi has successfully transitioned her farm into a robust, multi-source income enterprise, demonstrating significant achievements in productivity and profitability.

### **Income Growth:**

She has achieved consistent and substantial growth in her annual income from 2018 to 2021. Her income from mushroom and beekeeping alone nearly doubled from Rs. 1,11,400 to Rs. 2,16,300 in three years.

### **Productivity Enhancement:**

She has significantly increased the productivity of her main crops. Between 2016-17 and 2019-20, the yield of paddy increased from 1410 to 16600

kg/acre, wheat from 1400 to 1780 kg/acre, and lentil from 700 to 790 kg/acre.

**Awards and Recognition:**

She has been formally recognized by the Agriculture Department, ATMA Munger, for her exemplary work in creating awareness among women for mushroom production and beekeeping.

**Innovation Adoption:**

She is an early adopter of modern agricultural techniques, including Zero Tillage, integrated nutrient management, and the use of organic pesticides and fungicides

**KVK intervention (Planning & Implementation)**

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Munger; Bihar Agricultural University (BAU), Sabour, and ATMA, Munger, has been the primary source of technical knowledge and guidance for Smt. Devi. Key interventions include:

**Knowledge Transfer:**

She acquired information on her core innovations—mushroom cultivation and beekeeping—from these institutions.

**Capacity Building:**

She actively participated in training, demonstrations, On-Farm Trials (OFTs), and Kisan Chaupals organized by KVK, which enabled her to adopt innovative technologies suited to her local environment.

**Exposure Visits:**

She enhanced her knowledge through exposure visits to premier institutions like BAU Sabour, Dr. Rajendra Prasad Central Agricultural University (Pusa), Borlaug Institute for South Asia (BISA), and BAMETI, Patna.

**Impact (Economic/ Social/ Environmental)**

The integrated farming model adopted by Smt. Yasoda Devi has created a multi-faceted positive impact:

**Economic Impact:**

Her innovations have led to a lower cost of cultivation, increased yields, and savings on expensive inputs like seeds and fertilizers, directly boosting her profitability.

**Social Impact:**

She has become a beacon of change in her community. Her efforts have directly benefited 670 women farmers in the villages of Tilkari, Barsanda, Dadrijala, Jhikuli, Tetiya Bambar, and others, who have been inspired to adopt similar practices.

**Environmental Impact:**

Her farming practices actively promote environmental sustainability. By incorporating crop residues into the soil, using organic fertilizers, and adopting Zero Tillage, she is enhancing soil fertility and health, contributing to a balanced local ecosystem.

**Outcome (Horizontal/ Vertical spread)**

Her success demonstrates significant potential for replication and scaling. The adoption of her innovative practices by 670 women farmers across several villages is a testament to the strong horizontal spread of the model. Her farm serves as a local hub for learning and dissemination.

She has successfully diversified her farm beyond traditional cropping into multiple allied enterprises like mushroom cultivation, beekeeping, dairy, and goat rearing. This represents a vertical integration of activities, allowing her to capture more value and create a self-sustaining ecosystem on her farm.

## Success Story of Smt. Bina Devi from Munger, Bihar

<b>Name of farmer</b>	Smt. Bina Devi
Village/Panchayat:	Dhauri,
Block:	Tetiabambar,
District:	Munger,
State:	Bihar
Contact No.:	9661274222
<b>Assets (Landholding (in ha.)/ Livestock):</b>	Started with no landholding for cultivation.

### **Name and description of the farm/ enterprise**

Famously known as the “Mushroom Lady,” Smt. Bina Devi is an inspirational entrepreneur from the Tetiabambar block of Munger district. Faced with severe financial constraints and with no land for farming, she began her journey by cultivating mushrooms under her own bed after receiving training from Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Munger. Starting with just one kilogram of mushroom spawn, she overcame initial failures through perseverance and technical guidance. Today, she runs a thriving mushroom cultivation and spawn production enterprise, specializing in Oyster mushrooms that utilize locally sourced, low-cost agricultural residues. Her business now generates an income of Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 40,000 per month during the growing season (September to March)

### **Achievement of the farmers**

Smt. Bina Devi’s journey from poverty to prosperity has earned her numerous accolades and established her as a celebrated figure in Indian agriculture. Her key achievements include:

**National Recognition:** She was awarded the prestigious Nari Shakti Samman in 2021 by the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind.

**Other Major Awards:** Her contributions have been recognized with the Kisan Abhinav Puraskar (2019), the Mahila Kisan Award (2018), and an honor from the Chief Minister of Bihar (2014)



**Financial Empowerment:** She transformed her family's economic condition, enabling her to fund her eldest son's engineering education in Noida and her other children's studies. Her personal income grew from an initial Rs.1,500-Rs.2,000 per month to the current Rs.30,000-Rs.40,000 per month

**Community Leadership:** Her success and influence led to her being elected as the Sarpanch of Dhauri Panchayat, Tetiabambar block, for a five-year term.

### **KVK intervention (planning & Implementation)**

Facilitating organizations, primarily Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Munger, and Bihar Agricultural University, Sabour, were instrumental in her success. KVK's intervention included:

#### **Skill Development:**

Providing crucial initial and advanced training in mushroom production, spawn production, organic farming, vermicompost preparation, and creating bio-pesticides.

#### **Technical Backstopping:**

Offering essential guidance that helped her overcome initial crop failures related to improper methods and spawn quality

**Extension Activities:**

KVK, Munger, has actively promoted mushroom cultivation in the block by organizing Front Line Demonstrations (FLDs), On-Farm Trials (OFTs), and Kisan Chaupals (farmer forums)

**Impact (Economic/ Social/ Environmental)**

The enterprise has generated a profound and multi-dimensional impact:

**Economic Impact:** Smt. Devi created a sustainable livelihood for herself and has directly enabled over 700 women in her block to earn Rs. 8,000 to Rs.10,000 per month during the mushroom season. This has significantly improved the income and living standards of many families in the region

**Social Impact:** Her primary mission is to make women self-reliant. As a master trainer, she has inspired and trained women across more than 100 villages, sparking a grassroots women's empowerment movement centered on mushroom entrepreneurship

**Environmental Impact:** The enterprise promotes a circular economy by using agricultural waste as a substrate for mushroom cultivation. Smt. Devi is also an active proponent of organic and natural farming, training other farmers in these sustainable practices.

**Outcome (Horizontal/ Vertical spread)**

Smt. Bina Devi's initiative is a benchmark for scalability and replication.

**Horizontal Spread:** The model has seen massive horizontal adoption. Inspired by her, over 700 women in the Tetiabambar block are now engaged in mushroom production. Her influence has reached more than 100 villages, demonstrating the wide-scale replicability of the low-cost model.

**Vertical Spread:** Smt. Devi has vertically integrated her own operations by expanding from mushroom cultivation to the more technical and profitable venture of spawn production. She has also diversified her role to become a master trainer and an advocate for organic farming, adding layers of value to her profile.

## Success Story of Smt. Ranju Prakash from Munger, Bihar

<b>Name of farmer</b>	Smt. Ranju Prakash W/o: Sri Jaiprakash
<b>Village:</b>	Mahadevpur,
<b>District:</b>	Habeli Kharagpur, Munger,
<b>State:</b>	Bihar
<b>Contact No.:</b>	Mobile No- 8862849485 Email- <a href="mailto:ranju@sevabharat.org">ranju@sevabharat.org</a>
<b>Assets (Landholding (in ha.)/Livestock)</b>	1760 Sq.ft (80ft X 22 ft)

### **Name and description of the farm/ enterprise**

This urban farming enterprise was initiated in 2020 on a residential terrace, beginning with a modest pilot of floriculture in 10 repurposed thermocol fish-carrying baskets (dimensions: 24" x 12" x 12"). Encouraged by the excellent growth and quality of the flowers, the farmer transitioned to vegetable cultivation.

The operation has since scaled up significantly and currently comprises 150 thermocol baskets dedicated to growing fresh, seasonal vine vegetables. This successful terrace farm now serves as a model for sustainable urban agriculture, generating a net income of approximately Rs. 10,000 per quarter from the sale of its produce.

### **Achievement of the farmers**

The farmer's initiative has yielded significant personal and community benefits. She has successfully established a system that provides organic, fresh vegetables for her family's consumption while also generating supplementary income through local sales. This venture has earned her considerable respect and recognition within her community, establishing her as a local innovator. A cost-benefit analysis for a single cropping season (quarterly) is detailed below:

**Assumptions:**

Total Cultivation Units: 150 thermocol boxes

Volume per Box: 2 cubic feet (2 cft)

Total Cultivation Volume: 150 boxes×2 cft/box=300 cft

Potting Medium Ratio: 1:1 mixture of soil and vermicompost

Planting Density: 6 seedlings per box

Average Yield: 1 kg of produce per plant

Market Price: Rs.40 per kg

**Cost of Cultivation (Expenditure):***1. Vermicompost:*

Total requirement (50% of volume): 150 cft

Conversion: 1 cft≈10 kg vermicompost

Total weight: 150 cft×10 kg/cft=1500 kg

Cost: 1500 kg×Rs.10/kg=Rs.15,000

*2. Seedlings:*

Total requirement: 150 boxes×6 seedlings/box=900 seedlings

Cost: 900 seedlings×Rs.10/seedling=Rs.9,000

*3. Miscellaneous Costs* (e.g., tools, pest management, water): Rs.5,000

Total Cost: Rs.15,000+Rs.9,000+Rs.5,000=Rs.26,000

**Gross Returns (Income):**

Total Production: 900 plants×1 kg/plant=900 kg

Total Revenue: 900 kg×Rs.40/kg=Rs.36,000

**Net Profit:**

Net Profit = Gross Returns - Total Cost

Rs.36,000–Rs.26,000=Rs.10,000 per season

**KVK intervention (Planning & Implementation)**

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Munger played a pivotal role in enhancing the project's productivity and sustainability.

The KVK's primary technical guidance was to improve the soil media. The farmer was advised to shift from using only soil to incorporating a 1:1 ratio of soil and vermicompost. This enrichment significantly improved the medium's

aeration, water retention, and nutrient content, leading to healthier plants and better yields.

**Impact (Economic/ Social/Environmental):** The enterprise has generated a positive multi-dimensional impact:

**Economic Impact:** It provides a stable, supplementary income of Rs. 10,000 per quarter, enhancing the financial resilience of the farmer's household.

**Social Impact:** The farmer's success has a significant demonstration effect, inspiring other women in the society to adopt rooftop farming. This has led to improved food security and access to fresh, organic produce for the local community.

**Environmental Impact:** The project contributes positively to the urban environment by Utilizing terrace space for greenery helps mitigate the urban heat island effect, repurposing thermocol boxes reduces plastic waste, local production reduces the carbon footprint associated with transporting vegetables and the use of organic inputs eliminates chemical residues in the produce and the environment.



### **Outcome (Horizontal/ Vertical spread)**

The initiative has successfully demonstrated a viable model for urban agriculture, providing both income and nutritional benefits to the farmer and her community. The model is witnessing a gradual horizontal spread, with other community members adopting similar practices. This organic growth indicates its relevance and feasibility. This intervention is an eco-friendly, beneficial, and timely solution that addresses the needs of modern urban lifestyles. With continued technical support, it has the potential to be widely replicated, contributing to urban food security, environmental sustainability, and community well-being.

## **The Green Revolutionaries: How Kudumbashree Transformed Kasaragod's Farms** *(A Success Story from the Heart of Kerala's Agricultural Sector)*

For decades, agriculture in Kasaragod faced the same challenges common across rural India: fragmentation, lack of value addition, and market access issues. But today, the district is witnessing a quiet, powerful revolution driven by thousands of women. The Kudumbashree District Mission has engineered two groundbreaking models—the Bedakam Agro Farmers Producer Company (KAFPC) and the Kuttikol Integrated Farming Cluster (IFC)—that have not only revitalized local farming but have also redefined women's economic empowerment as the core engine of rural development. This is the story of how a clear vision, combined with collective action, is turning small-scale farmers into proud entrepreneurs.

### **Part I: The Empowerment Engine—Team Bedakam KAFPC**

The story of the Bedakam Agro Farmers Producer Company Ltd. is a powerful testament to the financial might of collective women's enterprise. It moves beyond the traditional microcredit model to establish a fully-fledged, large-scale corporation owned entirely by its members.

### **From Village Group to Corporate Shareholder**

KAFPC is not just a society; it is a Producer Company wholly owned by the women of the Bedadka Grama Panchayat CDS. With nearly 4,500 Kudumbashree workers pooling resources to acquire 6,772 shares, the company has transformed every member from a simple village worker into a corporate shareholder with a direct stake in its success. This ownership model instills a profound sense of responsibility and pride, making every investment decision a collective journey.

The company, inaugurated in 2022, immediately set an audacious five-year goal: to create 100 permanent local jobs. It recognized that the future of rural employment lay not in farming alone, but in value addition.

### ***The Value Addition Leap***

KAFPC quickly diversified its operations, providing immediate employment to 25 people through existing ventures like a Poultry Farm, a Café, and a Bakery

Production Unit. However, the real game-changer is the upcoming Natural Food Unit.

This facility, built with a substantial ₹2 crore investment secured via the Agricultural Infrastructure Fund (AIF), is designed to process and package high-quality rice powder and spices. This critical vertical integration allows KAFPC to capture a larger share of the profit margin by moving from selling raw produce to premium packaged goods. This strategic move directly addresses market volatility and provides financial stability.

### ***The Model Agricultural Village Vision***

Perhaps the boldest step taken by KAFPC is its commitment to securing a land base for large-scale operations. The purchase of 28 acres of land at Ezhinhipuzha is a physical manifestation of their ambition to create a Model Agricultural Village. Backed by a ₹90 lakh down payment, this land acquisition signals a shift from small, scattered farming plots to a consolidated, modern agricultural platform. This hub will allow for controlled, mechanized farming, and serve as a training ground for sustainable practices, solidifying their goal of being a long-term economic pillar for the panchayat.

As Kudumbashree celebrates its silver jubilee, the Bedakam Company stands tall as a symbol of enterprise—a clear model proving that women are not just beneficiaries of development schemes, but the architects of commercial success.

### **Part II: The Innovation Hub—Kuttikol Integrated Farming Cluster (IFC) and LSC**

While Bedakam focused on the corporate producer model, the Kuttikol initiative introduces a comprehensive ecosystem designed to uplift grassroots farming through technology, collective support, and centralized infrastructure.

#### ***Building the Ecosystem of Support***

The Kuttikol IFC, the first of its kind sanctioned by the State Mission in Kasaragod, represents a deep commitment to holistic farmer development. Its success lies in providing every essential service a farmer needs under one umbrella.

The cluster serves approximately 5,000 farmers and 22 Production Groups (PGs) by tackling perennial supply-chain problems. The IFC ensures timely access to high-quality seeds, fertilizers, and medicines. Furthermore, services

like insurance, a Custom Hiring Centre (for expensive farm machinery), and specialized training are made available, eliminating the need for small farmers to individually navigate complex, costly systems. This collective approach drastically reduces the cost of production and minimizes risk, directly improving the livelihoods of thousands.

### ***The LSC/VLAC: Where Value is created***

The Livelihood Service Centre (LSC) is the crown jewel of the Kuttikol IFC model, also functioning as a Village Aggregation Centre (VLAC). The LSC is a fully mechanized, centralized processing and value-addition hub designed to handle a diverse range of local produce.

Housed in a spacious 5,000 sq. ft. building provided by the Panchayat, the LSC enables PGs and Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) across the district to create market-ready products from commodities like turmeric, pepper, ginger, jackfruit, milk, and honey.

The ₹60 lakh initial investment in the LSC (later expanded by AIF, NABARD, and the District Panchayat) was a strategic injection that transformed raw materials into processed goods, ensuring that the wealth generated through value addition stays within the community. The LSC is a beacon of integration and mechanization, earning recognition as a benchmark model for farming clusters across Kerala.

### ***The Kudumbashree Mission's Grand Unified Theory (GUT)***

The success of these two distinct yet interconnected projects is underpinned by the clear strategic vision of the Kasaragod District Mission. They are methodically implementing a Grand Unified Theory (GUT) for agricultural reform. This framework ensures that grassroots activities (the PGs) are aggregated for support (the IFCs) and commercialized for profit (the FPC). This structured, top-down support and bottom-up engagement is the key to scaling the impact of women-led enterprise.

By focusing on this mission, the Kudumbashree movement in Kasaragod is not just achieving sporadic success; it is systematically building a resilient, integrated, and economically powerful agricultural sector that places women at its triumphant center. The Bedakam FPC and the Kuttikol IFC are thus more than projects—they are prototypes for the future of sustainable, community-owned rural economy.



**Vietnam model pepper farming**

## Nourishing Hope: How the Elda Project Became a Gold Standard for Social Enterprise

(Kasaragod's Elda initiative proves that empowering women is the best way to care for the elderly)

In the picturesque but often challenging rural landscape of Kasaragod, Kerala, a quiet revolution is underway—one that feeds the body while funding the future. It's called the Elda (Elderly Diet Add) Project, and it's a pioneering social enterprise model that seamlessly weaves together geriatric nutrition, economic stability, and local governance. Elda isn't just about providing food; it's about building a risk-free, self-sustaining ecosystem powered entirely by women of the Kudumbashree Mission, with the local government acting as the guaranteed buyer.

### ***The Power of Guaranteed Partnership***

The genius of the Elda model lies in its rock-solid collaborative framework, which eliminates the single biggest hurdle for any grassroots business: market uncertainty.

### **At the core of the project is the dynamic triangle of partnership:**

- ❖ *Kudumbashree Mission Kasaragod (The Engine)*: The Mission serves as the central implementing authority. It oversees the establishment and operation of five dedicated production units run by local women across various CDS (like Kinaanoor Karinthalam and Muliya). They are the engine driving women's economic autonomy, transforming local workers into specialized producers.
- ❖ *Kasaragod District/ Grama Panchayath (The Guarantee)*: This is the game-changer. The Panchayats commit their own financial allocation and, crucially, act as the guaranteed market. They execute the bulk procurement of all Elda products. This political commitment guarantees a risk-free, consistent revenue stream for the Kudumbashree units, ensuring every bag of product made is a guaranteed sale.
- ❖ *Kudumbashree RKIEDP Parappa (The Collaborator)*: This partner provides the essential local coordination needed to launch and operationalize the initiative smoothly at the block level.
- ❖ By guaranteeing the market, local governance turns a social welfare project into a powerful economic development tool.

## ***From Nutrition Challenge to Enterprise Triumph***

The immediate mandate of Elda is public health: combating malnutrition among the financially backward elderly population (60+ years). To meet this goal, the project utilizes technical innovation.

Working with the expertise of KVK CPCRI Kasaragod, the women's units produce two specialized, geriatric-friendly products: the concentrated Elda Powder and the traditional, easily digestible Elda Kanjikkoottu (porridge mix). These formulations ensure that the beneficiaries receive high nutritional value designed for their specific needs, delivered right to their doorsteps for free.

This flow—from technical formulation to grassroots production to free distribution—creates a perfect closed-loop system:

This is the ultimate self-sustaining, risk-free model. The women producers gain secure, stable income without ever worrying about sales, marketing, or credit risk, successfully marrying social welfare with economic stability.

### ***A Replicable Blueprint for the Future***

The Elda project is more than a local success story; it is a replicable blueprint for social enterprises across India. It demonstrates that effective social impact requires three things: strong local governance backing, rigorous technical expertise (KVK CPCRI), and grassroots implementation powered by empowered women (Kudumbashree).



With the production units fully operational, the immediate focus is on maintaining the stringent quality standards and establishing a robust monitoring framework. This framework will track both the measurable nutritional impact on the elderly beneficiaries and the economic impact on the hundreds of women who now earn a secure livelihood.

Elda is a powerful reminder that when you invest in women's economic stability, you secure the well-being of the most vulnerable members of society. In Kasaragod, the elderly are being nourished, and the future of women's

entrepreneurship is thriving, all thanks to a simple, yet brilliant, idea: The guarantee of hope.



**Spices and Rice Processing Plant - Team Bedakam Kudumbashree Agro Framers Producer Company.**

## Success story on Millet Value addition

**Name:** Smt. Sunkishala Swarupa

**Village:** Shayampet,

**Mandal:** Jammikunta,

**District:** Karimnagar

**Contact no.:** 8374215661

Smt. Sunkishala Swarupa trained in our **Krishi Vigyan Kendra** on **Value addition to Millets under STRY (Skill Training for Rural Youth)** during 2023-2024. In this skill training, she learnt ready to Cook and ready to eat items. After the training programme she established a unit near Govt. Degree College, Jammikunta, Dist: Karimnagar.



She started supplying early morning Jawa, Millet Idli as breakfast, Millet rotis & Millet Rice as lunch and Millet Rotis as dinner. The shop area is always busy with flowing public. So, her business is running very comfortably. Now she has given employment to 2 more women in her unit because of her millet laddu, biscuit orders. So, finally after calculating all the expenditures, she is able to earn 25,500 to 30,000/- per month.





## My Journey:

I began my professional journey as a Community Facilitator under the Velugu Project, where I worked for six years starting from 2007. During that time, recognizing the quality and dedication in my work,

I was appointed as a Community Assistant (CA) under the Non-Pesticide Management (NPM) program. This role deepened my understanding of agriculture and inspired me to shift towards chemical-free, natural farming. As my skills and expertise grew, the Department of Natural Farming recognized my performance and selected me as a Master Assistant (MA). Later, I also worked as a Seed Development Area (SDA) Coordinator and Marketing Master Trainer. During this period, I established an NPM input shop in my assigned unit to supply natural farming materials and motivate more farmers to adopt sustainable cultivation practices.

My work received visits and appreciation from Vijay Kumar Sir, as well as from state- and district-level officials, who observed the progress at my unit. To enhance farmers' access to markets, I helped form local farmer groups and explained the benefits of organic certification, particularly its role in fetching higher market prices for certified natural produce. I organized weekly organic stalls in the mandal area to make natural farming products more accessible to consumers. Additionally, during state-level organic exhibitions, I showcased the wide range of natural agricultural products grown under my jurisdiction, helping to build awareness and consumer trust.

Given the abundance of farmer-grown produce, we established a permanent store for natural and organic products, which significantly increased demand. This, in turn, encouraged more farmers to switch to natural farming. I also created WhatsApp groups for teachers and other professionals to directly supply them with the products they required at their homes. This initiative built a direct farmer-to-consumer marketing system, eliminating intermediaries and

ensuring better income for farmers while strengthening the rural farming economy.

All the products I cultivate are value-added before being sold, and they are marketed directly to consumers through our store and online groups.

### Annual Income

Season	Crop/ Activity	Yield & Processing	Gross Income (₹)	Expenses (₹)	Net Income (₹)
<b>Kharif</b>	Paddy (5 acres)	80 bags processed into rice → 160 units (25 kg each × ₹2,500)	4,00,000	72,500	<b>3,27,500</b>
<b>Rabi</b>	Pulses (5 acres)	17.5 quintals processed into dals (1,750 kg × ₹120/kg)	2,10,000	23,000	<b>1,87,000</b>
<b>Summer</b>	Sesame (3 acres)	120 kg oil × ₹500/kg	60,000	10,000	<b>50,000</b>
<b>Organic shop</b>	Value-added product sales	Average ₹10,000/ month	1,20,000	—	<b>1,20,000</b>

Total Gross Income: ₹6, 90,000

Total Expenses: ₹1, 05,500

Net Annual Income: ₹5, 64,500.

## A Journey from Homemaker to Model Farmer: The Inspiring Story of Mrs. Pranati Deka

**Name:** Mrs. Pranati Deka,

**Village:** Chengapara

**Block:** Sipajhar

**District:** Darrang

**State:** Assam

Mrs. Pranati Deka, a resident of Village 2 No. Chengapara under Sipajhar Development Block of Darrang district of Assam is a shining example of how perseverance, training, and the right guidance can transform lives. Married in 2003 to Mr. Hiranya Kumar Deka, a small farmer by profession. Mrs. Deka initially



assisted her husband in agricultural activities like cultivation of rice, gram, rapeseed and mustard, and potato. Alongside, she actively participated in a local Self Help Group (SHG) which opened new avenues for her self- development and income generation

### Training and Motivation and Interventions from ATMA

Her association with the SHG proved to be a turning point. Through the group, she got enrolled for a training program on poultry and cattle rearing organized by ATMA, Darrang in the year 2014-15. Motivated by the training, she started small cattle rearing unit with five Jersey cows.



However, due to limited space for producing green fodder, she had to close down the unit after a short period. Undeterred, Mrs. Deka continued to explore new opportunities. During 2015 to 2022 she participated in Exposure Visits of Farmers and a few trainings organized by ATMA, Sipajhar Block, Darrang and successfully implemented some demonstration program of ATMA. In 2022-23, she received training on vermi-compost production from ATMA, Darrang.

This training not only enhanced her knowledge of organic farming but also inspired her to use vermi-compost for developing a home-based nursery unit. With the support and encouragement of the Block Technology Manager (BTM), ATMA, Sipajhar Development Block, she got the opportunity to undergo practical training on nursery setup and plant propagation at the Horticulture Research Station, Assam Agril University, Kahikuchi, Guwahati.

During this training, she learned the technique of cultivating betel vine cuttings and producing healthy saplings from mature betel climbers available at her home.

## **Achievements**

Applying her newly acquired skills, Mrs. Deka started experimenting with betel vine propagation in a small nursery setup at home. Her initial success boosted her confidence immensely.

Encouraged by the positive results, she decided to expand her venture systematically. With the technical guidance of the Agriculture Department,

She established a Green House using shade net and UV film and began her first commercial batch of 50 betel vine climbers in 1400 square feet area of her homestead premise. To meet the initial expenses for raw materials such as saplings, coir, PVC pipes, and establishment of low-cost green house, she availed a loan of ₹50,000 under the SHG programme.



Her dedication and consistent efforts soon began to bear fruit. The betel vines flourished, providing her with a steady source of income. Presently, Mrs. Deka earns around ₹15,000– ₹20,000 per month from betel leaf sales and an additional ₹30,000- ₹35,000 per month from selling betel vine saplings. In addition to betel vine cultivation, she also diversified into vegetable farming, growing leafy greens and tomatoes in her poly-house. In the last rainy season alone, she earned ₹50,000 from tomato cultivation within just four months. Her journey truly reflects the saying— “It feels best to taste the fruit of one’s own labour.”

### **Impact on the Community**

Mrs. Pranati Deka’s success did not go unnoticed. Recognizing her efforts, ATMA Darrang, Assam established a Farm School on Protected Cultivation of Betel Vine at her farm during 2025–26. Through this platform, she has already trained 25 rural women farmers, inspiring them to take up similar livelihood activities at their homes.



Today, Mrs. Deka stands as a role model for rural women and young farmers, demonstrating how knowledge, persistence, and institutional support can transform traditional farming into a sustainable and profitable enterprise.

## Success story in agriculture sector on mushroom cultivation

**Name of farmer:** Mrs. Juri Borah Kachari  
Mordholi

**Village:** Kachari Gaon

**Block:** Jorhat Dev.Block,

**District:** Baghchung Jorhat,

**Pin code:** 785630

**Mobile no.:** 8822991394

**Land holding:** 10 Bigha



**Inputs provided:** Mushroom Spawn, Polythene Bag, Cotton Rubber Band, Plastic Rope, Sprayer

**Name of central sector/ state scheme utilized by the farmer:**  
Demonstration on Mushroom Cultivation under CSS-ATMA,

Financial Year: 2023-2024,

**Implementing Year:** 2024-2025

Mrs. Juri Borah Kachari of Mordholi Kachari Gaon under Jorhat Dev Block, Baghchung, Jorhat, engaged in agriculture and allied activities to support her family. She has 10 bighas of Cultivable land, 5nos of Cows, 6 now of goats and 10nos of poultry for her livelihood.

Mrs. Juri Borah Kachari is a hardworking woman, who always wants to use innovative ideas CSS-ATMA, Jorhat Dev. Block, Baghchung under Jorhat District has provided Capacity building and skill development training on Mushroom cultivation at FIAC, Baghchung, which motivated her to take up the mushroom cultivation, which requires low investment and can be utilized her waste land.

In the year 2023-24, Mrs. Juri Borah Kachari was selected as a beneficiary for demonstration on Mushroom cultivation under CSS-ATMA, Jorhat Dev. Block, Baghchung, where she received Mushroom Spawn, Polythene Bag, Cotton Rubber Band, Plastic Rope and sprayer by CSS-ATMA team. Chaff Cutter was also provided to her from FNS scheme.

She was also trained to use of quality spawn, scientific method of mushroom bed preparation, grading and packaging of mushroom, harvesting techniques, value added products from mushroom.

The officials of CSS-ATMA (DPD- I, DPD-II, Convener, BTM, ATM) were visited her mushroom demo plot frequently and provided technical guidance for scientific cultivation of mushroom. They also advised her to adopt scientific method of mushroom cultivation. Thus, adopting mushroom cultivation, Mrs. Juri Borah Kachari was able to achieve good income of 3-4 lakhs per annum. She sells the fresh Mushroom at local market, Jorhat Town, Assam Agriculture University Campus, Titabor Market etc. at a price Rs. 200/- per kg. She is now able to support her family economically.

Mrs. Juri Borah Kachari is a successful Agripreneur and became a role model to other women in the village as well as other villages too. She became a master trainer in capacity building training of CSS- ATMA for the farm women. She is now Board of Director of Bajalbari FPC and has motivated 10 nos. of women SHGs of Baghchung block and mobilized them for taking up entrepreneurship activities on mushroom.

Mrs. Juri Borah Kachari was felicitated with best farmer award from CSS-ATMA at Kisan Mela held in 2024-25. Now, She is leading a comfortable and sustainable life. Now, she could manage all the expenditure needed to meet her personal expenses as well as expenses of her family and a role model for upcoming generations.

No. of cylinder produce:	300nos.
Production per cylinder:	2 kg
Total Production:	600 kg
Cost of production per Cylinder:	Rs. 50
Sale Price:	Rs. 200/ kg
Total Income:	Rs. 1,20,000.00
Net Income:	Rs. 1,05,000.00 (in 3-4 months)

## Glimpses of Mushroom Activities



**Distribution of Input**



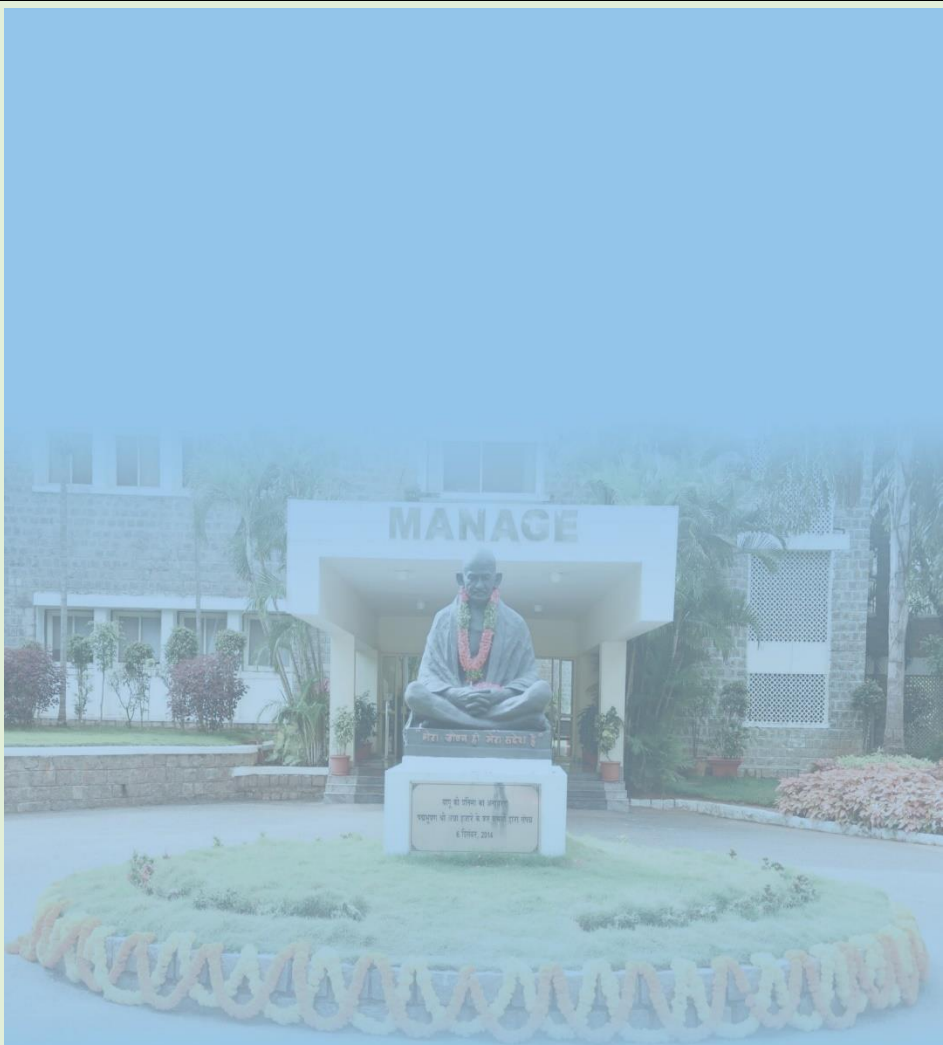
**Discussion with DPD-I**



**As Resource person in Capacity Building Training  
of Mushroom Cultivation**



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