

SMALL FARMER BECOMES KING OF KING OF FRUITS

Life was very miserable for 39 years old Mr. Panduranga Yellappa Honninaikar, a young farmer



of Hulkoti village in Gadag district until KVK guided him for crop diversification efforts through dry land Mango promotion in his 5.5 acres of land. Mr. Pandurang used to cultivate spreading groundnut in his land. Due to frequent occurrence of drought coupled with high cost of cultivation, he could not get sustainable income from groundnut cultivation. The red soil with high content of "Morrum" has poor

moisture holding capacity which restricted him to take up only one crop in a year. This has made him to look after alternate occupation for livelihood. During 2002-03, he approached KVK for possible guidance for his grievance. KVK studied his soil profile and advised him for Mango cultivation. Encouraged by KVK's support, he planted Mango in 3 acres (153 plants) of land under dry land situation during the same year. Initially he watered the plants by bringing water from village tank through tanker. He adopted all the measures as suggested by KVK viz., soil mulching, soil and water conservation measures and management of plants. He also grew inter crops of spreading groundnut and horsegram. After 6 years of planting (2008-09), Mr. Pandurang got an income of Rs.60000 from first harvest of Mango. This has encouraged him to extend Mango crop in remaining 2 acre of land in the same year.

During the subsequent years, the income from Mango orchard had steadily increased. During the initial years, Mr. Pandurang used to give Mango orchard for crop contractors. KVK advised him not to do so as major share of profit was earned by the middleman. KVK created a platform for Mango growers for direct sale of fruits to consumers by organization of Mango fair in Gadag city. KVK guided all the Mango growers including Mr. Pandurang on post harvest technology including natural ripening of fruits for quality Mango production. During 2014-15, Mr. Pandurang successfully participated in the Mango Mela and sold his fruits. There was lot of demand for his fruits because of high quality in terms of taste, color and size. He sold the fruits at the rate of Rs.100 per Kg. He earned an income of Rs.2 lakhs from sale of 2 tonns of Mango fruits. He also sold raw fruits at the rate of Rs.80 per Kg worth of Rs.1.6 lakhs during the same year. Total income from 5.5 acres of his orchard during 2014-15 was Rs.3.6 lakhs. Mr. Pandurang says that he incurred expenditure of Rs.60000/- and earned net profit of Rs.3 lakhs. Apart from this, he also got income from intercrops viz., spreading groundnut and horsegram crops. These intercrops are mainly utilized as fodder for feeding his 6 animals. All the members of his family are involved right from the production to marketing aspects of Mango, he says.

This is one of the success story of crop diversification. There are many farmers in Hulkoti and surrounding villages who have diversified their cropping system and successfully adopted dry land mango cultivation as climate resilient measure. Mango farmers have been earning Rs.50000/- to Rs.200000 per hectare depending on the age of Mango plantation. Mr. Pandurang says that farmers having red soils have been immensely benefited by crop diversification efforts and livelihoods are substantially improved. Further, he says that direct marketing platform between producers and consumers has created lot of awareness on consumption of naturally ripened Mango fruits and people are asking for quality Mango fruits. It is already win-win situation for both producers and consumers and in the years to come, it is going to be increased in scale.