

## INNOVATIONS OF FARMERS IN GADAG DISTRICT

Compiled by ICAR-KVK, Gadag

**NAME OF THE INNOVATOR:** Shri Santosh Pagad

**AGE:** 30 years

**EDUCATION:** M.Sc (Agri) in Agronomy

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**TITLE OF INNOVATION:** Innovative Fodder Seed Production Techniques and Marketing Approaches

**BACKGROUND:** Livestock is the major productive asset of farmers. Owing to imbalanced nutrition, the productivity of livestock is decreasing especially in rainfed areas. This is mainly due to non-availability of quality fodder seeds suitable for rainfed and irrigated situation and lack of knowledge on improved fodder varieties and fodder production technologies. Looking into this situation, Mr.Santosh Pagad, a post-graduate in agriculture plunged into fodder seed production in his farm immediately after completion of his post-graduation during 2011-12. He started with seed production of Anand-2 variety of Lucerne in 2 acres. Initially, he used to buy seed from Gujarat. The seed quality was not good as it was infested with Cuscuta parasitic seeds. In the first year of seed production, he produced 400 Kgs of Lucerne seeds and sold it to dairy farms in Northern Karnataka. He received a lot of complaints regarding the quality of the seeds from the farmers and started to think about quality seed production.

**CONSTRAINTS FACED IN SEED PRODUCTION:**

- i) Lack of quality seed material for seed production programmes
- ii) High incidence of Cuscuta parasitic seeds in Lucerne and striga incidence in fodder sorghum
- iii) Difficulty in marketing of fodder seeds

iv) Non-availability of labour during critical stages of seed production

**APPROACHES ADOPTED FOR QUALITY SEED PRODUCTION:** Mr.Santosh knew that there is a lot of demand for fodder seeds in Karnataka as there are no organised Fodder Seed Production Agencies. He decided to cultivate suitable varieties of fodder along with better management practices and develop marketing strategies.

During 2013-14, Mr.Santosh brought RL-88 variety of breeder seeds of Lucerne from ICAR-Indian Grassland and Fodder Research Institute, Dharwad and initiated the seed production activities in his 25 acres farm. He adopted all the best agronomic practices including Management of Cuscuta parasite. In order to address the labour shortage, he introduced mechanisation through use of reaper harvester, mini tiller, brush cutter, chaff cutters, seed processing and cleaning equipments. It has helped him to produce quality seeds. During the same year, Mr.Santosh started the seed production of COFS-31, a Sorghum Multi-cut variety and Hedge Lucerne. He brought planting material from Tamilnadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore. During the later years, he also started the fodder seed production of South African Tall, Cow pea, Napier, Stylo Heamata, Subabul, Sesabenia and Drumstick.

He registered his seed production enterprise as Krishi Agro Farm Developers. He has adopted the following strategies for quality seed production and marketing of seeds.

- i) Every year seed production of various fodder crops is being taken up on 100 acres of his own farm as well as land leased from other farmers.
- ii) Seed production is carried out under his own supervision
- iii) Scientific Agronomic Practices including use of pure and improved seed varieties, nutrition, weed management, rouging management are strictly followed
- iv) Mr.Pagad has maintained strong functional linkage with ICAR Institutes, Agricultural Universities, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Karnataka Milk Federation, Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services, Department of Agriculture. This has helped him for marketing of his seeds. He has supplied fodder seeds to many KVKs in Karnataka.
- v) Digital Medias are used by him for publicity and marketing. He has developed his firms' "Facebook Page" which has helped him in popularising the fodder seeds.

- vi) He has created a YouTube account and shared his experience through videos regarding seed production techniques.
- vii) Data base of more than 2000 farmers who have purchased fodder seeds are maintained by him and he provides technical advisories on fodder seed production through WhatsApp.
- viii) He supplies the fodder seeds to dairy farms, goat farms and rabbit rearing farms in Karnataka as well as other States.
- ix) Mr. Santosh participates in Krishi Melas organised by all the Agricultural Universities in Karnataka. He exhibits the seeds in Krishi Mela. This forum has helped him for sale of fodder seeds and facilitated development of network with farmers.

**PRACTICAL UTILITY OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES:**

- i) Lucerne seeds are very pure without Cuscuta Parasite. This has enhanced the fodder yield by 40-50 percent
- ii) Production of strigo free seeds of perennial fodder sorghum has increased the fodder yield by 30 percent
- iii) Seed buyers can place their seed demand through digital media and get the services at their door step.
- iv) Farmers are getting the fodder seeds throughout the year.

**OUTCOME:**

- i) Use of improved fodder has reduced the cost of feeding in dairy and goat farming by 50 percent
- ii) Milk yield of milch animals is increased by 30-40 percent
- iii) Higher price for milk is realised as fat content has improved through feeding of green fodder
- iv) Feeding of cereal and leguminous fodder has increased the inter calving period in dairy animals.
- v) Feeding of balanced nutrition has enhanced the meat productivity in goat
- vi) Every year demand for quality seeds is increasing in Karnataka as well as neighbouring states
- vii) Every year income from seed production activities is to the tune of 8-9 lakhs.

**AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS:** University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad has conferred him “Best Young Farmer Award” during 2017-18.

### PHOTO ALBUM OF FODDER SEED PRODUCTION ACTIVITIES



**COFS-31 variety of Multi-cut Sorghum Fodder**



**Seed production of R-88 variety of Lucerne**



**Hedge Lucerne Seed production activity**



**Seed storage unit**