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**ABSTRACTS**



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## Organic aquafarming initiatives in Karnataka: a success story

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The suspended farming technique of green mussels practiced under the technical guidance of CMFRI proved highly successful and remunerative to the mussel farmers in Karnataka, attracting attention of other fisherfolks to venture into mussel farming as an income generating activity. In one of the successful ventures, suspended farming of green mussel using rack and rope method was adopted by a shrimp farmer in the estuarine waters of Sita estuary near Saligrama. Bamboo racks were fabricated at the outlet of the shrimp farm where the water depth was at 1.5 m during low tide. The favourable salinity for farming marine mussels, >22psu, prevailed in the estuarine waters from November to May. Farming of mussels was carried out during the post-monsoon months using locally collected mussel seeds and harvested before the onset of monsoon to avoid reduction in salinity. Of the harvested produce, larger mussels of about 30 counts were marketed in domestic markets as a premium product and smaller mussels were pre-processed in seafood processing units for export. The higher unit price realized, minimal operational expenditure, short duration of the crop, eco-friendliness of the practice and good demand for mussels encouraged more farmers to adopt the practice in Sita estuary during the subsequent years. Mussel farming practice was adopted by 13 shrimp farmers as a small scale group farming activity in the estuary, during 2009-2010. This

study details the mussel farming practice, marketing strategies, production and income generation by the mussel farmers in the region. The training and demonstration programmes conducted by CMFRI for disseminating the technology in Karnataka with the involvement of local fishermen and shrimp farmers at Surathkal, Mulki, Udyavara, Kaup, Uppunda, Byndoor and Karwar helped in further popularization of mussel culture.

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