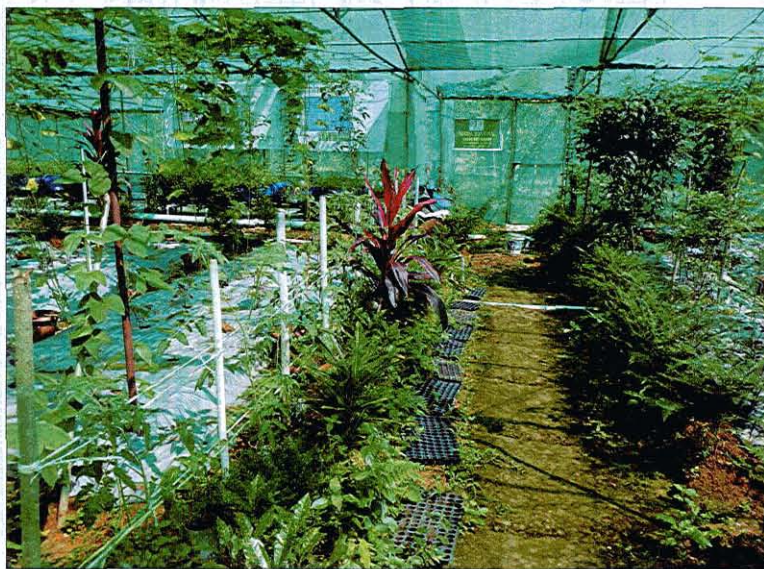


Mera Gaon Mera Gaurav

Mera Gaon Mera Gaurav programme was launched by ICAR to promote direct interface of scientists with the farmers to hasten the lab to land process with an objective to provide farmers with required

information, knowledge and advisories on regular basis on fish and organic vegetable farming in scientific manner. The scientist couple from ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Kochi, Dr P Jayasankar and Dr Reeta Jayasankar reached out to an upstart agrarian couple Srimati Hema Vijaya kumar and Shri Vijayakumar of Pazhoor (PO), Piravom 686664, Muvattupuzha taluk, Kerala, Survey no 589/5, 589/4.



Success story of an agrarian couple

Participation of small and marginal farmers in Indian agriculture is very important. Small farmers put forth their desire on various forums to receive timely information on investment in agriculture, loans, availability of other basic amenities, market rates, extension activities and facilities provided by different agencies, new research findings and technologies. Taking a cue from the above programme, possible assistance in terms of information, knowledge, advisories and connecting with relevant people/groups were extended to a couple with agrarian background. In an area of around 2347.26 sq m with laterite soil they started integrated organic farming of vegetables along with ornamental plants, variety of trees, medicinal plants, cash crops, poultry, cattle rearing and aquaculture. The challenge was to convert the hilly area with laterite soil which is more suitable for rubber plantation, to a fertile productive land suitable for integrated farming with horticultural plants. It became challenging when the couple decided to make it fully organic cultivation.

Technical knowhow from ICAR-CMFRI

The ICAR-CMFRI extended technical knowhow to the agrarian couple on integrated farming of fish and vegetable and horticultural crop by a recirculatory method. The couple was advised to rear genetically improved farmed tilapia (GIFT).

Fish grew faster immediately after the stocking, and

increased to three fold from November to December 2017. Within 5 months it reached 500 g. The couple faced regular fish mortality due to increase in ammonia level in the pond. Necessary advisory were given by the scientists couple from ICAR-CMFRI to maintain ammonia under safe level by using

recirculation of water through Azolla plant and calcium carbonate and to improve the plankton bloom by slow leaching of dried cow dung manure. It was also suggested to the farmer for providing *in situ* recirculation. For maintaining pond pH 6 kg common salt and 2 nos banana plant cut into pieces were added into the water, and average 7.5 pH was maintained.

The farm also has an office, living quarters, stores and lab for conducting basic tests. Besides, they have developed a roof top rain harvesting system too to collect rain water which goes waste in the hilly area.

Having less fertility of the soil, the farmer wanted to include animal husbandry and poultry along with fisheries and horticulture. A 'Vechur' breed cow was included; urine and dung from the cow were used in the plants to improve productivity. They were used for vermicomposting along with the dried leaves and the vegetable waste from the house. Local varieties of chicken were procured from which the couple gets nearly 7-10 eggs/day. Kitchen and farm vegetable waste were also utilized as bio fertilizer. Regular harvest of vegetable crops is being done. Snake gourds ranging in length from 70 cm to 1 m with a girth of 40 cm were produced. The largest snake gourd from the farm measured 1.81 m in length and 23 cm in girth, close to the record size of the snake gourd produced in India i.e. 1.88 m long.

Laurels

Srimati Hema Vijayakumar and Shri Vijayakumar received appreciation for their hard work to take up organic agriculture along with fish culture in the hilly area. The local municipality has recognized them as model farmers of the area who could motivate many small and marginal farmers to take up this venture. Local print and electronic media gave wide publicity to their success.

email: director.cmfri@icar.gov.in