

## **1.35 lakh in eight months; CMFRI with the project**

Cochin: Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute with support to SC families to become self-employed through modern aquaculture. Five Scheduled Caste families in Cheranellore have started biofloc farming, an innovative fish farming method, as beneficiaries of CMFRI's Scheduled Caste Sub Plan.

1800 gift tilapia are cultivated in this way which requires less water use as compared to other fish farming methods. The target is to earn at least Rs 1.35 lakh from eight months of cultivation. Even if a fish weighs 300 grams, it can earn a good income. Gift tilapia usually weigh up to 500 g during bioflock cultivation during this period.

It is a controlled method of cultivation in which the best bacteria are used for the benefit of the fish by depositing large quantities of juveniles. The amount of feed is also relatively low. For those who do not have access to water bodies and ponds, this is a fish farm where biofloc reservoirs can be constructed on the premises.

Under the CMFRI scheme, families were provided with tanks, ancillary facilities, fry and fish feed, which were constructed with various facilities to accelerate the growth of fish. The tank is 5 meters in diameter and 1.20 meters high and can hold 23,500 liters of water.

Each stage of cultivation will be closely monitored by the research team at CMFRI. CMFRI farmers have also been provided with water quality kits to maintain water quality.

CMFRI has already been providing assistance to SC families for aquaculture under the Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan Scheme. However, home-grown biofloc fish farming is being utilized to bring the benefits of the scheme to those who do not have access to adequate water facilities. Apart from Ernakulam district, bioflock fish farms are being set up in Palakkad, Thrissur, Idukki, Kottayam and Kollam districts under the leadership of CMFRI.