

## **CMFRI to support SC families in Kochi to become small fishing entrepreneurs**

CMFRI's assistance includes setting up of the tank with a volume of 23,500 litre of water and related facilities, fish seeds, feeds and technical guidance under the SCSP scheme, CMFRI said in a release. According to CMFRI, the self-help group will be able to earn an income of at least Rs 1.35 lakh from eight-month-long farming within which the fish will attain a minimum weight of 300 g.

Seeking to transform the lives of scheduled caste families at Cheranellur in the district, the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has extended support to the community to help them become small-scale entrepreneurs through innovative fish farming. The CMFRI has provided to members of five SC families in the area with all necessary support to launch a biofloc fish farming unit under the scheme of Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP). CMFRI said the self-help group named 'Sreelakshmi' with these families as members began the aquaculture practice by stocking 1,800 tilapia (GIFT) seeds into a biofloc tank set up adjacent to their households. "CMFRI's assistance includes setting up of the tank with a volume of 23,500 litre of water and related facilities, fish seeds, feeds and technical guidance under the SCSP scheme," CMFRI said in a release.

According to CMFRI, the self-help group will be able to earn an income of at least Rs 1.35 lakh from eight-month-long farming within which the fish will attain a minimum weight of 300 g. "Normally tilapia (GIFT) gains 300g to 500g weight during this period from this practice," K Madhu, Principal Investigator of the project and Principal Scientist of CMFRI, said.

Biofloc technology is a scientific method for high-density fish farming in a controlled environment in which fish wastages are converted into useful nutrients. The CMFRI will monitor different phases of the practice continuously to enable maximum fish growth. A water quality kit also was supplied to the SHG to maintain the required parameter, Madhu said.

Under the SCSP scheme of the CMFRI, the cage fish farming is being undertaken by members of the SC community across the country, and biofloc farming is aimed to extend the benefits of this scheme to those who do not have access to open water bodies for taking up aquaculture practices such as cage fish farming, he added. This innovative fish farming is underway in Palakkad, Thrissur, Idukki, Kottayam and Kollam districts under CMFRI's guidance. The tilapia seeds were procured from MPEDA's hatchery in Vallarpadam.