



Cage Culture, Farm Gate Markets & Branding - to augment income from Pokkali Paddy - Prawn Farming Systems



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Introduction

- Pokkali is a traditional farming system in which Paddy and Shrimp farming are alternatively done in the same field
- Pokkali fields salinity comes down to 0 ppt during monsoon and rises up to 25 ppt during peak summer
- The biomass residues of the paddy crop form the feed base for the shrimps and the residues of the shrimp culture acts as a fertilizer for paddy and hence the symbiotic system can be referred to as "Zero Input" farming system.



Pokkali Field: Digital Survey Map



District	Available Area (ha)	Presently Cultivating area (ha)	Production (ha)
Ernakulam	4000	610	929.64 kg
Alappuzha	3000		
Thrissur	2000		

Status of Pokkali paddy fields and production in Kerala

Issues

- Lack of machineries and drudgery in Pokkali field operations
- Widespread attack of White Spot Syndrome Virus (WSSV) to shrimps
- Low productivity and low price to Pokkali produce



Pokkali Field: Salinity (ppt)



Pokkali Seed Sowing



Present Scenario

- Ten to fifteen percentages of all the Pokkali fields are covered by long water channels and deep water logged sluice pit near the sluice gate.
- They lie unused from June till November though they are suitable for euryhaline high value fin fish farming.
- The local resource poor indigenous fishermen have the right to enter these fields and catch the fish as livelihood means during this period.



Intervention

- Introduced Cage farming of Mullet (*Mugil cephalus*), Pearl spot (*Etroplus suratensis*) and Asian Seabass (*Lates calcarifer*) in the water channels and sluice pit area Pokkali fields till commencing the license period (November 15).
- Nursery reared fishes stocked in cages during the Pokkali paddy farming period (July to October) and the culture was continued later on with alternative Shrimp farming (November to April) till the harvest period (April)

Length and Weight data of Mullet Nursery rearing

Pokkali Fish to Hit Easter Market

Kochi: A total of 25 tonnes of fish is expected to hit the Pokkali Farmers' Easter Fish Market at Kadamakudy here on Saturday. The pokkali farming was organised by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (Ernakulam) of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) under the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) and Kadamakudy panchayat, it is expected to help farmers who struggle to sell their fish variety.

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Pokkali Fish Farming to Get a Facelift

Kochi: Pokkali Fish Farming is getting a facelift. The fish farmers are now using cages in the water channels and sluice pits. This is a major step towards modernizing the traditional farming system. The project is being implemented by the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Ernakulam, in collaboration with the local panchayat.

Farm Gate Market for Organically-grown Fish Held

Kochi: A farm gate market for organically-grown fish was held at Kadamakudy on Saturday. The market was organized by the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Ernakulam, in collaboration with the local panchayat. The market was a success, with a large number of fish sold to the public. The fish were sold at a premium price, which was a result of the organic farming practices used by the farmers.



Easter special Pokkali fish market on Saturday

Kochi: A special Easter market for Pokkali fish will be held near Kadamakudy panchayat office on Saturday. Around 25 tonnes of fish including karimeen, thirutha, kalanchi, thilapia and vatta will be available.

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Output

- 350 Kg fin fish were sold at the rate of INR 500/- from 1 ha Pokkali field other than the regular produce of paddy (1000 Kg) and shrimp (200 Kg).
- Optimum utilization of unused farming area by integrated fin fish farming could generate an additional income of INR 1,00,000/- per ha.

Farm gate market

- Introduced farm gate market to avoid middlemen and ensure premium price for Pokkali produce.

Outcome

- The income generated showed the viability and replicability of the model which also received national attention.
- Fish Farmers Development Agency (FFDA) Ernakulam announced subsidy for large scale replication of integrated fin fish culture in Pokkali paddy fields during 2015-16 period



2014



2015



2016