

GRAMIN VIKAS TRUST-WEST BENGAL

Turmeric Cultivation on the hilly regions of Ajodhya-An innovative approach by Gramin Vikas Trust, West Bengal

Gramin Vikas Trust, West Bengal organized training cum awareness programme on Turmeric Cultivation at Ajodhya, Bagmundi comprising of 50 farmers on 20th June, 2014 followed by plot demonstration of the same on 25th June 2014.

Objectives of the training were:

- ❖ To provide an orientation to the farmers regarding setting up turmeric cultivation as an alternative source of livelihood.
- ❖ To train the farmers regarding scientific methods of turmeric cultivation.
- ❖ To aware the farmers regarding its economic benefits with its loss profit details.
- ❖ To aware the farmers regarding the utility of turmeric in our daily lives.

The training started with an informal discussion with the farmers by Shri Arabinda Mitra-focussing on their agricultural practices and cropping pattern. There are about 60 small villages in the top hill and its surroundings. The entire area is almost rainfed barring some pockets. Maize and rice is the principal crops here. A few of them grow vegetables.

Tribal from Majhidi,Puniasasan,Kuchariraha and other hamlets were interrogated. They were



all WADI beneficiaries . GVT has targeted 800tribal families under WADI project since 2012. 460 families have already been covered. They have already established mango ,jackfruit, and ber in their orchards. They are maintaining it under the technical advice of GVT staff. Low value crops with low productivity was the main point of discussion . Another part

was their non-awareness was cost-returns from crop. The negative part of the farming practices among these farmers are that they never consider farming as commercial venture.

They grow vegetables and crops at their homestead land but a significant amount for their own consumption purpose and a very less amount for selling purpose.

The discussion regarding growing turmeric in between orchards got initiated with the discussion that why Hill top is being considered ideal for this crop. And the reason why mango orchards need intercropping with turmeric. Dr. Mitra focussed on cultivation of turmeric with the concept of **“Macha Theke Dhahi”** i.e transformation of turmeric cultivation from homeland to farm land.

The farmers were trained about the techniques of sowing turmeric along with the use of fertilizer and manure, mulching techniques after sowing and low cost based technology for adopting turmeric into their fields. The time for growth of the roots and shoots of turmeric during winter and rainy season was also disseminated to the farmers of the concerned training. Apart from this, Dr. Mitra also focussed on instant processing and harvesting of turmeric.

Shri Subrata Sarkar- RPM, GVT, focussed on linking the SHGs with processing of turmeric along with packaging and marketing of the same at local level. Not only this, but the



Government can be a potential buyer of the same for supplying turmeric powder to schools for mid day meals. This is how backward and forward linkage can be ensured to the farmers.

Dr. Mitra presented the detailed economy of the turmeric where he informed that in 1 bighas of land, an amount of Rs.40000/- can be earned as net profit. Apart from

this, he also gave the additional benefits of turmeric cultivation as-

Shri B.K Mazumder narrated that Secretion from turmeric helps to control soil borne diseases. The smell of turmeric keeps pests and insects away. It can be used as a natural biopesticide. It also helps to keep Wild animals like elephants away from orchards. Turmeric if used as intercrop mixed with other crops like tomato and brinjal, help the plants to get rid of pests and diseases. Turmeric also increases soil fertility by decomposition of its leaves and controls soil erosion due to presence of its fibrous roots.



Shri Subrata sarkar and Dr. Arabinda Mitra emphasized not only on cultivation but also on institution building for proper, systematic and effective use of turmeric as a source of alternative livelihood for the tribal.

Thus Nature, Technology and Institution Building are the three major areas which have to be taken into consideration for adopting Turmeric on the dry belts of Purulia.

The training was an effective platform for the Progressive WADI Farmers of Ajodhya. The training was followed by a one day plot demonstration at Bagandih village of Ajodhya. Plots were prepared by two progressive farmers. Land



Preparation by ploughing was the initial step followed by weeding of the plot. It was then followed by land levelling and drainage preparation for allowing the excess water to flow out from the field. Vermin Compost was used before sowing of turmeric. Turmeric sowing followed by earth covering and mulching with palash leaves were done. The germination of the seeds followed by shoot formation is being expected to be after 14 days of the sowing.





The training of 20th training was published in newspaper- Anandabazar, with special focus to GVT's effort and the plot demonstration was covered by Etv- Annadata where the coverage of Turmeric Cultivation in Ajothhya, with its future benefits and marketing prospects were disseminated.

We hope that our efforts will usher a new look for the tribal of Ajothhya.

