

Case Study: Integrated Agricultural Practices of Durga Mani Soren

Background



Durga Mani Soren, a proactive member of the Jamthol Patar Lo Mahila Marshal Gaonta group, resides in the village of Jamthol. Her journey in sustainable agriculture began in 2020 with the handholding support of DRCSC with development of Nutrition Garden. Over the years, she has expanded her agricultural practices to include rice cultivation and animal husbandry, thereby creating a holistic approach to food security and economic stability for her family and community.

Nutrition Garden

Durga's nutrition garden spans an impressive 0.22 decimal. In this space, she cultivates eight varieties of vegetables, providing her family with fresh, nutritious produce. Although she does not sell the vegetables commercially, the garden serves as an essential resource for improving her family's diet.

To maintain her garden, Durga employs eco-friendly practices, utilizing natural fertilizers such as Gadasar and Amrit Pani. This season, she harvested vegetables over 75 days, reaping significant savings of 1771 Rupees from minimized costs related to labor, seeds, and other expenses. The detailed financial breakdown includes:

- Labor: 250 Rupees
- Other Costs: 200 Rupees
- Seeds: 215 Rupees
- Eggplant Seedlings: 80 Rupees
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The garden's produce includes:

Okra (14 kg)
Paat Shak (17 kg)

Eggplant (10 kg)

Guava (1 kg)

Pui (13 kg)

- Bitter (6 kg)

- Pumpkin (20 kg)

The total market value of these vegetables sums up to 1771 Rupees, showcasing the economic viability of her gardening efforts.

Rice Cultivation

In addition to the nutrition garden, Durga engages in rice cultivation. She began planting Kerala Sundari rice on August 17, 2024 on her 15 katha land, using sustainable practices that involve natural fertilizers like cow dung, Dhunche, and Amrit Pani and single stick method. Within just 15 days, she managed to produce 11 paddy clusters, highlighting the effectiveness of her cultivation methods.

The financial implications of rice farming are noteworthy, with expenses totaling 1250 Rupees:

- Plowing: 400 Rupees

- Rice Seeds (1 kg): 30 Rupees

- Organic Fertilizer: 250 Rupees

- Labor: 600 Rupees

This low-cost investment in rice cultivation helps sustain her family's food supply while promoting soil health.

Animal Husbandry

Durga's agricultural activities are further complemented by her involvement in animal husbandry, which she began in 2019. With support from DRCSC, she raises 11 sheep and 4 chickens, although she has faced losses of 2 sheep and 8 chickens. The income from her animal husbandry efforts amounts to 2700 Rupees, generated from the sale of 1 sheep and 2 chickens.

This additional income is vital, allowing Durga to reinvest in her farming activities and support her children's education.

Community Impact

Durga Mani Soren's integrated approach to agriculture demonstrates significant benefits not only for her family but also for the broader community:

1. Nutritional Security: The nutrition garden provides a diverse array of fresh vegetables, improving dietary diversity.

2. Economic Viability: The combined income from the nutrition garden, rice cultivation, and animal husbandry enhances her family's financial stability.

3. Sustainable Practices: By employing organic farming methods and natural fertilizers, Durga contributes to soil health and environmental sustainability.

4. Community Resilience: Her efforts in farming and animal husbandry serve as a model for sustainable agricultural practices, encouraging other community members to adopt similar approaches.

Conclusion

Durga Mani Soren's multifaceted agricultural practices exemplify a successful model of integrated farming. By combining a nutrition garden, rice cultivation, and animal husbandry, she not only secures her family's food and financial needs but also sets a positive example for her community in sustainable living.