

KVK Udalguri shows the way....

Vermicompost production as an enterprise for farmers upliftment

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Agriculture is the main source of livelihood in Udalguri district of Assam. Most of them are engaged in farming and allied sectors. Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Udalguri under Assam Agricultural University has been working since inception for technology transfer and to impart scientific farming among the farmers, farm-women and rural youth of the district through demonstrations and capacity building training. One such farmer is Mr Raju Hasda who has been trained and provided with the basic support required for vermicomposting.

Keywords: Earthworm, *Eisenia foetida*, Organic farming, Vermicompost

ORGANIC farming is practiced by many farmers of Udalguri district, Assam and these farmers are restricted to minimum use of chemical fertilizers. But access to some of the components of organic farming like biofertilizers, becomes difficult in Udalguri. So, a good alternative is use of nutrient rich composts like vermicompost. Farm-waste is left after harvest of crops which is generally not utilized and are heaped here and there or thrown away. So, utilization of this waste can be done to produce vermicompost and thus waste is turned into wealth. Farmers of Udalguri district are mainly marginal farmers. Rather,

they have *bari* in their home/ farm, where they can accumulate a lot of raw materials/ feedstock for production of different types of compost. They also rear cows which can provide the necessary cow dung required to produce vermicompost. One such farmer is Mr. Raju Hasda, son of Govardhan Hasda, Village – Darrinigipara, P.O. Nalkhamara, Udalguri district. He has been a marginal farmer. He received training on “Production of Vermicompost” from KVK, Udalguri in 2017. He has established a goot (Nalkhamara Anchalik Krishi Goot) and has trained farmers from many other villages of Udalguri district, sold his

produce which has resulted in horizontal spread of the technology and income generation.

Success timeline and KVK Intervention: A Front Line Demonstration programme had been started under Tribal Subplan (TSP) Programme by KVK, Udalguri in Nalkhamara and Darrinigipara villages of Udalguri district in 2017. The villagers of these two villages are having a good farming background and now after intervention of KVK, Udalguri with a good number of trainings and demonstrations on “Vermicompost Production Technology” they are able to produce vermicompost as a component of



Demonstration on Vermicompost Production on Mr. Raju Hasda's farm



Training cum Demonstration



Mr. Raju Hasda in his farm



Mr. Raju Hasda showcasing Vermicompost in Exhibition under support of KVK, Udalguri

organic farming at their own house (bari). Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Udalguri initially started with 10 farmers to produce vermicompost in the very villages. The farmers are commercially producing quantity vermicompost since adaption of the technology demonstrated by KVK, Udalguri. Raju Hasda, is one of the farmers who have been trained by KVK, Udalguri in 2017. He owns two units (HDPE materials of ISI 15907:2010) of vermicompost which he has been maintaining well since intervention.

Background information: Raju Hasda own 1 ha of land where he cultivates paddy – Ranjit, Swarna Masuri, Toria after rice, *rabi* vegetables, banana etc. He owns a 1.5 bigha pond, 4 cows, piggyery, poultry – local and Kadaknath. He has established two units of vermicompost in his farm under the support and guidance of KVK, Udalguri. The methodology for production of vermicompost involves domestic and farm wastes including cattle wastes and earthworms following recommended practices. The feed stock used for production of vermicompost is accumulates from

the crop residue of his farm, water hyacinth from his pond and banana pseudo stem etc. Mr. Raju Hasda, harvest 3 batches of vermicompost every year from his two units and has a net annual income of ₹ 17,000 from his vermicompost alone. His total annual income is about ₹ 26,000 from his overall farm. Mr. Raju Hasda also maintains a pure culture of earthworm *Eisenia foetida* from which he gets a good income.

Impact of the success

Mr. Hasda is a successful vermicompost producer who has motivated his fellow members to adopt new and improved compost production techniques thereby spreading the scientific technology horizontally and increasing the farmer's income and encouraging organic farming in the district. Under the guidance of Mr. Raju Hasda, the farmers of Nalkhamara have formed a group called "Nalkhamara Anchalik Krishi Goot" and are producing 1-1.4 tonnes vermicompost per batch (3 batches per year). Mr. Raju Hasda is the President of the group. The farmers use the product in their own field and

horticultural crops. They also sell their products in packets of 1, 2 and 5 kg. They sell their products locally and also to dealers. They have participated in different farmers' fair of the district and are able to showcase and sell their products with supervision of KVK, Udalguri. The farmers are also maintaining earthworm culture (*Eisenia foetida*) and are able to sell the earthworms to farmers of nearby areas of Udalguri district viz Fatahimalu, Tongla, Bengbari, Panikhaiti etc.

Awards: Mr. Hasda is the recipient of the Pragatisil Krishak Award in District Kisan Mela, Udalguri 2018-19 for his contribution in encouraging organic farming by production of vermicompost.

Inspiring others: After observing the success of "Nalkhamara Anchalik Krishi Goot" led by Mr. Raju Hasda, many interested farmers from nearby villages visit their units to learn the practice of vermicompost production. Hundreds of farmers of different part of the district has already started vermicomposting. It has also boosted up organic cultivation in the district. There has been a horizontal spread of the technology in the village and also to other villages of Udalguri district. The technology has been spread across 9 other villages (Fatahimalu, Tongla gaon, Bengbari, Panikhaiti, Dangdupur, Monpur, Rowta pathar, Kacharital, Deurigaon.).

SUMMARY

Active participation of farmers like Mr Hasda in vermicompost production, enhanced their livelihood status and encouraged fellow farmers to adopt the scientific technologies which is truly fruitful. He is known for his quality products throughout the district viz. farmers government offices, FPOs etc. and his product has high demand. Many more farmers, rural youth, SHGs, should come out and work hand in hand to produce more organic inputs and boost organic farming in Udalguri District of Assam.



Horizontal spread of Vermicompost production and application from Mr. Hasda to farmers of other villages of Udalguri district

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