

Economic revival of farmwomen through broiler farming in Andaman and Nicobar Island

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Scientific broiler farming is one of the emerging income generating activities for the farmers in Andaman and Nicobar Islands due to growing demand of poultry meat and other poultry products in the Islands. ICAR-Krishi Vigyan Kendra, South Andaman empowered the farmwoman Smt. P Meena of Indira Nagar village, South Andaman in the area of scientific broiler farming from which she earned her decent livelihood. She could increase her net profit by ₹ 60,000 to 6,30,000 per annum by this new venture. Her simplicity touched everyone and her efforts encouraged other farmwomen to become independent and follow her path.

Keywords: Broiler farming, Farmwomen, Poultry

POULTRY farming plays a significant role in the livelihood of rural communities in a developing country like India. It is one of the prospective tools to alleviate poverty and unemployment, protein-energy malnutrition, promote nutrition and food security, afford supplementary income and improve the living standard. Poultry farming can be transformed into one of the most adaptable endeavours by imparting rural farmers with skills and scientific packages and practices of technologies. India ranks 3rd in egg production and 5th in poultry meat

production in the world, but the availability of the chicken product is far below the recommended level (10.5 kg poultry meat and 180 eggs/person/annum). The scenario is still alarmingly low in rural areas. The per capita consumption of eggs and meat is about 69 eggs and 3.4 kg meat per annum in India. In Andaman and Nicobar Island, the poultry production is still at the juvenile stage and needs an immediate boost. As per the 19th census, the total poultry population in Andaman and Nicobar Island is 11,65,363. Due to the growing demand of poultry meat in

the Island, promotion of scientific broiler farming is one of the emerging income-generating activity for farmers.

Smt. P. Meena, aged 50 years is a progressive farmwoman from Indira Nagar village of South Andaman, and similar to the other households of the area, she had a backyard poultry (60-70 birds) but had no scientific knowledge of rearing them. The location of Indira Nagar makes it a very suitable area for rearing milch cattle, goats and backyard poultry. Smt. P. Meena was eager to learn scientific ways of animal husbandry,



Broiler farm unit of Smt. P. Meena



Smt. P. Meena working in her Broiler farm

she has undergone various skill imparting training programs in the areas of scientific broiler farming, backyard poultry farming, dairy farming and value addition of milk at ICAR-Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), South Andaman.

After imbibing various skills, studying and focusing on all the pros and cons of the different poultry and livestock farming, Smt. P. Meena chose poultry farming for her livelihood. Though desi poultry, Vanraja bird is the most sought commodity at market and fetches more price, it needs to be reared for a longer period (more than 5 months). Whereas, the commercial broiler bird can be sold after 35 days and the production and profit is higher per unit area compared to the desi bird. To gain the scientific experience, she initially started farming with just 200 broiler birds per batch during 2011-12 in her backyard with a small temporary shelter. By this, she not only could earn a net profit of ₹ 60,000 during the year 2011-12 but also gained experience in broiler farming, feeding, rearing and health management aspects. This was a boost to pave and expand her

farming horizontally.

The tourism industry took a new height in the Island, which invited a huge number of tourists to the Island and this caused heavy influx of collared workers from mainland India. Thus, the total population of the visitors from the mainland outnumbered the Island's population and also tourism increased the purchasing power of the islanders. This, in turn, shifted the preference of the islanders towards animal protein and as poultry has no regional and religious taboo, to satiate the whole population the demand of poultry products were sky-high. Huge demand for poultry meat in the market made her think for further expansion after achieving experience on broiler farming. With the support of her family members (husband and two sons), she established the infrastructure (sheds, feeds and equipments) for the Broiler farming to support rearing of 2100 broiler birds in a single batch (in three sheds) with the assistance and support of ICAR-KVK, South Andaman and Animal Science Division, ICAR-Central Island Agricultural Research Institute (CIARI), Port Blair. Her venture

achieved great success and incurred a net profit of ₹ 6,30,000 per annum during 2019-20.

SUMMARY

A farmwoman became self-reliant and earned a decent livelihood from Broiler farming. It takes a lot of hard work and enthusiasm but it gives back much more. Her simplicity touched everyone and her efforts encouraged other farmwomen of the Island to become independent and follow her path. Several other women of the area were interested to follow her path and take up broiler farming as their main vocation and women from surrounding areas also came to her to get first-hand knowledge and suggestion regarding backyard poultry and broiler farming. In this journey of self-reliance, Smt. P Meena got full extended support in all arenas of Broiler farming and management from the ICAR-KVK, South Andaman as well as Division of Animal Science, ICAR-CIARI, Port Blair.

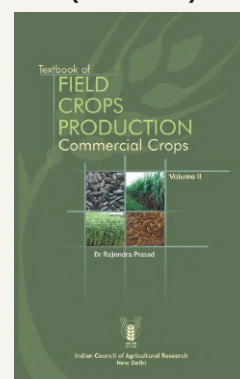
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