

From Engineering to Protected horticulture

The venture began from a small discussion over benefits of water saving 'Drip Irrigation' and 'Good Agricultural Practices' (GAP) which eventually inspired Vishal Shaukeen (B.Tech, Electrical and Electronics) and Vaibhav Rana (B.Tech, Information Technology) to start a farm of their own under support and guidance of Mr Prem Prakash Shaukeen (M.Sc., Vegetable Science, CCSHAU, Hisar), and named as Kinder polyfarms.

AFTER a couple of weeks of intensive studying and research over agricultural sector in India as well as the best practices across the world, they decided to adopt protected cultivation technology and to install a polyhouse at their agriculture land in Delhi. After facing difficulties regarding information and work experience about this vast and heavily undermined sector, they eventually ended up at 'Centre for Protected Cultivation Technology, ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute, Pusa, New Delhi' where Dr P. K. Singh and his team, not only appreciated their thought of going in the noble trade of agriculture but also shared his vast knowledge and expertise about the same.

After months of hardwork and extensive research, they were able to get a greenhouse installed in 2.25 acres in January 2018. They sowed their first crop of 'Parthenocarpic cucumber' in their polyhouse on 2nd February 2018; raised the crop using all good agricultural practices and fruit harvesting of which began on 17th March 2018 and lasted till 3rd June 2018. This was the time of happiness for families to realize the fruits of hard work done by Vishal and Vaibhav. During the course of

the harvest, on the advice of Dr Singh, they explored various other marketing channels for their produce. Beginning from the wholesalers and commission agents at the Azadpur Mandi, Delhi, the bulk sale of the produce shifted to the procurement centres of various reputed food supply companies like Reliance Fresh, Big Basket, Safal (Mother Dairy), More Megastore, Spencers, etc. in the vicinity of their farm. By doing so, they saved greatly on transportation from farm to *mandi* as well as cut out the entire share of commission agents in selling their produce. To further supplement their income, they did not waste any time and utilized the remaining land to grow multiple other crops that fetched a high price even in the wholesale market. At the end of their cropping season, they were able to generate a revenue of ₹ 7,40,277 excluding approximately ₹ 2,25,500 expenditure as costs of seeds, fertilizers, agro-chemicals as well as the labour used in the entire process.

Vishal Shaukeen and Vaibhav Rana give all the credit of their success to the continued support and motivation by their family members, guidance and knowledge provide to them by Mr Prem Prakash Shaukeen and Prof. G. S.





Rana (Hort. Division, CCSHAU, Hisar). They appreciate endless efforts of their staff as well as everyone involved in their entire learning experience. They express immense gratitude towards the highly qualified personnel at the CPCT, IARI, New Delhi; with special thanks to Dr P. K. Singh and his team for their endless support, guidance and self-less help that he extended towards them in their ambitious endeavor, which still continues.

They wish to learn more and more about the minutest details of the agricultural sector and contribute to bring reforms to the same, however small it may be. They believe in educating their fellow farmers as well as household gardeners about merits of Good Agricultural Practices as well as its health benefits which eventually help further in environmental well-being.

Journey ahead

Vishal Shaukeen and Vaibhav Rana have now grown their area under cultivation further and have installed a nursery at their farm, making it profitable for their own selves as well as the farmers around, who had to travel great distances in order to purchase vegetable seedlings.

For further interaction, please write to:

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Production of vegetable seedlings in low cost poly houses in district East Singhbhum, Jharkhand

KVK, East Singhbhum trained 235 rural youth on low cost poly house management for vegetable seedlings production. Out of which, 25 trainees established vegetable seedlings unit under the technical guidance of KVK as an enterprise in the year 2019–20. Every youth possessed one low cost polyhouse. In this low cost poly house they grow vegetables seedling of tomato, brinjal, cauliflower and cabbage good for early vegetable production. Cucurbitaceous crop like bottle gourd, bitter gourd, and cucumber were grown in side poly house in poly tubes. Also used this poly house for the cultivation of leafy vegetable (spinach, coriander, *amaranthus*). Their average net annual income is ₹ 65,000 from polyhouse based vegetable cultivation.



Source: ICAR Annual Report (2020)