

OVERVIEW OF SERICULTURE YESTERDAY, TODAY

D.Elumalai¹ R.Ramamoorthy² and

B. Poovizhiraja³

^{1&3} Department of Agricultural Entomology,

Adhiyamaan College of Agriculture and Research, Tamil Nadu

²Department of Sericulture, Forest College and Research Institute, Tamil Nadu

INTRODUCTION

Sericulture India is farming based on agriculture, annually five to six times of rearing in silkworm and also throughout the farmers and silk reelers are fetching the income. Sericulture is rural based on agro industry like pre cocoon to post cocoon. The farmer is horizontal cultivation of mulberry and vertical getting the rapid income in the all around the year. Sericulture, invariably 53 percent of women involved fetching employment opportunities. India is the second largest raw silk producer in the world after china and also tremendous consumer of silk and silk fabrics. In spite of huge industrialization, high wage rate, less in cultivable land and fluctuating cocoon prices, India could sustain its raw silk production over the recent years. In India, all the four types of silk production namely, mulberry, Eri, Tasar and Muga are produced.

SERICULTURE COMPRISES ON TWO PARTS:

1. Pre cocoon otherwise called on stage activities

- Mulberry cultivation
- Mulberry Leaf production
- Silkworm rearing and cocoon harvesting
- Cocoon selling in market

2. Post cocoon otherwise called as off stage activities

- Procured cocoon in market for reelers
- Silk Reeling
- Silk twisting
- Silk dying
- Silk weaving and final product of fetched in silk saree.

HISTORY: THE SERICULTURE OF YESTERDAY

In the 2nd century BC, Chinese relocate spread sericulture in Korea, but it did not endure there. The Silk Routes were not the dissemination roads of sericulture. On the contrary, the Routes protected its secret, because the merchants wished to keep the monopoly on the exchanges. In the 5th century AD, sericulture reached India, where it will endure. Gradually it propagated to most countries of Asia: India, Korea, Japan, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand and others.

THE SILKWORM

Mulberry silkworm is *Bombyx mori* and also monophogus feeding only mulberry leaves. It is a holometabolous insect and developed through four morphologically different stages in the life cycle such as egg, larva, pupa and adult.

S.No	Stages	Periods
1	Egg	10
2	Larva	26
3	Pupa	7
4	Adult	6



In earlier times 15 years, the farmers reared silkworms in egg to cocoon. The farmers buying eggs in egg production centers after eggs are hatching through reared in round bamboo trays. At the time farmers faced several constraints on improper hatching, unsized larva, poor appetite, diseases attacking larva, so farmer's not satisfactory and fetched only poor yield of cocoon.

THE SERICULTURE TODAY

Nowadays, the central silk board, ministry of textiles in India, it thrives in chawki rearing centers in various places in southern India. So, farmers buy only ten days old chawki larva and are also minimized in pest and diseases, unsized larva etc. the late farmers fetched superior quality of cocoons are selling the market, inspite taking good profit in sericulture. The farmers getting profit all around the year.

PECULIARITIES AND CRUX OF SERICULTURE

- Sericulture is an agro-based cottage industry with huge labour contribution and continuous higher income generation potential.
- India, the second largest raw silk producer next to china, has a sole position being the only country, producing all the commercial four types of natural silk viz., mulberry, tasar, eri and muga.
- Mulberry can be full-grown in a variety of soil and silkworm can be reared under different climatic conditions.
- Sericulture involves low venture. One time the garden is established it will continue to yield for 12-15 years with minimum expenses on maintenance of mulberry garden.
- Highest out-turn can be obtained from lowest investment.
- Sericulture technology is easy and thus it is highly suitable for all types of farmers, even illiterate farmers.
- All the sericulture behavior is village based and hence prevents migration of people from rural to urban areas in search of jobs.
- Being upland crop, mulberry cultivation does not encroach upon agricultural lands meant for food production.
- Silk being an expensive material commonly used mostly by the higher society, transfer of money from rich to poor is ensured.
- Mulberry ensures higher income per unit area than that form a number of agricultural crops.
- With five to six crops a year, it keeps the whole family involved almost round the year.
- Sericulture requires use of simple appliances, which are easily available in rural areas.
- In drought conditions, when most of the

agricultural crops fail, mulberry can sprout and yield leaves for silkworm rearing.

- Sericulture provides self-employment to the educated unemployed youths in varied sectors.

CONCLUSION

Sericulture is tremendous income generation as well as farmers, reelers, twistors and weavers throughout the year. At present situation one of the leading activity and continues profit in sericulture. The central and state government is abundantly support for subsidy and motivation of sericulture framers.

**“Silk is unique characters for all the cloths”
Sericulture is mulberry to silk and milk**

