

A Pond's Story from 'Dusk To Dawn'

¹Palwinder Singh, ²Sarvpriya Singh and ³A P S Dhaliwal
^{1,2,3}Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Bathinda

This is the story of a beautiful pond located in the Chotian village of Bathinda district. A few years ago it was a stinking pond as the sewage water of the village used to flow into the pond and pond became a breeding site for mosquitoes. The pond was rebuilt by Mr. Rajveer Singh resident of village Mehraj after acquiring training from Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Bathinda. His father Sh. Nachhatar Singh was a simple farmer and was engaged in his ancestral occupation of farming but Rajveer Singh's thinking was to do something different from traditional farming. After doing graduation in 1998, he started looking for job. Meanwhile, he came in contact with the scientists of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Bathinda. He got training in Fish production organized by the 'Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Bathinda' in collaboration with Department of Fisheries, Bathinda in the year 2000. Then he took that pond on lease from Chotian village panchayat in the year 2005 and started rearing fish in it. At that time, total Rs. 30,000 was spent for the maintenance of the pond. The banks of the pond were paved with bricks and the bottom was kept as kacha floor. Trees were planted to strengthen the banks of the fish pond. Pond was filled with water and fish prawn was released into it. The plantations of different types of shade trees helped to change the microclimatic conditions nearby the pond during summer season.



Presently, this pond generates additional income of Rs. 90,000 per annum to the village from the fresh sale of fishes. Progressive farmer Mr. Rajveer Singh said that the fish pond of the village is very effective for the fast growth of fishes due to the availability of natural conditions & nutrients as per the requirement of fish development and helps in earliness in market. Fishes become marketable after six months of release of the fish prawn and are sold at Rs. 10-12 thousand per quintal. This profession also provides employment to rural youth/farmers/women for fishing and other cultural operations. Additionally, the fish pond also increased the income of the family, who lives near the pond as now they are indulged in the surveillance activity of the pond. The total area of the fish pond is about 6 acres and graced with different historic trees especially Bohr/Banyan, Peepal and Tahli which are declining now-a-days. These trees also provide shelter to a large number of birds, which have a distinct charm to their surroundings due to their chirping. That is why not only the people of Chotian village but also from the surrounding villages come for morning and evening walks in this enchanting environment. In summer season, villagers take their animals for bath in this pond. The excrement of these animals contributes



to the diet of the fishes. But water always remains clean in the pond because of the fishes. The biggest advantage of this pond is that the water constantly percolates from kaccha floor which helps in raising the water level. Due to this venture, the people of Rajveer Singh's village are now seeing his profession like a miracle.

In future, Mr. Singh is planning to irrigate the adjoining panchayati land (about 10 acre) from pond to various crops grown under this area and moreover, there are less requirement of fertilizer due to availability of enough nutrients for the crops which ultimately decrease the cost of cultivation.

Therefore, cleaning of old ponds of the villages for fish farming is very beneficial for saving water which is a precious gift of nature and at the same time it provides employment, wealth and clean environment. In addition to this, smelly ponds can be converted into beautiful lakes. It also conveys a message that "Nothing is impossible if we decided to do something with determination". Nowadays, due to the tremendous advantages of this concept it is being popularized in nearby villages. Besides of this, it also changes the old pond of the village into a beneficial occupation of fish farming.

