

## From Fields to Fortune with Reliance Foundation's Digital Farm School - A Success Story

Ashok Kumar Malik, Chittibabu Nagulapalli and A. Mohanta  
Reliance Foundation, Odisha

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I am Sri Manulal Pradhan, a 54-year-old farmer renowned in Adring village, located in the Narla block of Kalahandi district. For over a decade, I have been cultivating crops, relying solely on the income generated from my agricultural endeavors to support my family of four, which includes my wife and two sons. Despite my keen interest in education, financial constraints prevented me from completing education beyond the metric level. Since then, I have dedicated myself to farming, incorporating advanced and modern technologies.



My agricultural venture spans across 5 acres of land where I predominantly cultivate paddy. However, in recent years, I encountered challenges in cultivation, particularly dealing with insect pests. To address this issue, I relied on local pesticide shops, investing significant amounts of money without achieving effective pest control.

In May 2023, the Reliance Foundation visited our village, introducing various information service initiatives and a digital farm school program. Throughout the *Kharif*, 2023 growing season, the foundation organized farmer training programs, covering topics such as paddy seed selection, soil testing, nursery management, nutrient management, crop protection, harvesting, and storage.

The foundation conducted a soil testing campaign in our village, enlightening me about the significance of soil testing and providing recommendations for fertilization. The soil test revealed that my land had acidic soil with low organic carbon and medium potash and phosphorus levels. Armed with this knowledge, I took steps to reclaim my soil using

recommended agents like Zypmite Plus and followed the fertilization recommendations on the soil health card.

Participating in Reliance's audio conference program, field-based sessions, and pest diagnostic camps, I sought guidance on managing various issues in my field, such as BPH, leaf blast, bacterial leaf blight, and sheath blight. Utilizing the toll-free helpline-18004198800, I consulted agricultural experts to address pest and disease problems in my paddy fields. Implementing their suggestions, I found that the majority of the issues from the previous year were effectively controlled. Moreover, following the soil test recommendations led to reduced expenses on fertilizer applications.

(Sri Manulal Pradhan, Kalahandi)

	Area (Acres)	Yield (Quintal)	Selling Price (Rs)
<b><i>Kharif, 2023</i></b>	5	71	142000
<b><i>Kharif, 2022</i></b>	5	54	108000

(Production difference of paddy in last two year by adopting scientific agronomic practices; *Kharif, 2022* by Farmers practice & *Kharif, 2023* by scientific intervention)

As a result of these efforts, I achieved a substantial paddy crop this year, harvesting 71 quintals from my 5 acres compared to 54 quintals the previous year. I plan to sell 65 quintals in the local marketing society, fetching around Rs. 1,30,000/- while reserving 6 quintals for personal consumption. The Reliance Digital Farm School program not only helped me cut cultivation costs and safeguard my crops but also enabled me to earn an additional 17 quintals of paddy, equivalent to approximately Rs. 34,000/-. This year, I am pleased to have secured both food and income for my family. Looking ahead, I anticipate double income from fallow crops like green gram and black gram, employing the recommended practices outlined in the soil health card. I express my gratitude for the commendable work undertaken by the scientists, employees, and members of the Reliance Foundation, and I advocate for continued access to such valuable services.