

Mushroom Production: An Alternative Source of Livelihood

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Introduction:

Oyster mushroom (*Pleurotus spp.*), commonly known as “Dhingri” in India. The mushroom crop is widely grown all over India and it is popularly grown in the states of Orissa, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal and in the North-Eastern States of Meghalaya, Tripura Manipur, Mizoram and Assam (Directorate of Mushroom Research (ICAR) Solan, (2011). It is very much advantageous as because it can be grown even by landless farmers, that too on waste material and could be a good source of protein (Ambili and Nitiya, 2014). To raise income, employment, profitability, food security, global competitiveness and social welfare, a holistic approach with emphasis in mushroom production has become imminent. Farmers’ income can be increased not just by increasing production but also through value addition. Adoption of modern technology and sustainable utilization of resources and farm inputs can help mushroom growers in minimizing the cost of production. Mushroom enterprise plays predominant role towards employment generation, food and nutritional security and enhancing income. Several companies have taken up mushroom growing on industrial scale to supply good quality of fresh, dried and canned mushroom to the domestic and international markets (Thakare and Gupta, 2006., Hatai et al, 2021). Mushroom production is a viable, technically feasible and profitable venture. Since mushroom cultivation is capital-intensive and the financial assistance through institutional agencies at cheaper interest rate would help increase mushroom production

Background information of the grower:

Mr. Luingaingam, aged 35 years, of Wainem village, Kangpokpi district formerly Senapati district, Manipur is a hard-working farmer. Before the intervention of KVK he was producing fresh mushroom with little technical skill and could earn Rs. 0.58 lacs per year from the sale of fresh mushroom only at local market.

Institutional Involvement:

Mr. Luingaingam comes in contact with the staff of KVK seeking technical help. He was later selected as one of the beneficiaries of ARYA project during 2017. Accordingly, he was imparted skill-based training and provided with critical inputs under ARYA project.

Effect of the technology /process

Sl.no.	Parameters	Before intervention	After intervention
1	No. of fruiting bags	50	1000
2	Yield (Spawn)	NA	1675 kgs (Rs per year)
3	Yield (fresh mushroom)	70 kgs (Rs per year)	4000 kgs (Rs per year)
4	Cost of production/unit	0.26 lacs (Rs per year)	1.66 lacs (Rs per year)
5	Gross income	0.84 lacs (Rs per year)	8.28 lacs (Rs per year)
6	Net income	0.58 lacs (Rs per year)	6.62 lacs (Rs per year)
7	BC ratio	3.23:1	4.98:1
8	Income/youth/year	0.58 lacs (Rs per year)	3.31 lacs (Rs per year)

Impact of intervention:

The unit produced fresh mushroom of 1790 kg worth of Rs. 250600 (gross income) in 2019-20. During 2020-21, he increased the size with 1000 fruiting bags capacity and he could earn Rs. 5.6 lacs (gross income) from the sale of fresh mushroom in the year 2022-23. Mr. Luingaingam has also started producing mushroom spawn by using simple and modest structure along with UV bulb which works as a laminar flow with the technical assistance of KVK in 2020-21. The unit could earn Rs. 2.68 lacs (gross income) per annum from the sale of spawn in 2022-23. Recently, the unit has opened a mushroom sale outlet and the products are marketed under the brand name “Manna” for both spawn and fresh mushroom.

Socio-economic impact:

It has increased the income manifold with the inclusion of mushroom spawn production unit during 2022-23. This vocation/enterprise has generated an average of 320-man days per year. It is also apparently observed an improved standard of living. He emerged as a special social class/ leader acting as a role model for other farmers of the district.

Linkage with technology/ development organizations:

The mushroom production technology (package of practices) has been recommended and promoted by Krishi Vigyan Kendra- Senapati for large scale adoption. In addition, many line departments at district and state level are also involved as stake holder.

Conclusion:

With the inclusion of mushroom spawn production, the net income increases to 3.31 lacs/year/ youth from 0,5 lacs before the ARYA intervention. It shows a huge jump in net income which attractive income had encourage and motivated others farmers to take up spawn production besides fresh mushroom. This has convinced Mr. Luingaingam about the monetary benefit of spawn production and has assured that one can go for spawn production for higher income.

Activity related photographs:



Reference

- Ambili, S. and Nithya, T.P. 2014. Oyster mushroom cultivation A study in Palakkad district, Kerela. *Int. J. Management. Soc. Sci. Res. Rev.*, 1: 104-105.
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- Thakare, A.B., Gupta, S.P., Kad, M.D. (2006). Economics of mushroom production in Chhatisgarh Plain, Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Economics, College of Agriculture, IGAU, Raipur, (C.G). *New Agriculturist Journal*. v. 17, n. 1,2, p. 9-18.