

Fodder Maize: A Wonder Crop for The Challenges of Hill and Mountain Agriculture: A Success Story

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Challenges:

Fodder is an important source of feed for cattle. Production of fodder maize in Kashmir is 95 lac ton which is insufficient for feeding cattle population with a deficit of 44.1 lac ton. In order to meet the needs and overcome problem of fodder scarcity, high yielding varieties Fodder Maize viz; African Tall, J-1006, were introduced two to three decades back. However, on account of their mid to late maturity, these varieties could not find place in a seed production system because of short growing season.

AICRP on Forage Crops and Utilization -Srinagar Centre in collaboration with AICRP-Maize Srinagar Centre took up the initiative to develop variety in early maturity group which doesn't have significant compromise of green fodder yield and possess the required quality attribute. Shalimar SFM1(GM-6x KDM-111) released in 2020 and subsequently notified in 2021 is a potential material for short growing season in hill and mountain ecologies and has the potential to be a game changer for the seed. The variety has been licensed out to M/s Khyber greens Pvt.Limited for its large scale during 2022-2023. It is intended to cover 50000 ha in 5 years to augment the green fodder availability in UT of Jammu and Kashmir.

Details of farmer:

Name of the farmer: Waseem Hajini S/o Anayatullah Haji

Address for Communication: Sir Syedabad Sopore, Baramulla, J&K- 193201

Contact Phone No.:7006770776

Age:41 years

Farm holdings: 60 Kanals

Irrigation Source: Borewell as well as Lift Irrigation

Livestock holdings: 20 cows and buffaloes, 100 sheeps, our contact farmer received trainings from our station and executed them on farm named Welkin Farmstead

Initiative:

The work was started by mentorship provided by Prof J Vitcom who showcased the potential of GM-6 maize drought tolerant extra early white kernel composite released by AAU, Anand which could be utilized in a crossing programme with white material from Kashmir to recover desirable grain and fodder type maize accessions for which there is a huge demand. The work was started in 2012. The farmer contacted AICRP-FC&U, DARS, Rangreth through State Department of Agriculture and Farmers welfare as the region is facing the problem of low fodder production and inferior quality fodder as well as the quality fodder maize varieties are not available in early group. The interventions including technologies, training, and quality seed material were supplied.

The present trial on SFM-1 showed results with highest yield of 890 qtl/ha and a lowest yield of 550 qtl/ha with an average of 720 qtl/ha. The trial involved gross cost of Rs 32,200 gross return of Rs/72,000 with net return of 40,000 and 2.23 was the BCR.

Present trial had a higher impact of maize variety as fodder for livestock. This variety had an impact on availability of green fodder during lean period and increased the farmers income by 4 times as compared to local variety used. Animal palatability was better than local variety with better farmer acceptability in respect of economic returns. DARS, Rangreth has played a significant role in larger spread and wider acceptability for expansion of seed villages in different districts and establishment of centres at KVK's through technology transfer. Package of practices for SFM-1 is in pipeline to be released soon for information and knowledge updation of stakeholders. Farmer interest groups in livestock rich districts have been identified and will be registered soon for further horizontal dissemination of the technology.





The variety developed by SKUAST-K is certainly going to address the issues of fodder scarcity in the valley and make dairying a viable business option for interested persons. However timely feed availability and package of practice should be followed.

