

A Success Story on vegetable cultivation through natural farming

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Introduction

The natural farming, unlike other systems of farming, completely avoids the use of external chemical inputs. It balances the natural and ecological processes through the use of organic and bio- inputs in form of soil inoculants and bio-pesticides. Practices like mulching, no-till, mixed cropping etc are generally adopted under natural farming. The practices followed under natural farming collectively provide increased crop resilience to weather aberration.

Major practices adopted

Mr. Shabun Balang, age 54 years of Makuilongdi village, Willong Block, Senapati, Manipur is a natural farming practitioner. He has been cultivating vegetables like cabbage and peas for more than three years in an area of 1.5 ha(1 ha cabbage & 0.5ha peas) under natural farming practices. Prior to 2022, he raised cabbage and peas without any scientific intervention. Later in the year 2023, he is using jeevamrut, beejamrit for soil and seed treatment and neem-based products as a major practice under natural farming after he came in contact with the staffs of KVK – Senapati.



Identification of entrepreneurial competencies:

KVK- Senapati has identified Mr. Shabun to be a promising farmer for entrepreneurial development under natural farming based on his passion for farming, qualification and other enabling factors like managerial and technical skill. Accordingly, he was imparted skill-based training programme on natural farming including preparation of different bio-formulation of organic inputs his

practical capacity was also strengthened by conducting field demonstration in his farm.



Farmer's natural farming Schedule

Cabbage seed well treated with beejamrit are sown in the month of October in nursery bed. Twenty days old seedlings are transplanted in raised beds after the application of jeevamrut at the initial stage and followed in the subsequent week. In case of pea, seeds are directly sown in well prepared field in the month of Nov at a spacing of 3 inches plant to plant. Neem based products are sprayed at regular interval to manage insect-pests and diseases of cabbage and pea.

Financial performance- Mr. Shabun can earn a net income of Rs. 91782/- from cabbage (1ha) and pea (0.5 ha) annually.

Economics:

Component	Return (Rs./year)
Gross return	
i. Cabbage	131520
ii. Pea	36750
Total returns	168270
Gross cost	
i. Cabbage	56900
ii. Pea	19587
Total Cost	76487
Net returns	
i. Cabbage	74620
ii. Pea	17162
Total Net returns	91782

Overcoming Challenges

In the initial phase of natural farming, Mr. Shabun has to struggle much to overcome the issues related to natural farming since the concept of natural farming was entirely new to him. The other constraints faced were difficulty in maintaining strict schedules for preparing bio-formulations

and distinction between naturally and chemically grown produces is not made in the market for earning premium price.

In order to overcoming these issues, KVK -Senapati has made timely intervention by providing solutions. KVK - Senapati has organised a number of awareness programme on natural produces for consumers at district level.

Impact & Influence: Mr. Shabun is now able to set example about the advantages of natural farming for other fellow

farmers. Natural farming has markedly enhanced soil health status of his farm an also reduced the cost of cultivation. Mr. Shabun is presently encouraging others to take up natural farming as sustainable source of livelihood. His farm has emerged as a model farm of natural farming in the district. It becomes the destination for exposure visit by officials, students and farmers.

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