

Adopt Subsidiary Occupations for Employment and Income

Raj Kumar

Principal Extension Scientist (Agricultural Economics), Department of Economics and Sociology
PAU, Ludhiana

*Corresponding Author: rajkumar@pau.edu

Nearly 85 per cent of farmers are small-holding farmers having less than 5 acres of land under cultivation in the country. Due to lack of knowledge and experience for any occupation other than agriculture, these people are also deprived of other employment opportunities. The development of the country is possible only with the economic development of this section. The concerted efforts needs be made to encourage the farmers to take up subsidiary occupations so that they can utilize their free time by doing some economic activity to increase their income. It is high time for farmers to realise that they have to break the vicious cycle of wheat-paddy cultivation and have to opt for subsidiary occupations like pig farming, fishery, poultry and dairy farming.

With the increasing mechanization, the work for agricultural workers is decreasing. On the one hand, farming costs are increasing, while on the other hand, unemployment is increasing among the agricultural workers. Subsidiary occupation can prove to be very effective in employing such replaced manpower from the agriculture sector. Dairy farming, goat rearing, mushroom cultivation, bee keeping, pig rearing, etc. can be adopted as subsidiary occupation along with farming. Information and trainings related to these occupations can be taken either from the agricultural universities or *Krishi Vigyan Kendras*. The financial assistance for starting a new business is also provided by commercial as well as cooperative banks. Apart from this, farmers may contact the Department of Animal Husbandry and Department of Horticulture of the state regarding the provision of subsidy for these enterprises.

Self-marketing in dairy business starting from small scale with good breed cows/buffalos provides both work and profit. Fishing in empty village ponds may be encouraged. Landless workers can also start their work after taking expertise for honey bees. Rearing of broiler (meat chicken) is also very profitable. Mushroom cultivation can be done easily. Processing of fruits and vegetables can increase the work and profits manifold. The products produced

from subsidiary occupations may be better marketed in own locality/village. In this regard, the government should support the farmers by creating necessary infrastructural facilities. Financial and technical assistance should also be provided by the government to establish small scale industries in villages. The cooperative societies can play major role bolstering small farmers if they are run by honest, competent and consensually elected representatives. Rural women can increase their household income through these occupations. Farm women should be provided with first hand training in preparing pickles, jams, *chutneys*, *murabba*, etc, to enable them to earn more with little efforts. Besides, at the time of glut in the market, the produce can be stored at home, cleaned and sealed in packets/boxes, etc. and sold at a higher price later on. Farmers can set up small sales centres in town or village at their own level to sell their produce directly to the consumers. Under the ATMA Scheme under the Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, the sale points (ATMA Hut) are provided to farmers where they can sell their products. Consumers also get clean and pure products in this type of market.

Educated youth of villages can earn good income by opening custom hiring centres to provide farm machinery and implements on rent. To purchase farm machinery, the state government provides subsidy to the extent of 50 per cent for individual farmers and 80 per cent to the cooperative societies and the group of farmers (8 to 10 farmers). The agro processing complexes needs to be installed in rural areas to provide employment to the unemployed rural youth. To increase their efficiency to earn more and enhancing their standard of living, various skill development trainings should be imparted to them. This may also help to decrease the trend of migration to the foreign countries in order to find their livelihood and will clear up the negativity/depression from the minds. A skilled person has no shortage of work but the skills need to be gotten polished to fetch more work, money and recognition.

Table 1: Returns from some important subsidiary occupations (Rs/ annum)

S. No.	Subsidiary occupation	Scale of business	Gross returns	Total costs	Net returns (Approximate)
1.	Mushroom cultivation (Button mushroom)	30 sq m area (8 quintals wheat straw)	40,000	17,050	22,950
2.	Bee keeping	50 colonies (Stationary)	1,69,000	94,590	74,410
		100 colonies (Migratory)	7,75,000	3,02,713	4,72,287
3.	Dairy farming	10 buffaloes	11,43,525	9,94,583	1,48,942
		10 hybrid cows	12,47,375	10,14,173	2,33,202
4.	Poultry farming (Cage system)	1000 layers (300 eggs/layer/ annum)	17,43,000	14,65,790	2,77,210
5.	Goat rearing	100 does + 5 bucks	14,16,610	10,31,203	3,85,407
6.	Piggery	10 sows + 1 boar	13,90,800	11,11,248	2,79,522
7.	Fish farming (Carp fish)	One acre	2,00,000	1,12,500	87,500

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