A Success story of Vanaraja Backyard Poultry: Enhancing Livelihood and Nutritional Security of Tribal Farmers in Hazaribagh

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A Story of Transformation

Farmer Shri Sibu Soren from Bhanderi village in Bishnugarh Block of Hazaribagh district of Jharkhand is an example of how scientific knowledge, technical guidance and sustained hard work can change a rural livelihood. Earlier he was a poor man depending on traditional backyard poultry rearing but today he is a successful poultry farmer earning regular income every year. He has a steady income and provides employment for family members, particularly women, in his village.



A Modest Beginning

Shri Sibu Soren comes from an economically backward tribal farming family. Agriculture is the primary occupation of his family, supplemented by traditional backyard poultry rearing. However, indigenous poultry birds exhibited poor growth, low egg production, and high mortality, resulting in limited income. This made his income low and irregular to earn his livelihood. He first tried his hand at traditional poultry rearing, using indigenous (Desi) birds. The harvest was only 35-50 eggs/bird/year and the adult body weight was only 1.0-1.2 kg. It was a start but not quite enough to support the family. He therefore continued to rely on seasonal agriculture and his financial situation remained pretty much the same until he sought formal, scientific guidance which would eventually change the course of his life.

The Turning Point: Scientific Training

The turning point came when Sibu was selected under the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) for the promotion of Vanaraja backyard poultry by the ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute, Jharkhand. Under the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP), Shri Sibu Soren received 50 Vanaraja chicks along with technical guidance on scientific backyard poultry management, including brooding, feeding, housing, vaccination, and disease management. The family's approach to poultry farming has been transformed by the knowledge acquired in this training.

Steady Expansion

Buoyed by this success, Shri Sibu Soren expanded his poultry cultivation every year, following expert advice, and enhanced his flock management and gradually boosted his production capacity. He achieved another milestone: establishing scientific backyard poultry with an improved dual-purpose breed. His produce was of a superior quality and he was able to get better prices in the market. Today, he makes a steady and regular income from poultry cultivation, a massive jump since his intervention and a dramatic shift from where he was originally. This success has come from his dedication, his scientific training and his willingness to adopt modern agricultural technologies.

Creating Employment in the Village

Sibu accomplishments are not confined to his own household. As his enterprise grew, he started to create employment opportunities for family members, particularly women. The enterprise has become a reliable source of income for many rural households with limited employment opportunities and has made Shri Sibu Soren an important contributor to rural employment and local economic development. He spends the extra income on household expenses and family nutrition. He strongly believes that nutrition and livelihood resilience are the best investments a family can make in the next generation.

A Transformed Life, A Wider Impact

Shri Sibu Soren and his family's life has been transformed beyond recognition. From a household that had difficulty with poverty, uncertain income and dependence on traditional low-yielding poultry birds to a household that is economically secure and self-reliant. Higher earnings have improved their standard of living, opened up regular availability of eggs and meat for the family and strengthened their confidence in the future. Encouraged by his example, many farmers in his village and the adjoining areas have taken up scientific backyard poultry cultivation, thus spreading the modern methods of Vanaraja poultry farming in the region.

Conclusion

The experience of Shri Sibu Soren demonstrates that Vanaraja backyard poultry is a low-investment, high-return enterprise for tribal households. The turning point came with the SCSP chicks' distribution program and comprehensive technical guidance provided by ICAR-IARI, Jharkhand. This intervention gave him both the knowledge and the confidence to adopt scientific poultry cultivation. Through this support, he achieved enhanced income and a significant boost in household nutritional security. Today, he is not only a prosperous and economically empowered poultry farmer, but also a role model for fellow farmers and a source of employment for his community. His journey from struggle to success clearly shows that backyard poultry cultivation can be a strong tool for rural economic development, employment generation, and poverty alleviation if the right technical knowledge, scientific guidance, and sustained institutional support are provided. This is an inspiration not only for the tribal growers of Jharkhand but also for the farming communities across India, as it demonstrates the huge potential of scientific Vanaraja poultry cultivation to uplift rural livelihoods and strengthen the rural economy.

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