

SUCCESS STORY ON KING CHILI CULTIVATION AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO OPIUM IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Opium is being cultivated since time immemorial in Arunachal Pradesh. More than half of the state especially eastern part still cultivates opium for household use. Cultivation of opium was never a commercial activity in this frontier state. Consumption of opium is a part of social traditional and cultural customary occasions, such as marriages, festivals, rituals, house warming and child birth etc. It took up into micro-commercial farming for exchange, barter and cash in the neighbor area in the recent past. Every year the Central Narcotic Department with the help of paramilitary and state police force carry out annual operations to destroy the standing crop in the field. It was a long felt desire of the state Agriculture department to replace this crop with equally potential cash crop on long term basis without touching the local sentiment to give up the opium cultivation abruptly.

King chilli (*Capsicum chinense* Jacq) popularly known as Raja Mircha, otherwise known differently by various Tribes is a popular indigenous crop cultivated by all indigenous Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh for its pungency and medicinal food value. It is consumed in different form as normal chili but have especial demand for its extra powerful pungency and aroma. Many locally processed and packed king chili based products are now available in local market. It's crushed/ powder is known to have used for driving the elephant and punishing the mischievous culprits in the society. Local tribal people also used its smoke to drive away demons and wild beast.

The law enforcement agencies in Western and European countries use pepper spray as less lethal weapon to control riot, disperse crowds etc. Chili beer & chili ale is coming as important food staff internationally to satiate the ever growing taste and craze to satisfy the sensation. Having tasted all powerful drowsing and sedative food staff the people are now attracted to king chili based food and drinks.

Considering the potential and adoptability of King chili cultivation in the agro-climate and agro-economic condition of Arunachal Pradesh, commercial cultivation of king chili as an alternative to drudgery opium cultivation under the intervention of Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana(RKVY) being a state planed, central sponsored scheme the commercial cultivation of king chili was taken up in the state. Our efforts have now yielded desired results. The uneducated rural youths have today accepted and adopted this project and are managing profitably to the extent of exporting the product.

One such Agri-preneur is Mr. Chow Amat Namchoom, S/o Chow Som Namchoom, Graduate from St. Edmund's College under North Eastern Hill University(NEHU) Shillong during 2000 have taken up king chili cultivation in a commercial scale by setting up an drying unit at Namsai, Headquarter of Namsai District, Arunachal Pradesh. He is a registered Exporter of Species under the SPICES BOARD, Ministry of commerce and Industry, GOI bearing Reg.No.M1941 and exports his products as M/s ARUNACHAL SPICES. This young Agri-preneur can be contacted at Industrial Estate Building, Industrial Estate Area, Namsai. Arunachal Pradesh:792103, Tel;0380 6262327/ 09436049995, Email: arunachal.spices@gmail.com

So far Mr. Namchoom have supplied his product to Mark Rodrigguez, Alamo City Pepper Products,1410 Bobbins ridge, San Antonio, Taxes 78280, USA. During 2015 he supplied to H,Bilal & Co, a Kolkota based exporter to the tune of 2000kgs for Rs.28,40,000/-. This year he is supplying his products to D.B GROUP INDIA PVT. LTD, Kolkota. Apart from self cultivation he purchases produces from nearby adjoining area, process, packs and supplied to various destination. He purchases king chili at Rs.120 – 170/kg and sells dried chili at an average cost of Rs. 1550-1875/kg. Today he is not only self employed but a employer undertaking king chili cultivation as an alternative to opium cultivation in the area once initiated under Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) funding.

PRODUCTION STATISTICS PF PODS PER BIGHA (1333 sq mtr)

1. 9 no. of pods per plant X 2 rounds in a week =18 pods
2. Per pod average weight 8 gms X 18 =144 gms per week
3. 144 gms X 4 weeks =576 gms per plant per month
4. 576 gms X 3 (1st May – 31st July) month =1728 gms (1.728 kgs)
5. 1.728 kg X Rs. 120 =Rs. 207.36 per plant
6. 800 plants per bigha X Rs. 207.3 = Rs. 1,65,888/-



King Chili Nursery bed ready for sowing



Germinating King Chili under shed net



King Chili Nursery bed



King Chili Saplings ready for dispatch



King Chili Field at Namsai



King Chili Field at Namsai



Fruiting King Chili



Fruiting King Chili



Fruiting King Chili



Fruiting King Chili (Variety: Green to Red)



King Chili (Variety: Green to Red)



King Chili (variety: White to Red)



King Chili (variety: Brown to Red)



Freshly Harvested King Chili bought from distant area ready for drying process



Freshly Harvested King Chili ready for drying process



Packing Dried Chili in presence of Hn'ble Minister Agriculture, Director Agriculture, Local MLA , ADC Namsai and Agri.& allied officers



Dried and Packed King Chili for dispatch



Inauguration of King Chili Processing unit in presence of Hon'ble Minister Agriculture, Director Agriculture, Local MLA , ADC Namsai and Agri.& allied officers



Lighting Inaugural Lamp



CHOW AMAT NAMCHOOM
Agri-prenuer