

## **Fisheries estate Ratyod -- a new fish hub.**

**Background:** Ratyod is a moderate village in tehsil Nalagarh of Solan district. It is situated some 10 km from Bharatgarh, the nearest national highway. The villagers of Ratyod have been engaged mostly in agricultural practices as they have abundant land. Almost all villagers have bore wells for fulfilling their agricultural needs of water.

**Identification of Ratyod as potential area for aquaculture:** An ambitious scheme “Aquaculture development through integrated approach” under NMPS (National Mission for Protein Supplements) was sanctioned to the State under Rashtriya Krishi vikas Yojana. The idea was to identify a cluster as potential area for aquaculture development. After having full satisfaction with water and soil parameters (pH, temperature, hardness) ideal area for the culture of carps was found and Ratyod village was selected as suitable hub for implementation of this project. The villagers were awared and motivated in Gram Panchayat meetings, through personal contacts as well as training camps, to spare some of their agricultural land for the development of aquaculture activities.

**Implementation:** Implementation of the programme was started with the creation of water area under fish ponds and nursery ponds. A total of 5.46 ha area was created under fish ponds and a subsidy to the tune of Rs. 15.288 lac was provided to the farmers (including first year inputs). Similarly 0.97 ha area was created under fish nursery ponds and a subsidy to the tune of Rs. 3.101 lakh (including first year inputs) was provided to the different farmers. A carp fish hatchery with a cost of Rs. 9.70 lac (100% subsidy) has been established by Mr. Manjit Singh, a leading farmer and a potential group leader. Then this cluster was united and converted into a society under the name “**The Krishak , Matsaya Palak and Ekatrikaran Sales Cooperative Society Ltd. Ratyod**” initially with 20 members. Now further funds (46.0 lakhs) were provided to this cooperative group for “**Post harvest infrastructural facilities**” which includes a mobile fish vehicle, ice plant, office building, furniture, deep freezer and insulation boxes etc. Farmers are getting judicious price for their fish as it is now being sold through mobile fish vehicle and in most hygienic conditions. Farmers also do not have to worry about their unsold fish as it can be kept safe under ice cold conditions in deep freezer or in insulation boxes with crushed ice inside. This group of farmers is now

expanding day by day and now 57 active members have been registered under this cooperative society.



Fig. A view of nursery ponds constructed at Fisheries estate Ratyod.



Fig. Stocking of fingerlings by a farmer in his fish pond.

**Outcome :** After one year the area has turned into a fish hub. The progressive fish farmers have told that their income has gone up by several folds. Mr. Manjit has sold three lakh Indian major carp fry during last season @ Rs. 1.00 per fry and his production cost on rearing these fries has only been Rs. 20000/- only resulting a net gain of 2.50 lakhs. The land which he has utilized for this purpose was earlier providing him only Rs. 30000/- per annum from all agricultural activities. Similarly all farmers of the cluster have achieved yearly production of 4-5 M.T. /h thereby a net gain of Rs 1.60 lac/per ha.



Fig. keys of the mobile fish vehicle handed over to the President of the Fish co-operative society.

**“Aquaculture is an excellent alternate to traditional practices of livelihood”** quotes Mr. Manjit, a leading fish farmer and president of co-operative society. These figures of fish culture economics are based on practical gains which these farmers have achieved .Overall the developments in the Ratyod area have provided an alternate to the people for their livelihood in addition to agricultural and horticultural activities.