

Success Story No.2

Multipurpose Farm Ponds - Money Making Ponds???

- The Splendid face of Inland Fisheries in Tamil Nadu

Under RKVY, the Tamil Nadu Government through the Department of Fisheries intervened in the activities of the small & marginal farmers especially of the Cauvery Delta area by way of creating multipurpose farm ponds and introducing fish culture in these ponds and changed their lives forever for better. These beneficiary farmers regard these multipurpose farm ponds indeed as their Money Making ponds owing to their stupendous success.

Fisheries Scenario

In Tamil Nadu, Inland fisheries contribute around 38% of total fish production and Marine Fisheries contributes to the rest. Tamil Nadu has a total area of 3.73 lakh ha of inland water bodies and these are used for Fish Culture in the traditional way. All these water bodies are monsoon dependent and thus highly seasonal. The limited water retention period of 4 to 6 months in these water bodies necessitate meticulous planning with respect to fish seed production and subsequent stocking to achieve satisfactory fish production.

Idea behind

Creation of Water bodies in the form of Farm Ponds in agricultural lands appeared to be the best option for increasing the area under inland fisheries which required voluntary participation by agriculturists. The Department of Fisheries, through demonstrations, convinced the farmers by showing the multiple benefits of creation of farm ponds like water retention, ground water recharge, and irrigation water for agricultural crops besides getting additional income from the fish culture. The acute drought that occurred in Tamil Nadu during 2012-13 taught a bitter lesson to the farmers who had lost their valuable crops just because they could not give a life saving irrigation to their crops. The farmers realized the benefits of having a Farm Pond in their fields especially in the Cauvery Delta region. This realization of farmers led the Department of Fisheries to positively intervene and moot two exclusive proposals under the Rashtriya

Krishi Vikas Yojana titled “Introduction of Fish culture in Multi-Purpose farm ponds of Drought affected Cauvery Delta Region.” and “Propagation of Fish culture in Multi-Purpose farm ponds in Tamil Nadu” during 2013-14.

Project

During 2013-14, an amount of Rs.311.84 lakhs was sanctioned for the project “Introduction of Fish culture in Multi-Purpose farm ponds of Drought affected Cauvery Delta Region” and Rs.33.46 lakhs was sanctioned for the project “Propagation of Fish culture in Multi-Purpose farm ponds in Tamil Nadu” under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana.

Methodology

The Farm Ponds of size 15 m x 15m x 1.5m were excavated in the sites of Small & Marginal farmers identified through the Joint Walk through Survey by the Assistant Director of Fisheries/Inspector of Fisheries of the concerned district and officials of Rural Development Department along with the beneficiaries.

Farm Ponds were excavated under the MGNREGS and Fish Culture is encouraged under RKVY.

In multipurpose farm ponds, fish seeds of Indian Major Carps namely Catla (surface feeder), Rohu (column feeder), Mrigal (Bottom feeder) which are having different feeding habits were stocked following composite fish culture technique. When these fishes are stocked in the farm pond, the feed available in all the three layers of pond water have been utilized effectively.

Assistance

Input subsidy assistance @ 50% is extended to Small & Marginal farmers for fish seed, feed cost and harvesting material. Training on Fish Culture is also provided to the selected beneficiaries.

Economics on the point of view of a successful farmer

Name of farmer	Thiru. A. Muthaleep
Village	Vaanathirajapuram
Block	Kuthalam
District	Nagapattinam
Area	900 sq.m
Date of stocking	22.10.2013
No.of fingerlings stocked	1000 nos
Quantity of feed given	389.6 Kg
Training given	24.10.2013
Total expenses	Rs.31626.00
Subsidy by dept.	Rs.16626.00
Production	1200 kg
Gross income	Rs.1,20,000.00
Net income	Rs.88,374.00

Success strikes

In Tamil Nadu, additional water spread area of 151.861 ha. has been brought under fish culture by way of this scheme and 20.12 lakh fish seeds were stocked in multipurpose farm ponds.

So far **300 tonnes** of fishes have been harvested from the farm ponds all over Tamil Nadu.

Highest of **120.26 tons** of fishes have been harvested from farm ponds of Thanjavur District.

After seeing and believing in the profitability of fish culture in farm ponds, many farmers have expanded their pond size by excavating additional area. 2286 ponds are sustainable in delta districts.

Success leads to Scaling up

Owing to the huge success of this scheme and based on the demand from the farmers, Rs. 113.54 lakh has been sanctioned under NADP for the year 2014-15 also for carrying out fish culture in 600 farm ponds.

Under this scheme, 576 farm ponds covering a water spread area of 28.03 ha. were stocked with 3.14 lakh fish seeds and culture is in progress.



