

Promotion of Millet based crop diversification – Experience of Timbaktu collective, Anantapur district.

Experiences of Transition from Ground nut based mono cropping production systems to Ground nut and Millets crops based Multi cropping and crop rotation system

Area: Chennethapalli, Roddam, Ramagiri Mandals of Anantapur of AP.

Period: 2005 to 2008 cropping seasons

No. of farming families involved: 349

Extent of area covered under diversification: 1050 acres

Crop rotation area targeted per person: 350 acres

Millets crops introduced: Foxtail Millet and Little Millet.

Anantapur is a classical example of large scale, long term mono cropping.

The Ground nut has been cultivated continuously in the rain fed lands for the past 25 years covering today 20 lakh acres. The crop productivity of Ground nut is highly variable – from as low as 200kgs/ acre to rarely 1100kgs/acre.

As part of the project The collective organized farmers to take up the cultivation of crop diversification in the Ground nut fields @ 3 acres/ family. In addition the farmers to

bring in 1/3rd of the area under pure crops of Millets like Foxtail millet and Little Millet.

Support was provided for applying tank silt to the selected lands for crop rotation.

The challenge was that the millets crops were being introduced after a gap of 25 years. But for the elderly farmers the younger generation had lost the experience of Millets cultivation as well as consumption.

The famers were provided with Millets seeds for the cropping. Assured of Market support at their door steps.

Sl. No.	Particulars	2006	2007	2008
1	No. of farmers worked with	349	349	349
2	Extent targeted for crop rotation	349	349	349
3	No. of farmers taken up Millets crops cultivation	140(40%)	220(63%)	280(80.2%)
4	Extent of area tried	54 (15.5%),(38.6%)	88 (25.2%)	156 (44.7%)

	out under millets - acres			
	No. of farmers - crop failed	90(65%)	108(49%)	64(23%)
4	Extent of area where crops failed	30 (55.6%)	45 (51%)	72(46%)
5	Extent of area recorded production.	24 (44.5%)	43 (54.5%)	84(54%)
6.	Total qty of Millets produced	35 qtl(1.45qtl/acre)	64 qtls(1.5qtl/ac)	162qtls(1.92q/ac)
7.	Procurement done by Dharani	25 tons	42 qtls	90qtls
8.	Price paid by Dharani	Rs.550/qtl	Rs.700/qtl	Rs.1000/qtl

The reason for poor yield/acre.

- 1. Allocation of less fertile lands**
- 2. Dispersed small patches of millets cultivated.**
- 3. The procurement price not attractive to make the crop viable.**

4. Lack of skill in the crop management.

5. Lack of priority for using the millets as food at home.