

Vermicompost - A mean to strengthen livelihood

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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted marketing on vermicompost and the results were very encouraging. Vermicompost manure was sold by the participants on regular basis to strengthen their livelihoods. Even for domestic purpose also, vermicompost manure was quite useful for them. It indicates that, adoption of such practice needs to be promoted to the large number of people in the society. Changing faces of rural livelihoods and depletion of natural resources call an immediate action for survival of large majority of the people. Adoption of such kind of practice by not only few but by many can promise us to have better tomorrow.

KEY WORDS: Vermicompost, Motivations technique of vermicomposting, Return from Vermicomposting

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The concept of livelihood is widely used in relation to poverty and rural development. Its dictionary definition is a 'means to living', which straight way makes it more than merely synonymous with income. A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living (Dhama, 2004). A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stress and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base. (Chambers and Conway, 1991).

In the current decade, according to estimates of the Planning Commission for the Tenth Five Year Plan, more than 10 million people in India seeking work every year. Thus, to ensure full employment within a decade, more than 10 million new livelihoods will have to be generated every year. Given the magnitude of the problem, and the dearth of resources for livelihood promotion, the task of promoting livelihoods for the poor becomes all the more urgent. However, changing faces of livelihoods in rural areas are worst. In 21st century there are several issues related to rural livelihoods in India. Globalization and vulnerability, agriculture as main livelihoods in rural India, migration and livelihoods, unprecedented numbers of farmer suicides, Big corporate houses entering into retail business, land allocation for special economic zones (SEZs), boom in information technology (IT) and IT enabled services, zero growth rates in employment are among many such

events that need introspection.

There are various government and non-government organizations who are engaged in vermicomposting project and showed successful experiments and projects by conducting it at household and farm level in India. So, looking at the upcoming trends of the market and the encouraging results of the successful projects, project worker decided to think about exploring potential benefits of vermicompost for villagers of rural areas (Tripathi, 2003; Vyas, 2009). Vadodara city of Gujarat is surrounded by villages on its all four sides. In these villages, primary occupation of villagers is farming. To grow fruits, vegetables and crops, farmers require filling the planting with manure and soil. Keeping in mind the growing popularity and market for organic manure and products, the project worker thought to pursue to continue project on strengthening livelihoods through vermicomposting for farm men and women groups of Vadodara district, as phase II.

Further, the project worker referred past action projects, undertaken in the Department of Extension and Communication for gaining better understanding of action projects. Project worker reviewed environment related documentation due to her interest in the area and she came across with action project conducted in 2007-08 on adoption of vermicompost practice by villagers. Keeping in mind the growing popularity and market for organic manure and products, the project worker thought to pursue this project.