

# The Transition from Chemical to Organic Farming

## *Real Case Studies*



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## Preface

**George Cheriyan**

*Director*

CUTS International

April 2022



'Developing a Culture of Sustainable Consumption and Lifestyle through Organic Production and Consumption in the State of Rajasthan' or ProOrganic is a project supported by the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), Sweden and implemented by CUTS International in multiple phases. The first phase of four years (2013-16) covered 102-*gram panchayats* in six districts of Rajasthan. The second phase with the name ProOrganic II (2017-21) was extended to four more districts of Rajasthan, making it to ten districts covering 192-*gram panchayats*.

After the interim phase of the bridge year 2021, CUTS launched another five-year initiative (2022-27) titled 'Developing a Culture of Sustainable Consumption and Lifestyle Through Promoting Organic Consumption and Production and Adopting Sustainable Consumption Practices by Engaging Consumers in the State of Rajasthan, India' (ProScop) with the inclusion of two new districts Dungarpur & Banswara making it total 12 now along with an ambitious target of creating 'Model Organic Villages' in each of the 12 districts.

In the given period of over eight years now, there have been several farmers, who got associated with CUTS, some of whom were trained by us under the project activities, while some were already into the organic farming on a partial model, thus paving the way to concrete a team of strong and committed progressive organic farmers. We just thought of documenting the success stories of some of the very proactive farmers from among these. This document aims to showcase our efforts in building a scenario of organic farming in the state and to use this as a handy tool for advocacy with policymakers and a contrivance for motivating other farmers who are still in the chemical mode.

CUTS is dedicated to achieving the goal of easy availability, affordability, and accessibility of organic products without distressing people's livelihoods. In this regard, we take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to SSNC, Sweden, for their cherished partnership in bringing the goals forward and providing their relentless support.

We are also very thankful to all the district partners in each targeted district for their support and teamwork in providing details and evidence from the field, which helped our project team collate the cases. I would also like to thank and express our sincere appreciation to the project team consisting of my colleagues Deepak Saxena, Dharmendra Chaturvedi, Rajdeep Pareek, Nimisha Gaur and Pratibha Jain, without whom accomplishment of this work would not have been possible.



# 1

## Difficult but not Impossible: Integrated Organic Farming Results in Increased Farm Income

*Gopal Lal Sharma is a forward-thinking farmer who is turning his land into a source of revenue for his family. In the Bhilwara district's Narayanpura village, he does organic farming. Only in 7 Bigha land does Gopal make 7 lakh per year from horticulture, vegetables, and agriculture. He is now happily residing with his family and providing his children with the most incredible education possible.*

Earlier I used to work in the factory to earn a living for my family. But now the situation has changed. After adopting improved ways of farming, there was a change in my economic status. Producing vegetables have been much beneficial for me. Income increases year by year, said Gopal, a progress organic farmer. Adopting organic farming is leading the way to progress for farmers in Rajasthan. One such farmer is Gopal Lal Sharma, a resident of the Bhilwara district's Narayanpura (Bilyakala) village.

Gopal possesses only 7 Bigha of the land, but his net profit is Rs 5 lakh. With agriculture, he is getting this income through integrated organic farming. For the last five years, he has been doing crop production with organic ways and means to maximise profit. Gopal Lal earns one lakh per Bigha of income by adopting an integrated farming system. Along with this, he

is earning Rs 5000-Rs 6000 rupees per month from organic Ghee.



Gopal said that with 7 Bigha of agricultural land, initially, along with farming, he had to work in a garment factory to earn a living for his family. At that time, he was making only Rs 60000-Rs 70000 per year through agriculture. Irrigation in the farms was dependent only on the wells, and the year when rainfall was good, the water level used to increase in the wells. Otherwise, he had to face

difficulty in irrigating the fields.

He said that whatever was the saving after taking up additional works other than farming, he used that for land improvement and fixed irrigation systems. It was followed by the use of an improved variety of seeds. But due to the production of traditional crops, his income level did not change much.

***Gopal is now an excellent example for other farmers in the area who learn from his fields and produce more with less land, and earn more money. He earns one lakh each Bigha, which any farmer can do.***



## Shift to Organic and Integrated Farming

Observing this, he shifted to vegetables and then to livestock rearing. He said that he applied chemical fertilisers and insecticides in the field until five years back. But now, he is into crop production with organic ways and means. Apart from this, he is also using organic in livestock rearing to earn more from ghee production rather than milk. He further said that he is producing Maze, Gram, Mustard, and Wheat crops in the traditional crops.

Gopal attributes this success to the guidance and support from the CUTS International team. The Agriculture Farm of Gopal is a well-integrated farming model for the region's farmers. Other farmers of the area come to get exposure from these fields and learn the ways of better production in a lesser farming area and earning increased income.

***Ghee and milk provide a yearly income of 1.5 lakh. Pure organic Ghee is priced at Rs 1200 per litre, and milk is sold at Rs 40-45 per litre.***

## The Game-Changing Time in Gopal's Life: Vegetable Production

Gopal said that he has been doing vegetable production for more than 10 years now. In vegetable crops, Lady Finger, Bitter Gourd, Bottle Gourd, Pumpkin, Ridged Gourd, Brinjal, Turmeric, Onion, Garlic, Potato, and Chilly, etc. have been included. He further said that he could earn a profit in the range of Rs 1.5 to 1.75 lakh per year after deducting all expenditure by cultivating vegetables in 1.5 Bigha of farming land. He is doing pest control in vegetable plants through organic insecticides.

## Mixed Horticulture: An Income booster

Gopal said he had grown a Guava orchard in 1.5 Bigha of land, and now it is three years old. To meet the expenses until the production of Guavas started, he produced Papaya. He had earned an initial profit of Rs 70,000 from Guava production. At the same time, he has made a net profit of Rs 40,000 by growing Papaya.

## Ghee production prevailing over milk

In livestock, he has four cows and two buffaloes. Daily milk production is 25-30 liters. To meet the expenses of rearing the livestock, he sells 5-6 litres of milk at Rs 40 to 45 per liter to the customers. Apart from that, with the remaining milk, he prepares Ghee. By producing Ghee, he earns an average of Rs 5000-6000 per month. He is selling Ghee at the rate of Rs 1200 per litre. With the usage of animal residue, he is preparing Vermi Compost. Cattle shed is also made through the scientific method.

## 2

## Willpower and Diligence Led to be Progressive Farmer and Entrepreneur

*Ruby Pareek is a progressive farmer who promotes several female farmers to set up a vermicomposting unit and an Azolla fern unit. She surpassed all expectations and became the division's first female ginger grower. More than 300 women in the district received organic agricultural training from her. With all the organic farming, she is living a happy family life.*

Ruby, a woman entrepreneur and a progressive farmer, has taken organic farming to new heights. Before marriage, Ruby is acknowledged as a state-level progressive woman farmer and trainer, not even knowing the basics of agriculture. Her husband was engaged in farming, so after coming to her in-law's place, Ruby started showing interest and discussing the ways of farming. Happily willing, her husband kept sharing the knowledge that led to Ruby preparing organic compost and developing the farm as Pareek organic farm.

Through this farm, in 2008, with the support of the NABARD, Ruby established a 200 metric tonne vermin hatchery unit which has been considered the most significant unit in the division and innovation in the field of organic farming and vermicomposting.

In 2010 looking at her achievements, Ruby was selected as the President of Kisan Club

supported by NABARD. This was followed by her training other women farmers on the specific knowledge of organic farming.

***Ruby was awarded by the National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development (NABARD) at the state level in 2012.***

Continuing the journey, Ruby did one more innovation by preparing Azolla fern on water bands which was a blessing for cattle feed. This phenomenal success further strengthened her interest in organic farming.

She continued the work with complete dedication and identified the organic way of Ginger farming in March 2014.

In May 2014, Ruby planted ginger in the Aonla (Indian gooseberry) orchard in the farm beds; however, there were no rains on time. Instead, it was too hot. Ruby did not lose her confidence and relied on her dedication. At last, there were rains and the ginger crop blossomed.

This led to Ruby being acknowledged as the first successful woman farmer doing ginger farming in the whole division.



The information reached various departments and agencies involved in organic farming and the representatives from these agencies took turns to visit Pareek Organic Farm in Khatwa. To observe her work, a team of representatives from the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS International) and NABARD visited Pareek Organic Farm and congratulated her on these achievements.

Seeing the officials and scientists visiting frequently, the villagers gathered in large numbers. Ruby provided training to more than 300 women in the district on organic farming.

Considering the achievements, a block-level farmer club federation was formed in Lalsot block in November 2014. Through this, Ruby gave a message that each

***Ruby stated that organic farming has resulted in the well-being of farmers and the nation as a whole and contributes to a healthy environment.***

farmer shall establish a vermicompost unit and an Azolla fern unit, which will lead to the welfare of farmers and after the nation and lead to a healthy environment.

In Dausa, a district-level farmer orientation workshop was organised under the guidance of scientists and CUTS representatives. As a part of the workshop, an exposure visit was also organised to Pareek Organic Farm, chosen to show the practical aspects of organic farming. 75 farmers participated in the exposure visit and were briefed by Ruby.

Being a rural woman, Ruby Pareek has been instrumental in showing the way forward for farm-based livelihoods through the organic way.





# 3

## From Army Captain to a Progressive Organic Farmer

*Haji Babu Khan is a progressive farmer who encourages several farmers to produce seeds. Despite the salty water available for irrigation, he chose horticulture and has cultivated Belpatra, Lemon, Pomegranate, and Ber, among other crops. He demonstrated his technique in a water-scarce area of western Rajasthan, Jodhpur. He has succeeded in producing various seed varieties. He has taken command of farming.*

After giving befitting replies to the enemies in the wars against the nation and providing relief services to the people in distress during various natural calamities entering into the field of farming with a passion for doing something innovative is, not many people can do that. One such story is of Ordinary Captain (Retired) Haji Babu Khan.

Babu Khan, 70 years old, a resident of Dantiwada village in Jodhpur district, is very passionate about serving the country in any way. After joining the army as a soldier, Babu Khan, with his talent and disciplined service record, moved up the ladder and attained the rank of an Ordinary Captain. After serving for years in the army, he started serving society in different manners and capacities.

Today, he contributes to the nation's economic progress as a farmer. He says, 'One, living life without a purpose, cannot make his identity before the society and the nation.'

**Babu Khan has exposed himself to the agriculture research centers. He regularly visits various fairs, exhibitions, and meetings at state and national levels and raises the voice in support of organic farmers.**

Babu Khan says, 'the difference in the lives of an ordinary citizen and an army man is only that an army man spends his life in a very disciplined manner, which is crucial for achieving success in life. Even after retiring from the army, Babu Khan lives a much more disciplined life. He further says, 'Be it service or farming, along with acquiring different skill sets, if one has the passion and enthusiasm, success comes uninvited.'

Babu Khan says that immediately after retiring from the army, he had decided to do something innovative in farming. But due to the scarcity of water, he was not clear on the course of action to achieve his goal. But he did not give up, and the rest is history.

When he took charge of farming, it was only rainfed farming on his parental agriculture land, and there was nothing he could have done in farming with that much water scarcity. However, he wanted to do something on a scale, so he purchased 12 bighas of land. Initially, he decided to do

something new in traditional crops only. In the meantime, he got in touch with the scientists from Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) and learned new things in farming technology; he felt it right to go ahead in technical farming.

### Pioneer in Seed Production

Inclining to do technical farming, he opted for horticulture and produced seeds. Along with horticulture crops, Babu Khan also adopted seed production as advised by the scientists. He has successfully produced various seeds and mentored other farmers in seed production.

His complete dedication towards farming to achieve his goal has resulted in hundreds of farmers adopting technical farming inspired by Haji Babu Khan. An organic farm named '*Madina Jaivik Krishi Farm*' developed by Babu Khan has become a seed production cum demonstration center for these farmers.

***Babu Khan's organic farm, known as 'Madina Jaivik Krishi Farm,' has become a farmers' seed production and demonstration centre.***

### Horticulture in Salted water

Ordinary captain Haji Babu Khan, despite the available water for irrigation being salted, has grown various horticulture crops such as Belpatra, Lemon, Pomegranate, and Ber. To reduce the harmful effects of salted water, he has been using gypsum and the drip irrigation method to utilise every drop of water optimally.

### Voice for Other Farmers

To acquire a skill set related to technical farming and benefitting other fellow farmers from these skills, Babu Khan has also exposed himself to the agriculture research centers in Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh. He is also a regular visitor and participant in various fairs, exhibitions, and meetings at state and national levels and has raised his voice to support organic farmers.

He was one of the few selected farmers demanding Kair Sangri among 20 dry vegetables under India's Food Safety and Standards Authority (FSSAI) regulation. He made separate arrangements to purchase organic products in agriculture *mandis* in a meeting called by FSSAI with 11 organic farmers in Delhi. He had made many other suggestions, including timely providing certificates for organic farming at this and other similar platforms.

Babu Khan is now famous for innovations in organic farming and doing farming with various new ways and means. The then Union Minister of State awarded him the *CAZRI Krishak Mitra* for Agriculture & Farmer Welfare Gajendra Singh Shekhawat during CAZRI Kisan Mela in 2017.

Babu Khan said that two of his sons have also joined the army to serve the nation, and he has taken command of farming.

# 4

## Organic Farming Knock on Gurjar's Happiness Door

*Behari Lal Gurjar, a progressive farmer from Padra Visthapit village in Sawai Madhopur district, utilised the government's opportunity to give him land and began learning new farming methods. Behari grows wheat organically on two bighas of land and plans to expand to four more. He can now bring joy to his family's lives.*

### Background

Till eight years back, Bihari Lal lived in a village situated in the middle of Ranthambore National Park. *He had a kaccha* house and little more than a bigha of land. Forest animals used to destroy the crop, to protect which he used to take safety measures with much investment and pain. The yield was significantly less as there was hardly any surplus to sell. Behari was using desi seeds; the traditional farming and irrigation system was done through a well or nearby scanty canal.

This was the case with most of his fellow villagers. In the night, thieves and robbers used to stay in the village, and the villagers arranged their food. The village economy was primarily dependent on milk production. Villagers used to keep buffaloes and used buffalo dung as manure in agriculture fields. Villagers were illiterate and cut off from the development and progress of the outer world.

'I used to go to Kundera village after 2 hours of continuous walk to bring food items and other material from the fair price shop and to sell the crop produce.' 'Whatever seeds were provided by the

shopkeeper, I used them to cultivate the crops. The yield was not adequate, and I never felt the need to sell the crop in the market', said Behari Lal. 'Once in a while, I used to sell 10 kg of Bajra or Ghee on the shops of Kendra village and purchase necessary food material from the shopkeepers there to fulfill the day-to-day requirements', he further said.

### Opportunity Knocks at the Door

Eight years back, when the villagers in this village were shifted to Padra Visthapit village as a part of the resettlement process, Behari, like his fellow villagers, was provided six bighas of agricultural land for cultivation. The allotted land was barren, but Behari started using tree leaves, animal dung, and mixing some urea for his crops, resulting in a bumper crop, and he did not have enough space to store the produce.

### From Chemical to Organic Way

During this time, he contacted the Rural Development Society and Vocational Training Organisation (RUDSOVOT) of Sawai Madhopur. With the initiative and guidance of RUDSOVOT and support from the Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS



International), Bihari Lal made the first and most effective effort for vermi farming and improved cultivation & changed his life and lives of fellow humans farmers of the village.

CUTS supported the farmer under the ProOrganic project. Information on vermicompost and the development of the culture of sustainable production and consumption was provided. CUTS organised film shows, and project personnel explained the harmful effects of urea on the agricultural land and diseases caused by it.

Behari Lal says that he used animal dung as manure in the crops with this information, which increased the productivity of his agricultural land. The taste of the produce also became very palatable.

### Now a Progressive Farmer

Bihari Lal has grown Guava in its two bighas agricultural land and cultivated wheat without urea with organic inputs. He says that CUTS provided a demonstration for preparing vermin compost and motivated villagers, due to which villagers became ready to prepare vermicompost. A private agriculture farm provided the worms.

Behari and fellow farmers have practically demonstrated the preparation of BED & officers of the Horticulture Department explained to the villagers how to prepare vermicompost. The information on how



animal dung manure is converted into compost was given practically to the villagers through the farmers club.

The Horticulture Department taught villagers that using only vermicompost manure could yield good crop yields. BEDS have been made, and Behari Lal has made arrangements and supplied worms to prepare vermicompost individually. Behari Lal is hopeful that there will be no need to purchase manure from the market next year.

### Conclusion

'CUTS has provided enough motivation and training to the farmers to prepare vermicompost by themselves,' Behari Lal says. 'If facilities for preparing beds and arrangement of supply of worms to farmers is also smoothened, then the farmers could make more & more beds because farmers are facing difficulties in preparing beds and purchase of worms', he further said.

Behari Lal says that he will do only organic farming in additional four bighas of remaining land in the future.

# 5

## A True Example of Transformation

**If given appropriate opportunities and a conducive environment, women can thrive beyond imagination.**

**M**anju Chaudhary is a 32-year-old woman from Maheshvaas, a small village in rural Jaipur, Rajasthan. She has completed her senior secondary education and got married on June 21, 2014.

Manju's family has 12 hectares of land. She had never worked on a farm before marriage, but she realised that with 12 hectares of land, they might not produce enough money. Her in-laws' family only grows wheat and pulses, but when crop production was not enough to fulfill the family's needs, her husband also took on a marketing job.



***Integrated farming earned her Rs 6 lakh for her family. Manju demonstrates to everyone that organic farming is not easy, but it would produce more money if done with full effort.***

Manju is a stay-at-home housewife who works from morning till night. She decided to support her family financially; therefore, she devoted most of her time to farming. After finishing her housework, she went to the farm, but it was unsuccessful due to a lack of knowledge, but she maintained her confidence and kept going. She obtained information from diverse sources. Farming is no longer challenging work for her; she was quite in it, but increasing the income graph remained a challenge.

She began to help her husband in marketing as well to at least retain their lives. Manju and her husband got an opportunity to attend an awareness meeting organised by CUTS. They were informed about organic farming and decided to start their organic farming. After knowing that organic farming inputs are challenging, they started but were discouraged not just by the villagers but also by members of their own families. However, they switched to organic farming and were able to produce less.

While they discovered the lower production, everyone discouraged them and told them to stop organic farming because they could not make enough money during the previous organic period. However, they have decided to produce organic crops. As they already know that organic farming is a time-consuming procedure, they steadily expanded the size of their organic farming field, not just for family use but also for sale.

***Manju's Eight-year journey: She is now not only a stay-at-home women, but also an entrepreneur and progressive organic farmer. Who shown her ability and became a role model for other women.***



### **They focused primarily on a few key areas to generate more revenue**

**Improved animal husbandry:** Now they have 1 cow, 10 buffaloes, and 5 goats. She also used to sell 10-12 liters of milk every day to fulfill her family's daily needs and feed and fodder for their animals. Dairy byproducts have been used in the production of biogas and vermicomposting.

**Water harvesting techniques:** Crop productivity had been hampered by heavy water in their tube well. They dug a farm pond to collect rainwater on their land. At their farm, they installed micro irrigation systems. They now have two farm ponds, which serve to meet the water needs of the entire farm.

**Vermicomposting unit:** They have begun vermicomposting with two 10-by-10-foot beds. Vermicomposting has brought them

additional revenue. The cost of agriculture has also decreased due to the use of organic agricultural practices. Vermicomposting has created an extra income of Rs 3 lakh in a year.

**Producing vegetables:** They grow seasonal vegetables and earn Rs 15,000 each month and cultivate veggies in a 500-square-metre shed net house. In this shed net house, they earn Rs 1.4 lakh each year by producing broccoli, capsicum, and cherry tomatoes.

**Entrepreneur:** She has started her own 'Incense Sticks' business. She obtained a loan to set up the entire system, including the equipment and other necessary items. She made Rs 80,000 to Rs 1 lakh profit with this incense stick in a year.



# 6

## Organically Double one's Income

*A poor farmer named Mava Ram from the small village of Karmal in the Udaipur district became an inspiration for several farmers. He cultivates vegetables, wheat, and maize in a purely organic manner. Organic manure has entirely replaced chemical fertilisers in Mava Ram's garden. He is now a happily married man with a family. He intends to double-crop to avoid risk and earn more money in a single season.*

### Poverty results in Migration

Mava Ram has five members in his family. With almost unfertile land and more than 10 small ruminants, it was difficult for him to meet his family's daily needs. Using chemical fertilisers, such as Urea and DAP, further degraded the farmland extensively. The low groundwater level in the area also added to his problems. Earning a meagre income of almost Rs 2,000 per month, he could not sustain the life of family members, which also forced his elder son to migrate to Ahmedabad in search of a job.

***Maya ram said organic farming raised his annual income from Rs 24,000 to 60,000. Organic farming returned fertility and softness of his farmland soil.***

CUTS. Because of Mava's efforts and participation in CUTS activity, he decided to switch to organic farming. He became aware of the project and its efforts, including its vermiwash training. The training focused on making vermiwash and how to use it.

He converted his agricultural pattern to a money-making deal under the supervision of both organisations. He

fulfilled the project's objective to promote organic farming for income enhancement of marginalised farmers and impart skills for promoting productive agriculture in poverty-hit remote areas.

### Training & Knowledge Lead to Success

Through his wife's Self Help Group (SHG), Mava Ram addressed CUTS International functionaries. Prayatna Samiti promotes the SHG. Mava Ram got an opportunity to attend an awareness meeting organised by

### From Chemical to an Organic Farm

Immediately after receiving the training, Mava Ram purchased a 20-litre plastic bucket to start with. The process started with putting a 15 cm thick layer of gravel to the bottom; above it 30 cm thick layer of sand; and on the top, a 15 cm thick layer

of decomposed material introduced 20 to 30 *Eisenia foetid* (red worms). A small amount of water was sprayed to start producing vermiwash.

After one week, he collected the first sample of the fertiliser through the tap provided at the bottom of the bucket. Vermiwash is the liquid fertiliser collected after the passage of water through a column of worm culture. It is beneficial as a foliar spray, and it is a collection of excretory products and excess secretions of earthworms and micronutrients from soil organic molecules.

He sprayed the fertiliser on indigenous wheat by mixing 1 liter into 10 liters of water. With this, he increased the production of wheat and maize by almost two quintals. Vermiwash contains plant growth hormones like auxins and cytokinin apart from nitrogen, phosphorus, potash and other micronutrients. It contains nitrogen-fixing bacteria like *Azotobacter* spp., *Agrobacterium* spp., *Rhizobium* spp., and phosphate solubilizing bacteria. It acts as a plant tonic and helps to reduce many plant diseases. Mava Ram collects 4 litres of vermiwash every week, spraying water drops over the top every two days.

## **Adopting Pure Organic Farming Lead to Following Ourcomes**

Knowing the importance of vermiwash, Mava Ram completely replaced chemical fertilisers with organic manure. Encouraged by the practice, he used an extra 0.12 ha for vegetable production. He used indigenous cabbage seeds, radish, spinach, cauliflower and green chilly to grow vegetables. He also sprayed the vermiwash on vegetables to enhance their growth and production. Last year, he harvested 50 kg of vegetables, which he sold in the village market. This way, organic farming raised his income from Rs 2,000 to Rs 5,000 per month.

The project supported the farmer in producing vermiwash, a bio-fertiliser, and utilising the land for economy-based agriculture. For the last two years, Mava Ram has doubled his production of wheat and maize from 0.12-hectare land, and now he is harvesting six quintals of grains, which has supported his family livelihood.

As people are coming to know about his secret of success, he promotes the preparation and use of vermiwash. He plans double cropping to reduce the risk and earn more from a single season.

## 7

## Finding the Right Opportunity and Following it with Zeal

*Radheshyam, a progressive farmer, is an inspiration to several people who come to him to learn organic farming. This farmer was awarded the 'Best Farm for Cattle Breed Improvement of Desi Cow Breeds Gir and Shailwal' by the Department of Animal Husbandry. He is the only farmer who produces opium using organic methods. He has 40 cows and is working on a 15-acre organic farm. Sahu is happy with his family and earns enough money from organics.*

Radheshyam Sahu is a resident of Gomana Gram Panchayat of Chhoti Sadri Panchayat Samiti in Pratapgarh district. Along with being educated, he is also the honorary Secretary of Chandoli Gram Panchayat. Apart from doing the work of the Gram Panchayat in the remaining time, he and his brother and other family members carry out the farming work in an organic way.

***Radheshyam said that do not lose hope in the first year; production may be lower, so net income may be lower. We must keep our spirits up and keep moving forward. After putting in enough time and effort, production will rise in tandem with profit.***

Radheshyam, while being the Secretary of the Gram Panchayat, facilitated the development of the village by benefitting the villagers through many government schemes. He further thought that being from a farmer family and having fertile land, he shall also do farming while taking advantage of government schemes available for farmers.

Radheshyam and his other family members were also associated with Bharat Swabhimani's Trust. It prompted him to do farming traditionally. He got an opportunity to attend an awareness meeting organised by CUTS. On getting

associated with CUTS International, he further moved on to an organic way of farming.

On engaging with organic farming, the production was less for the first year, but the input cost was also less, so the net income was almost the same. Subsequently, since the output increased, the profit increased, and the soil fertility and soil softness also increased.

For the last so many years, he is continuously increasing his production capacity by use of organic inputs and also taking advantage of various government schemes. He started organic farming by establishing a vermicomposting unit, solar pump and sprinkler, drip, and mini sprinkler. Along with organic farming, he has also planted medicinal plants on his farmhouse. Radheshyam took advantage of organic farming and showcased its benefits visibly. He keeps motivating fellow farmers to adopt organic farming and disseminates



information to the farmers on his farm on the use of livestock in organic agriculture.

### **Dairy Farm House**

Radheshyam has also established a dairy on his farmhouse where he has put many indigenous breed cows as he receives cow dung for organic manure from these cows. He always emphasises livestock rearing, saying that one gram of cow dung contains enough bacteria to make the land fertile and increase the immune capacity of crops against the diseases. He is also preparing organic compost from the manure available from the cows and using cow urine to prepare bioinsecticides and use the same for farming.

### **Radheshyam Farm's Exposure Visit**

A district-level farmer orientation session was held in the Pratapgarh district under the Pro-organic project, including a field exposure tour to Sahu Farm House in Radheshyam. Radheshyan gives a brief description of his agricultural practice and encourages other farmers to go organic. More than 50 farmers participated in the exposure tour. This farmhouse was chosen to provide farmers with practical experience in organic farming as part of their orientation and show the benefits of organic farming. They visited the farmhouse and met with progressive farmer Radheshyam Sahu.



# 8

## Inspiring Story of a Progressive Farmer

*Janki Lal Meena, a progressive farmer, inspires several villagers who learn organic farming. He is doing vegetable cultivation on 4 acres of land in Surwal village of Sawai Madhopur district, completely organic. He lives a happy family life with organic farming, and three of his kids are in service.*

### Hobby Turns into Profession

Many farmers, including those from other districts, come to me asking for inputs on organic farming daily," said Janki Lal Meena, an acclaimed progressive organic farmer. 'When I was studying in school, I loved to do watering the plants, digging, cutting, removing the weeds in the kitchen garden existing in the school premises, said Janki Lal. He further said that when the children his age were busy playing games, he was inclined towards plantation and nursery preparation.



Childhood hobby led Janki Lal towards cultivation. To do this progressively, he was always inclined towards learning new things. For this, he made it a point to participate actively in the meetings organised by Agriculture Department and apply the learnings in the field.

### From Chemical to Organic Way

He started farming with chemical inputs only; however, soon, he realised that chemical farming was harmful to humans and the environment. But he was unsure how to stop chemical farming as he and everyone else were getting bumper crops.

One fine day, school children were taught about preparing organic compost by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Karmoda. When back from school, his children told him about the lesson learnt in the school. This ignited his mind; he picked up his bicycle and reached KVK.

On inquiring about vermicompost and request for guidance, Harish Verma, the In-charge of KVK, initially ignored him doubting his capability to do this work. On second thought, he called him back, handed over worms even less than 500 gm, and told him to prepare vermicompost.

With these worms, Janki Lal prepared two trolleys of compost and applied the same into the field. Results were not as expected, and he was not satisfied and kept collecting information. He also got an opportunity to participate in the training at Bharatpur. The instructor taught him farming with 10 kg of dung. Janki Lal was apprehensive that it would work out. He planted 80 trees of Guava, out of which only 20 remained. Others just vanished despite all my efforts.

### Training & Knowledge lead to success

Janki Lal participated in various events organised by CUTS and its district partner Rural Development Society and Vocational Training Organisation (RUDSOVOT) under ProOrganic project. He remained in constant touch with the project personnel, and it helped him a lot and cleared all his doubts. He recalled the training and knowledge received and then started experimenting slowly. He prepared Jeevamrit which took his attention away from chemicals, and it led to a complete shifting of mind to organic. He again planted the trees, and this time, all his plants were grown.

There was not much investment, no losses, no borrowings from shopkeepers. Organic inputs have been used in gardening and growing vegetables. Recently due to excessive rains, his crops got damaged, but he was not worried much as he neither



borrowed nor invested much and hence was not worried. Fellow farmers who had taken loans were worried.

### Now, A Master Trainer

A deputy head of the village and many farmers contacted him for inputs. Now he enjoys disseminating information. Recently he participated in the state-level consultation on BT Brinjal. He aired his views on why the farmers shall purchase seeds and then sell to them. He said that he could earn much from the desi Brinjal itself.

He says that *Jeevamrit* is best suited for an orchard. Plants cannot bear the weight of leaves as only two-year-old plants look like four-year-old ones. He attributes organic farming to this magic. In *Beejamrit*, it is extracted after putting into the roots of the plants, due to which the disease (big mosquitoes, stem and fruit piercing) does not affect the plants. *Agnihast* (cow urine, garlic, green chili, Fennel powder, tobacco boiling) is used to treat the above. It makes the insects blind and kills them.



## Conclusion

Janki Lal is enjoying organic farming. As of now, he is cultivating vegetables for family usage only; however, he receives regular calls and demand for organic vegetables and fruits.

He says that many farmers are doing chemical input-based farming. Due to their excessive use of chemicals, insects die and the birds eating insects also die. Hence, there is a need to abandon chemical input-

based medicines, and this has caused many species to disappear.

Cultivation of ignorance is going on, and chemical inputs are killing birds. While doing farming, we shall not do anything which harms nature.

He has also prepared mosquito repellent from organic inputs, which repels mosquitoes. He lives a happy family life with all the organic farming, and three of his kids are in service.

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## Learning Behaviour Gave a Chance to Become an Organic Farmer & Entrepreneur

*Prahlad Upadhyay, a progressive farmer, encourages all farmers engaged in organic agriculture and animal husbandry. Prahlad comes from the Kaili village in the Chittorgarh district. He sells Vermin, Vermicompost, Milk, Oilseeds, Mustard Maize, Wheat, and Soybean. Prahlad intends to increase the number of vermin beds, build a dung farm, and produce medicinal crops and lemon on half of his Bigha land, all of which will boost his revenue.*

**W**e can achieve the Prime Minister's vision of doubling the farmer's income provided they are aware of and make efforts towards adopting organic farming and modern technology," said Prahlad Upadhyay, a progressive farmer and a successful entrepreneur, resident of Kaili village of Nimbaheda block in Chittorgarh district of Rajasthan.

Prahlad says that he has been in touch with the Agriculture Department and the Animal Husbandry Department for the last 15-20 years and lately with Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS International).

This has resulted in over 3 lakh per annum income from 2 acres of agricultural land and allied sources. Further, he says that he is getting an income of 8,000-10,000 from worms, 15,000-20,000 from vermicompost, 80,000-90,000 from milk, 1.5 lakh from Oilseeds, Mustard, and Soybean, etc., 50,000-60,000 from Maize and 30,000 from Wheat.

***He advised all farmers to begin focusing on animal husbandry and agriculture. Farmers who would like to increase their revenue should concentrate on organic farming.***

"I have been learning from the officers of these departments and through participating in the meetings organised by them. As a result, I have 2 Gir cow, one Gir calf, one Holstein calf, and one Red Den cow". He says that he has got these breeds by indigenous breed cows through artificial insemination through hybrid breed bulls.

After a change in breed, now he is providing milk to the dairy booths, providing an income of 8 to 9 thousand per month, which was earlier not adequate even for own consumption.

As the veterinary medical officer taught, he said he has kept in mind all critical factors such as timely vaccination, artificial insemination, deworming, preparing animal feed at home, etc. He has learnt the tricks of increasing income while reducing expenses in livestock rearing. Such tricks as not doing *Japa* (on which he used to spend 4 to 5 thousand rupees) after delivery of animal and instead of giving calcium and

mineral powder. He also said that he planned to enhance milk quality and fat by preparing Ajola grass on his farm.

Prahlad also said that he learnt to prepare vermicompost from the Soil specialist of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Ratan Singh Solanki, and Anshu to grow grains and vegetables for his consumption by using organic compost prepared by himself. It motivated him to take an interest, and he started using the same initially in half a Bigha agricultural land only.

For the last few years, he has also been in constant touch with CUTS Centre for Human Development, Chittorgarh, and participated in all the organised meetings. It has provided him with an opportunity to generate more income. He has prepared a Potion Vatika (Kitchen Garden) in the backyard, providing his family with fresh and nutritious vegetables.

Almost two years back, CUTS CHD, Chittorgarh considering his efforts in organic farming, prepared free of cost vermicompost bed on his farm. Along with designing the vermi bed, he also detailed its maintenance and usage. After delivering him detailed information on vermicompost, the CUTS team provided information on preparing insecticides from cow urine and advised him to use the same. Using the learning received, Prahlad prepared insecticide made from cow urine, saving him the expenses incurred in chemical insecticides.

***Prahlad picked up a lot of information from both officers and locals. He stated that if you genuinely want to enhance your earnings, you must work honestly, diligently, and patiently.***



When asked about his plans, Prahlad said that he plans to increase the number of vermi beds and open a dung farm to increase his income further. He intends to grow medicinal crops and lemon in half Bigha land each in agriculture. He also said that he is getting continuous support from the Livestock Assistant of the Animal Husbandry Department and agriculture supervisor.

He also participated in all the *Panchayat Samiti* and District-level programmes. He is aware of the latest information in all related subjects.



*Narendra Malav, a progressive farmer from Dangawat Gram Panchayat in Sultanpur Panchayat Samiti in the Kota district, wants to succeed through dedication and hard work. He kept honey bees alongside his horticulture, medicinal plants, and vermicompost unit to try something new. With all of his organic farming, he has a happy family life.*

The young farmer says that organic farming is proving profitable, and honey beekeeping has sweetened the taste of his life. Knowing the nitty-gritty of agriculture since childhood, leaving the studies after higher secondary, Narendra joined his traditional farming work to earn his family livelihoods.

He was very much aware of the traditional food grain and horticulture crops; however, he desired to do something different. To earn his family livelihoods, he decided to do honey beekeeping. With this thought, he continued exploring and contacted the officials from the Horticulture Department. On their advice, he received training in Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) on the technical know-how of beekeeping.

In the year 2004, Narendra started honey beekeeping on his farm. An organic farmer Narendra Malav has not only attained mastery over honey beekeeping but is also a good horticulturist. He started growing different horticulture crops, including Aonla, Lemon, Mango and Guava, Carrot and Reddish, etc. Narendra also registered

his firm in the Horticulture Department and started bidding for tenders.

***When there is a passion for doing something different, the pathway is created on its own. The first few years of beekeeping were less profitable, but as time went on, the profits increased.***

He has 40 bighas of ancestral farmland and 20 bighas purchased later on. He is also doing farming on an additional 40 bighas of hired farmland. In 36 bigha lands, he is doing Lemon, Guava, and Aonla orchard wherein he has grown 500 plants of Aonla, 600 plants of Guava, and 325 plants of Lemon. He has also prepared a Papaya orchard.

The farming is of joint family wherein his elder brother and father accompany him. Narendra is doing organic farming by establishing a vermicompost unit, sprinkler pump, drip, and mini sprinkler system. Along with organic farming, he has also planted medicinal plants and provided information to the visiting farmers on using livestock for farming. He is also rearing cows and preparing bio compost from cow dung and insecticides from cow urine.

### Awards and recognitions

Narendra Malav has achieved distinction in honey beekeeping, got many awards and



recognitions, and earned a good income. In the year 2004, for the first time, when he reached 80 kg of honey, he was motivated. The next year, he earned Rs 1.25 lakh from 30 quintals of honey which continued to increase year on, and he received an income of Rs 8 lakh in 2009. This motivated many other farmers to come forward.

The Agriculture Department has also awarded Narendra under Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) scheme for doing exemplary work in Agri-horticulture. Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot awarded him in a state-level farmer award ceremony organised in Jaipur in March 2010. Before this, he was also awarded at the district level in the year 2007 and then again in 2010.

### Exposure to other farmers

The association with the Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS International) and

its district partner, Ram Krishna Shikshan Sansthan (RKSS), further motivated Narendra to take up organic farming in a more significant way.

Under Pro-Organic project, a district-level farmer orientation workshop was organised in Kota wherein a field exposure visit was

conducted on Malav Farm House of Narendra Malav. In the exposure visit, more than 50 farmers participated. This farmhouse was selected to provide practical exposure to the workshop's subject matter for the orientation of farmers in the KVK. The benefits of organic farming and factual outcomes were shown to farmers by visiting

the farmhouse and meeting with Narendra Malav.

Narendra has proved to be very successful in showing the way forward to the youth for livelihoods.

***Narendra, who was honoured by Chief Minister, educates visiting farmers on livestock usage in agriculture. Narendra said that he earns more than Rs 8 lakh per year, which prompted many more farmers to come forward.***