

SERICULTURE

..... Living with cocoons....

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Introduction:

The Aryans discovered silkworm in sub Himalayas beyond Kashmir. Despite, the long history of Indian sericulture it is only after independence that efforts were initiated for developing sericulture industry on the scientific lines.



India has a unique distinction of producing all the five known varieties of silk viz. Mulberry, Oak Tasar, Tropical tasar, Eri & Muga. Sericulture is a labour intensive agro-industry in all its phase, viz. food plant cultivation, silkworm rearing, silk reeling & other off farm activities such as twisting, dyeing, weaving and printing. Sericulture has considerable socio-economic importance in Indian socio-economy largely due to its

suitability for small & marginal farm holdings, self employment & low investment with high returns.

Raw silk production to great extent depends on higher yields and quality mulberry leaves. In eastern india, the local mulberry was cultivated till 1960 with a very poor leaf yield of around 8-10 mt per hectare per year depending on the availability of irrigation.

Sericulture is a sustainable farm based economic enterprise, which provides ample work for women folks in the rural areas. India is in IInd position after China in silk production.

The present production of silk is 918320 mt against an estimated an annual demand of 26000 mt.

Scenario of Sericulture in district Reasi:

Sericulture is an age old practice in district Reasi. It is practiced in the area for last 50 years. Earlier due to non scientific approach the cocoon production was very low and the quality was poor. With the intervention of KVK and Division of Sericulture SKUAST and Deptt. of Sericulture the new selections of mulberry were provided to the farmers. Scientific knowledge of sericulture was given to improve the quality of cocoons. At present sericulture is practicing in more than 120 villages of Reasi. They produce 20 MT of cocoon annually. There are 12 mulberry nurseries in the district spread over 317 kanals.

Kanjali is a remote village falls under tehsil Reasi of the district Reasi. Due to unavailability of proper road network the village is poorly developed. The main source of earning of the villagers is agriculture. An educational facility in the village is upto class 10th. The farmers were practicing maize- wheat cropping system with small production of pulses and vegetables for their own use. After establishment of Krishi Vigyan Kendra at village Seri Tanda, the farmers contacted the scientists of KVK to guide them regarding the improved varieties of crops to increase their

income. KVK scientist suggests the farmers to use hybrid varieties of the maize & vegetables and HYV of cereals & pulses for higher yield and income.

For socio-economic upgradation scientists suggest to start some agriculture related enterprises so that farmers can earn from some other sources. Farmers were guided to adopt Sericulture, Bee keeping, mushroom cultivation and floriculture. With the guidance of these institutions in village kanjali, awareness programme were organized, which impacted on farmers a lot.



Regular training, regular visits regarding feeding and management of these cocoons encouraged farmers of Kanjali village by experts from SKUAST-J. Farmers adopted sericulture because of availability of lot of Shahtoot (*Morus alba*) trees on their farm bunds and started the cocoon production. They were guided for proper use of medicines and hygiene for better production. On demand of the farmers a camp was organized by the KVK with the help of division of sericulture SKUAST Jammu at the village kanjali. In the camp farmers were guided regarding the whole process of sericulture. Scientists of the division discussed the farmers regarding their problems in this field and then suggested the farmers about the improved selections of Shahtoot

trees to plant for feeding purpose.

This valuable guidance helped the farmers to improve the production of cocoons. Scientists also guided them for proper handling of "Khoontis", so that the farmers can get best price in the market. Now every household has 10-20 trays and producing cocoons of high quality giving them a very good result in terms of money. Every year these farmers are selling the cocoons of more than 10 lacs



The farmers started the work with 2-4 trays and now they are having around 20 trays for cocoon production. They are producing around 2 kg cocoon per tray having the market price of Rs.500 per kilogram. Every farmer is earning around Rs. 20000 by selling these cocoons. This income is other than the farm income generated by selling other crops. As the female members can also handle the trays easily, the work is easily adopted by the farm women also.

Some other farmers have also started the sericulture practices in the area after watching the success.

Regular diagnostic visits about diseases were made

and market led linkages available were also made which helped these farmers to have good price of their silk produce.

Results and Economy:

Following neighboring farmers of kanjali are continuing the sericulture practices

S.No.	Name with parentage	Production (Kg)	Earning (Rs.)
1	Vichitraram S/o Krishan lal	50	25000
2	Raj kumar S/o Omprakash	35	17500
3	Kewal krishan S/o Mansukh	40	20000
4	Sohan Lal S/o Gian Chand	50	25000
5	Mahinder Kumar S/o Vichitraram	45	22500

Cost benefit of cocoon production

Cost of production/ tray (Rs)	Cocoon production(Kg)/ tray	Cost of cocoon/ Tray (Rs)	Benefit (Rs)	BC ratio
300	2	1000	700	1:2.33

Impact:

Due to better return in sericulture, farmers are sowing keen interesting this enterprise. Some farmers have started planting their own shahtoot trees to start the sericulture. Some landless farmers are continuing the work by purchasing shahtoot leaves. Day by day the involvement of farmers increasing.

List of farmers practicing sericulture in Kanjali (Reasi)

S. no.	Name With parentage	category
1	Md. Sadiq s/o Meer Ali	ST
2	Bashir ahamad s/o Ata Mohd.	ST
3	Bansilal s/o Amru	SC
4	Md. Alam s/o Firozdeen	ST

5	Desh raj s/o Parsuram	SC
6	Shankar dass s/o Ramsaran	G
7	Vikram singh s/o Balbir singh	G
8	Ratan singh s/o Roopchand	G
9	Chain singh s/o Shatrughn	G
10	Roop chand s/o Malli	SC
11	Vichitru ram s/o Krishanlal	SC
12	Sohan lal s/o Gian Chand	SC
13	Md. Sharif s/o Aziz Mohd	ST
14	Sukhdev singh s/o Ram singh	G
15	Fakir singh S/o Nar Singh dayal	G
16	Suram singh s/o Shatrughn	G
17	Sunil datt s/o Hansraj	G
18	Bishan singh s/o Tejram	G
19	Pankaj Singh s/o Kamal singh	G
20	Chain Singh s/o Shivram	G
21	Pooran chand s/o Ram Saran	G
22	Guchchi Ram s/o Balku	SC
23	Ramratan s/o Shivram	SC
24	Vijay Singh s/o Dharma Singh	G
25	Md. Saleem s/o Firozdeen	ST
26	Preetam singh s/o Roop Chand	G