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Pepper thresher, an ideal substitute for manual labour



Unlike in Western countries complete mechanisation is not possible

Better alternative: Gopala Krishna Sharma, Kasargod working on his machine. The two biggest problems farmers regularly face are water scarcity and labour shortage.

“Increasing wages in the last one year alone, thanks to the Government 100 days rural employment scheme, today a situation exists where agricultural labourers no longer need to beg for work.

“They negotiate and fix the price. In short agriculture is fast turning into a costly proposition and farm owners are finding the going tough,” says Dr. S. Prabhukumar, Zonal Project Director, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Hebbal, Bangalore.

Not possible

“And complete mechanisation cannot work in our country, because machines are quite costly and may not serve the purpose for a long time. If a land owner decides to sell his lands, then disposing the machine becomes difficult,” he says.

A pocket friendly machine for any crop that promises to substitute manual labour is sure to find favour among the land owners. That too if the machine is developed by a farmer, then its value appreciates, according to him.

Recent meet

Recently, a National Farm Innovators Meet was organised at Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Suttur, Mysore District, Karnataka. A number of farmers across the country showcased their findings before experts and media persons.

“Many of them exhibited new, simple and economical innovations developed by them. If these innovations can be popularised among others it could make an impact on the agricultural scenario of the country,” explains Dr. Prabhukumar

Take the case of a pepper farmer from Kasargod, Mr. Gopala Krishna Sharma, who demonstrated a pepper thresher machine he developed, in front of the experts.

The machine promises to be a good substitute for labour shortage among pepper cultivators, he adds.

Explaining about this machine the farmer Mr. Gopala Krishna says:

“Threshing is usually done manually by shearing between the legs. At present there are no machines in the market to do the job.

“The berries should be threshed immediately after harvesting. Any delay affects the quality of the plucked berries. I used a threshing drum from case pipes (used for tube wells) and ...welded four rods... to the surface of the drum in a curved manner to push the pepper stalk forward for threshing.”

A half HP, 1440 rpm electric motor provides the energy for the machine. A stationary plate is provided with small holes to facilitate the threshed berries to fall through it.

The detached berries fall through the holes onto a stationary plate and get collected in a container kept at the bottom of the machine.

Door provision

An opening door is provided at the other end of the device to collect the stalk after threshing. A rubber sheet at the bottom of the stationary plate collects the threshed pepper and guides it to a container kept at the bottom of the machine.

The remaining residue (stalk) gets collected at the other end of the drum and needs to be removed periodically after threshing 5kg of pepper.

Working capacity

The machine can thresh 100kg of pepper in an hour. "Manually it takes 6 hours to do the same. One person can thresh 100kg per day and the machine can run for six hours. The machine can thresh all varieties of pepper since the pepper size does not vary," says the farmer.

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