

Cultivating vegetable pea rakes in good revenue



Beneficiary: Sushil in his vegetable pea field in Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh.— Photo: Special Arrangement

For farmers in Bahuti village of Mirzapur district in Uttar Pradesh water availability and quality farm inputs posed a big problem. Though rice and wheat are the main crops, farmers also cultivate vegetables such as tomato and cucurbits during kharif season and pea during rabi season. Most of them grow local varieties of vegetables purchased from unauthentic sources at high cost.

Project

With a view to helping and encouraging farmers to take up vegetable cultivation, the Indian Institute of Vegetable Research, Varanasi introduced a project named 'Ensuring livelihood security through watershed based farming system module.' Mr. Sushil Kumar Bind, a small farmer having nearly a hectare, is a beneficiary farmer of the project. He grows two varieties of peas — Kashi Nandini and Kashi Uday, the seeds for which were supplied by the Institute. "I was advised to grow these two pea varieties by the scientists from the Institute as the pea crop fits well in rice-wheat growing areas, especially in eastern parts of Uttar Pradesh," he says.

Yield

Kashi Nandini comes to flowering in 32 days after sowing, bears 7-8 pods per plant. The pods are 8-9 cm long and well filled with 8-9 seeds with a shelling percentage 47-48 per cent. It is tolerant to leaf miner and pod borer with a yield potential of 9-10 tonnes per hectare. The second variety — Kashi Uday — is also an early maturing variety. Its characteristics are: plant height 58-62 cm, flowering in 35-37 days after sowing, plants have dark green foliage and short internodes with 8-10 pods per plant. The pod length is 9-10 cm and is filled with 8-9 bold seeds. The shelling percentage 48 and can yield 10-11 tonnes per hectare. The farmer sowed the seeds during the last week of October and started harvesting the crops in 2-3rd week of December. He sold them at Rs. 25-35 a kg in the local market. "In December alone last year, I earned Rs. 40,000 by selling 1,200 kg. The production was high during January and I harvested 3,500 kgs and sold them at Rs.15-20 per kg that fetched me Rs.57,500. The next month the yield started declining and I could harvest only 1,500 kg and sold it for Rs.5-10 per kg and got Rs.11,250 as income," says the farmer.

Better benefit

After the first pickings the farmer left the crop for seed production as suggested by the scientists, since growing a crop for seeds can be a little more beneficial for the farmer in terms of income. He collected around 250 kg of pea in the form of seeds which he sold at Rs.60 per kg and earned another Rs.15,000. Dr. Neeraj Singh, senior scientist, Agricultural Extension from the institute says: "Till date the small farmer has been able to earn approximately Rs.1,23,750 by sale of pea both as a vegetable and as seeds. He spent approximately Rs.5,000 on seed, Rs.10,000 on transportation, Rs.1,000 on irrigation, Rs.2,000 on land preparation and Rs.5,000 for fertilizer." Totally he spent about Rs.23,000 and earned about one lakh rupees in less than five months from this crop. Now he is planning to cultivate only vegetables in his land."

More growers

Many other farmers in the region, after seeing the income from Mr. Sushil Kumar's field, have started growing this pea variety both for seed production and also for selling the produce.

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