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Success of a Farmer through Enterprise Diversification

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ABSTRACT

A single enterprise in the farms runs the risk of ruining the fortunes of farmers in case some calamity strucks the fields and results in devastation of crops. The need therefore is to have approaches which ensure a regular income for the farmers even in case of failure of one crop/enterprise. One such approach is to have more than one enterprise or produce more than one product to avoid having your income totally dependent on the production and price of one product. If profit from one product is poor, profit from producing other products may prevent total profit from falling below acceptable levels. The present success story of an innovative farmer from District Ramban in Jammu and Kashmir highlights how the farmer doubled his income after enterprise diversification. This also helped him reduce his dependence on external inputs and recycle his farm and animal waste.

Keywords: Enterprise, diversification, dependence, external, recycle

Farming everywhere is subjected to various types of risks and uncertainties. These risks may be human induced or may be result of natural calamities. In a country like ours where farming is dominated by the presence of marginal and small farmers, such type of risk threatens the farm sector as well as communities engaged in this noble profession. Calamities like insect-pests and diseases, untimely rainfall, hailstorms, fast blowing winds result in considerable loss of yields ultimately making agriculture a non remunerative profession. Agriculture is not only confined to crops or livestock. Agriculture encompasses a wide range of enterprises which among others also include goatry, sheep, apiculture, sericulture, piggery, floriculture, horticulture, olericulture etc. Continuing with a single enterprise runs the risk of ruining the fortunes of farmers in case any calamity struck the fields and results in devastation of crops. We need to have approaches which ensure a regular income for the farmers even in case of failure of one crop/enterprise. One such approach is to have more than one enterprise or produce more than one product to avoid having your income totally dependent on the production and price of one product. If profit from one product is poor, profit from producing other products may prevent total profit from falling below acceptable levels. This is what is called as enterprise diversification. Enterprise diversification is a self-insuring strategy used by farmers to protect against risk (Mishra *et al*. 2004).

Having more than one enterprise ensures that farmer gets compensated from one of the enterprise in case

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of failure of other. Infact, enterprise diversification is a self-insuring strategy used by farmers to protect against various risks. Promoting a Farming System Approach through Integrated Farming System IFS models is the best way towards enterprise diversification. In this paradigm, the output of one enterprise becomes input of other enterprise thereby helping in reduction of cost of cultivation and increased profit. Moreover the resources within the farm are judiciously used contributing to the sustainability of the system. The present success story of an innovative farmer also depicts how an integrated farming system model based on enterprise diversification has reversed the fortunes of the farmer.

Until a few years back farming for 58 years old Mr. Abdul Majeed Rounyal, hailing from a remote village Gandhri in district Ramban was a fatigue, a non remunerative preposition, a baggage that was handed over to him by his forefathers and which he was supposed to give it to next in his family. The traditional methods and same type of crops grown year after year had rendered his farm a subsistence one hardly enabling him to make his both ends meet. In his 17 kanals (0.85 ha) of unirrigated land, cost of cultivation always exceeded his net income putting him in distress and frustration. Mr. Rounyal always wanted to do something different which could make his farm profitable and sustainable. He wanted to set an example in farming for others in his region to follow.

It only became possible when he came in contact with department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, UT of Jammu Kashmir and Krishi Vigyan Kendra-Ramban that winds of change started blowing for him. His thirst for modern farming finally was quenched when he started attending various awareness, sensitization and training programmes of the agriculture department as well as Krishi Vigyan Kendra-Ramban. He was advised and guided to adopt an Integrated Farming System (IFS) approach and turn his farm into an IFS model farm. Mr. Rounyal finally in the year 2017 started working to convert his farm into an IFS farm. Today his IFS model farm has become a role model for the farming community of his region as well as whole of UT. With no external input in the form of synthetic fertilizers or plant protection chemicals and recycling of farm and animal waste, he is able to considerably reduce the cost of cultivation. As the land is rainfed with no irrigation facilities, he has made a farm pond in his field. The water harvesting structure in his fields is 20 feet long, 10 feet wide and about 6 feet deep. The water stored n this pond comes to the rescue of Mr. Abdul Majeed while growing different vegetables and crops. From KVK-Ramban, he learnt scientific cultivation of different crops including vegetables and natural farming practices. He was given hands on training on preparation of Jeevamrita, Bijamrita, and various other microbial cultures.

His Integrated Farming System consists of crops, a poultry unit, a fishery unit, flower cultivation, an orchard and a vegetable unit The different crops like Maize, Wheat, Oats and Mustard cover 0.50 ha of land, an orchard with fruit plants of Walnut, Apple, Pear, Quince, Pomegranate, Apricot and Plum on 0.25 ha and exotic vegetables on 0.10 ha of land. His annual income from different fruit trees stands at 2.50 lakhs. Abdul Majeed also has two sows one of which is Desi and other is exotic. Both of them have milk yield of 10 litres per day. This also gives him an annual income of 1.00 lakh. Besides growing crops, Mr. Majeed also raises Marigold for commercial purpose which also fetch him an annual income of rupees 0.20 lakh. . He recently also has constructed a polyhouse in which he plans to grow vegetables in winter months when their cultivation in the open is not possible due to harsh climatic conditions outside. In his fish pond, he is rearing about 800 common carps and is yet to get any income from the rearing of fishes. In his poultry unit, he has about 200 poultry birds. He also earns by selling their eggs as well as the bird for meat purpose and he earns rupees 0.10 lakh on a annual basis by selling eggs and poultry birds for meat purpose. Cultivation of exotic vegetables is also another important source of income for the farmer. He grows different types of vegetables like Radish, Carrot, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Knolhol, Peas, Turnip, Spinach, Tomato and this also gives him an annual income of rupees 2.05 lakhs. All these enterprises fetch him an income of more than 6 lakh per annum which is many times more than his income a few years back from the same farm. He sells all his produce in the district. Recycling, no dependence on external inputs, scientific cultivation and natural farming has brought the difference for him. It can also be inferred from table 1 that

horticulture is having the major share in his total income. This is because fruit plants do not need any investment once they get themselves established in orchards. They continuously go on bearing fruits year after year. Horticulture sector is recognized to have the potential to raise the farm income, provide livelihood security and foreign exchange (Jha *et al*. 2019).

Table 1: Income from different enterprises

Enterprise	Net Income (in Lakhs)	Share in Net Income (%)
Crops*	0.35	5.64
Horticulture	2.50	40.32
Livestock	1.00	16.12
Poultry	0.10	1.61
Vegetables	2.05	33.06
Floriculture**	0.20	3.22
Total	**6.20**	**–**

*Maize, Wheat, Mustard and Oats; ** Marigold.

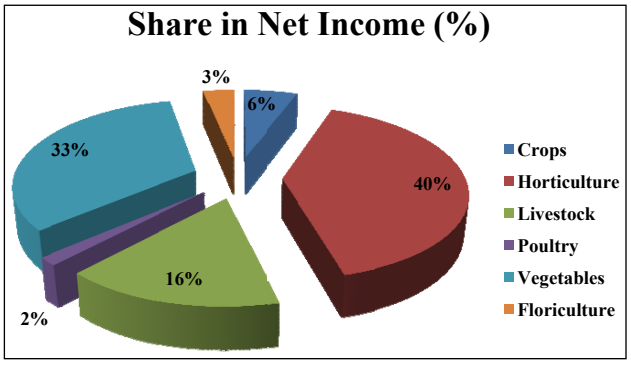

Fig. 1: Percentage share of different enterprises in Net Income of Farmer

The efforts of KVK-Ramban in promoting and dissemination of sustainable agricultural practices were also duly recognized when Mr. Abdul Majeed Rounyal got innovative farmer award by Director ICAR-ATARI on its Foundation day at Ludhiana. He also has got appreciation from SKUAST-Jammu for his promotion of IFS model. His dedication and quest to adopt new technologies and natural farming

practices has not only made him a role model in his area but also earn recognition at the national level too. Today, Mr. Majeed has proved that size of land holding is just a number. He is earning a handsome income from its farm by adopting an integrated farming system approach diversifying his farm with crops, oilseeds, fodder, vegetables, flowers, fruit crops, backyard poultry, fishery and livestock. An Integrated Farming System approach has reversed the fortunes of this marginal farmer located in a remote corner with lack of resources and a limited access to different institutions and agencies. He is a source of inspiration for more than 80 percent of marginal and small farmers (Mahendra Dev, S. 2012) who dominate the Indian agriculture who has proved that with the commitment, dedication and scientific temperament marginal and small farms can also be made profitable. Mr. Majeed duly acknowledges the efforts of KVK-Ramban in promoting sustainable agriculture practices in the region which according to him have really resulted in doubling of farmers' income.

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