

VALUE ADDITION IN MUSHROOM

Mr. AKBAR FORGES AHEAD IN MUSHROOM VALUE ADDITION

1. Name of the enterprise: Mushroom cultivation and value addition

2. Name and complete address of entrepreneur:

Mr. B.Akbar
S/o R.S. Basheer
12/3 Bhutan Sahib Street,
Tindivanam 604 001
Villupuram Dist., TN
Mobile : 9360333235

3. Interventions of KVK with quantitative data support:

a. Pre and post interventions survey:

i. Pre intervention survey:

Mr. Akbar, belonging to a lower middle class family was an auto rickshaw driver by profession. He owned a vehicle that was valued at Rs. 1.25 lakhs in 2005. His education stopped at higher secondary school level itself and the family of the rural youth were not educated. They were very conservative. His income per day was meager, Rs. 250/- only through this profession. He owned a piece of land of 5 cents around his house with borewell facility in Tindivanam of Villupuram District. The total asset value of Mr. Akbar was Rs. 3.5 lakhs only. His economic status before 2005 was very poor. He faced debt and other social problems in bringing up his family as he was the only bread winner.

ii. Post interventions survey:

Mr. Akbar had the inquisitiveness to learn and practice newer methods for gainful self employment. At the age of 38, Mr. Akbar decided to change the profession in view of the difficulties he was facing due to low returns with his profession. A platform was created by the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University for better livelihood. Mr. Akbar began production of Oyster mushroom, *Pleurotus* spp in his farm which has been promoted by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Villupuram District. He saw better prospects in this venture and committed himself as a part-time cultivator of oyster mushroom in the early part of 2006. He used to get a net profit of Rs. 10,000/- from the oyster mushroom production unit. The mode of income generation was by direct selling of the produce to retailers, other vendors, regular customers at a fixed margin in 2006. This type of self employment continued upto 2009. In this period he accumulated wealth and experience. During 2008-10 he leased in 10 cents of additional land near his residential production unit to establish a full- fledged business. At the time of establishment of the mushroom unit he faced numerous hurdles. All have been overcome by him due to the constant support of the family. In this period, Mr. Akbar was attracted towards milky mushroom cultivation. The technology 'know how' was provided by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Villupuram through several capacity building programmes. The cultivator was encouraged to produce mother and bedspawn. A Rural Laboratory was established in his farm household during 2008 under the aegis of the DBT-GOI funded project on rural youth empowerment in the followup programme. Technical backstopping in his place and the

techniques were provided by the experts of the KVK. Through KVK intervention he instituted “Bismi Milky Mushroom Growers Association” under the Societies Act, 1976 in 2009 with 22 members. He has bought two vehicles for his own purpose. The technical skill in the production of Milky and Oyster mushroom has been improved and he is marketing the fresh mushrooms in networking mode through five different groups who are successfully cultivating mushroom (Mr. Sekar from Kadapakkam, Mr. Babu from Nolambur, Mr. Ponnusamy from Nemili, Mr. Jayaraman from Dadapuram and Mr. Babu from Panruti). Presently due to cultivation of Milky and Oyster mushroom, spawn production and value addition of mushroom, his standard of living has raised and he is earning Rs. 30,000-40,000 per month.

b. Trainings:

i. Trainings Undertaken:

The following are the some of the important trainings he undertook at the major centres in the State. These skill development programmes have enabled his group to practice the value chain management in mushroom on scientific basis.

Date	Topic	Training type	Location
5.2.2007	Mushroom Cultivation	One day training	TNAU, Coimbatore
5-7.9.2007	Mushroom spawn production	Vocational training	KVK, Villupuram
26.2.2009 to 1.3.2009	Milky mushroom production	Vocational training	KVK, Villupuram
19.8.2009 to 19.9.2009	Milky mushroom substrate and casing material preparation	Vocational training	KVK, Villupuram
16.2. 2010	Milky mushroom spawn preparation and weed mould management	On campus	KVK, Villupuram
20.2.2012 to 2.3.2012	Oyster mushroom cultivation and value addition	Vocational training	KVK, Villupuram

ii. As Resource person for the trainings organized by the KVK:

From 2011 onwards Mr. Akbar’s expertise has been utilized by the KVK, Villupuram. He has been a resource person in the capacity building programme organized by the Kendra. The major vocational trainings in which he acted as facilitator are furnished below.

Date	Topic	Training type
2-9.7.2011	Cultivation of Milky mushroom	Vocational training
14-18.9.2011	Mushroom cultivation Technologies	Vocational training
6-9.11.2012	Mushroom cultivation Technologies	Vocational training

iii. Demonstrations

Demonstrations of cultivation of oyster mushroom, milky mushroom and mother and bed spawn productions were given to his group during the training programmes.

Date	Method demonstration	Training type
5-7.9.2007	Mushroom spawn production	Vocational training
26.2.2009 to 1.3.2009	Milky mushroom production	Vocational training
19.8.2009 to 19.09.2009	Milky mushroom substrate and casing material preparation	Vocational training
16.2. 2010	Milky mushroom spawn preparation and weed mould management	On campus
20.2.2012 to 2.3.2012	Oyster mushroom cultivation and value addition	Vocational training

This group also demonstrated the value of mushroom in several platforms. Notable among them are the demonstrations held during the visit of the Deputy Director General (AE) during 2009, Technology Week 2010, Quinquennial Review Team Visit during 2011, Statelevel Exhibition in Namakkal during 2010 and Salem during 2013.

iv. Exposure visits

Mr. Akbar and his associates have attended many exposure visits organized by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra. Totally he has participated in nine exposure visits within the state and outside the state during 2010-13. It included visits to centres of excellence at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore, CODDISSIA, Coimbatore, National Research Centre for Banana, Trichy, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, National Research Centre for Mushroom, Solan etc.

v. Field days, group meeting etc

As Mr. Akbar gained professional competence he participated in many group meetings, field days etc. Since 2007, the group under the leadership of Mr. Akbar organized 18 field days and group discussions on mushroom production as a livelihood option in the rural setup.

vi. Publicity and marketing:

a. Publicity

At Village/Town level: The District Administration is organizing a seven day exhibition for the general public as part of the celebrations of *Chitrai* Festival at Tindivanam from April 14- April 20 every year. Since 2009, Mr. Akbar under the Banner 'Bismi Milky Mushroom Growers Association' has been participating in the week long event and exhibiting the products to promote healthy mushrooms and gain publicity for the venture. Packaged and ready to serve products are displayed on commercial dimensions in this annual exhibition. Publicity materials such as leaflets and recipes are distributed to the general public and consumers during the event regularly by the group.

At District level: The District Industrial Centre enabled platform for Mr. Akbar to display the fresh mushrooms as part of the Entrepreneurship promotional initiative of the district during 2007-2008.

At State level: He has displayed his products in Farmers Day conducted during every year at the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore and CODISSIA at Coimbatore. Since 2009 he had attended eight events in total at the State Level Programmes on different concepts. He was

part of the exhibitors at the State Level programme on 'Attracting Rural Youth in Agriculture' held at the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University on 30.12.2011. The products displayed received highest commendations of the social activists of the country. The success story of mushroom cultivation in his farm was broadcast in AIR, Pondicherry on 17.9.2012, Makkal TV, Podigai TV, Doodardashan (DD), and published different daily tamil magazines at different periods during 2010-13.

At National level: The success story of mushroom enterprise promoted by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Villupuram had been documented earlier by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi in 2010. The success of the entrepreneur had been presented in it. The latest one to showcase fresh and value added mushrooms products was at Salem in the Mushroom Mela hosted by National Research Centre for Mushroom, Solan and the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore on 22.03.2013. The Bismi Milky Mushroom Growers Association displayed participated in the First Global Conference for Women in Agriculture at New Delhi during 13th -15th March, 2012 exhibited mushroom products in the Forum. This was the first international appearance and received appreciation for participation.

b. Marketing

Bismi Milky Mushroom Growers Association has commercialized the edible mushrooms like milky mushroom, oyster mushroom mass produced. This group also has been a liaison for the button mushroom produced in the Nilgris, Tamil Nadu. The fresh mushroom products are marketed in the name Bismi Food products- BFP heath Healthy Mushrooms adhering to the principles of packaging fresh and value added mushrooms. In all the cases the products are sold with information on nutritional properties printed on the package and supporting information brochures containing recipes. Since, the mushroom have low shelf life the producers group with expertise is marketing processed forms and their products for general consumers. The value added products are marketed in the brand name BFP Healthy mushroom pickle, BFP Healthy Chilli mushroom powder, BFP Healthy Mot laddu, BFP Healthy dry mushroom, BFP Healthy dry mushroom stem, BFP Healthy Mushroom Idli powder etc. Apart from the above recipes he is taking bulk orders for ready to serve preparations and snacks viz., mushroom soup, mushroom samosa, mushroom biriyani, mushroom gravy, mushroom chilli, mushroom chapatis, mushroom pav Baji, mushroom manchurian for family functions, marriages etc.

vii. Time line of entrepreneurship development of entrepreneur

2005	-----	Akbar-An Auto Rickshaw Driver
2006	-----	Trainee on mushroom production
2007	-----	Mushroom cultivator
2008	-----	Experienced mushroom grower
2009	-----	Mushroom spawn producer and entrepreneur
2010	-----	Expertise in value addition and name holder
2011	-----	Master Trainer
2012	-----	Exposure from village to global level
2013	-----	Compliance to commercial nuances in mushroom

4. Technical components in the enterprise

Cultivation of milky mushroom, oyster mushroom, establishment of rural facility for tissue culture to mother spawn, bed spawn production, maintenance of biotic and abiotic conditions for mushroom production, harvest, grading, packaging transport and of fresh mushroom and preparation of various value added mushroom products.

i. Raw materials

Substrate for production involving paddy straw, casing soil, mushroom spawn, calcium chloride etc for multiplication under controlled conditions in prefabricated mushroom shed of standard size as per the prescription of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University.

ii. Process (methodology)

The methodology followed for milky and oyster production is as per the standard protocol developed by Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore.

iii. Man power involvement: 20

iv. Package and handling

The products are packed in the food grade quality poly bags and sealed.

5. Cost benefit ratio

S. No	Particulars	Cost benefit ratio
1	Milky mushroom	1:1.5
2	Oyster mushroom	1:1.6
3	Spawn	1:2.0
4	Mushroom pickle	1:1.75
5	Mushroom mot laddu	1:1.5
6	Dry mushroom	1:1.5
7	Dry Mushroom stem	1:1.42
8	Mushroom chilli powder	1:1.66
9	Mushroom idli powder	1:1.5
10	Mushroom biriyani	1:1.6
11	mushroom chilli	1:1.71
12	mushroom soup	1:1.87
13	mushroom samosa	1:1.25
14	mushroom chapatis	1:1.66

6. Status of entrepreneur before and after the enterprise

The Entrepreneur had owned an auto rickshaw till 2005 with a land of 5 cents around his house. His economic status before 2005 was very poor and he was earning Rs. 250/- per day from his auto rickshaw. Through spawn and mushroom production venture, his net profit rose up to Rs. 30,000- 40,000 per month in 2013. His standard of living has raised and he has bought two

vehicles for his own purpose During 2008-09 he earned an income of Rs. 1,57,000 through mushroom and Rs. 4,60,200 through value addition. Presently his gross annual income in this venture is Rs. 7.20 lakhs.

7. Present working condition of enterprise in terms of raw material, labour availability, consumers preference, marketing the produce etc parameters (i.e economic viability of the enterprise)

Due to its poor keeping quality of Oyster mushroom, he along with his wife moved into putting down their culinary skills on to milky, oyster and button mushrooms and soon they were found selling various value added products which included instant snacks (mushroom soup, mushroom samosa, mushroom biriyani, mushroom gravy, mushroom chilli, mushroom chapatis, Mushroom pav Baji, mushroom manchurian , mushroom mot laddu etc.). With value addition he got double the profit than selling as raw mushroom. He is selling the value added products in different rates. Viz. mushroom soup (Rs. 15 each), Mushroom samosa (Rs. 5 each), Mushroom Biriyani (Rs. 80 each), Mushroom Gravy(Rs. 60 each), Mushroom chilli (Rs. 50 each), Mushroom chapathis (Rs. 25/set), Mushroom pav Baji (Rs. 20 each), Mushroom munjurian (Rs. 20 each)and Mushroom mot laddu(Rs. 15 each).

8. Horizontal spread of enterprise

He is giving training on mushroom cultivation to school students viz., Philomenas Higher secondary School, Tindivanam, Montfort Higher secondary School , Tindivanam, VKM Vidyalaya, Molachoor and to interested candidates who has approached him on free of cost basis. Through him the mushroom enterprise has been taken up by four rural youth in the District.

9. License, advertisements etc on product

Formed the “Bismi Milky mushroom producers association” under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975 during 2009 with 22 members comprising of 18 women and 4 men with license No 8/2009 issued by District Registrar’s office, Villupuram. The success story of his mushroom cultivation was broadcast in AIR, Pondicherry, Makkal TV, Podigai TV, Doodardashan (DD), and in the print media through different daily magazines. Besides, he had participated in the district level, interdistrict level and state and national level exhibitions to showcase the technology and technology backstopping by the Indian National Agricultural Research System.

10. Recognitions/awards received by the entrepreneur

During 2009, his wife Mrs. A. Rahmed Fathima was awarded “Velan Chemmal (Krishi Pandit)” by Tamil Nadu Agricultural University for her effort in mushroom cultivation and its value addition. Several certificates of meritorious participation in the state and national level exhibitions have added strength to his enterprise.

1.	
<p>Mr. B. Akbar, entrepreneur, Villupuram District</p>	
2.	
<p>The cultivation of milky mushroom in Akbar's facility</p>	
3.	
<p>Value added products of mushroom from Akbars Lab</p>	

4.



Technology showcasing in the First Global Conference of Women in Agriculture



Participation of Th. Akbar in State level farmers interaction meeting at TNAU, Coimbatore

Source:

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