

A Regular Housewife to a Commercial Vegetable Farmer

Urmila Chaudhary, a housewife, is a permanent resident of Krishnapur 7, Shantipur, Kanchanpur. She grows vegetables on 350 sq. m land. However, lack of skills and traditional farming approach, forced her to rely on market vegetables for meeting household consumptions. Although, the community she was associated with is known as a farming community, lack of knowledge on seasonal/off seasonal vegetables (best suited season/weather for cultivation of vegetables), ability to identify quality seeds, IPM approach, marketing and saving were major difficulties faced by her community for quantity vegetable production. Therefore, Mrs. Chaudhary had to work on a daily wage basis to meet her needs.

On August 2020, with the support and guidance from Skill Up, 20 farmers formed a group named “Kopila Farmers Group” to adopt the PLA and FFS approach for vegetable production. Mrs. Chaudhary was also a member in the group. Under the guidance of the project team, the group established a demonstration plot in their FFS. During demonstration, they were provided with technical knowledge and practical skills on vegetable cultivation, inter-culture operations, post-harvest handling and marketing. Basically, farmers were trained to identify a suitable crop and its favorable season for production & marketing. They also acquired skills on production and use of bio-pesticides, bio fertilizers which helped them quit using chemical based pesticides and fertilizers. Further, the group was also trained on non-chemical pest control measures, selection of quality seeds, soil treatment and irrigation.



Mrs. Chaudhary working on her vegetable farm

These new technologies and approaches were exciting and motivated her to opt for commercial production of vegetables. “I was so impressed with the productions results in demonstration plots by the use bio-fertilizers and bio- pesticides” said Urmila excitedly. Further, she added that she doesn’t need to invest on market based chemicals anymore. At present, she has been growing vegetables on 1700 sq. m land. She could be able to earn more than Euro 800 this season alone. She has also opened an account and started saving. Recently, she bought her own power tiller to minimize time and cost. “The FFS training and technical guidance of Skill Up has changed her life “said Urmila. Mrs. Chaudhary who was reluctant and hesitated to speak publicly, now can speak with confidence and make her own decisions.