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Empowering tribal women through value addition of minor millets

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Abstract

Minor millets are one of the important traditional food groups that have been moved out of the regular diets in the recent past. Recognizing the lack of modern processing facilities as one of the major obstacles in promoting millets. Self help group members has set up processing units and processed products like kodo rice, utai rice and ragi atta (finger millet) are supplied to 245 Anganwadi centers of district and through Anganwadi centers these processed products has been given to an anaemic women and malnutrition effected children by preparing kodo/kutki khichadi and ragi halwa as supplementary feed. They have earned Rs 7.43 lakh by supplying 2490 qt processed kodo/kutki/ragi into different Anganwadi centers within one year from these processed products.

Keywords: Minor millet, mechanical processing technology, SHGs

Introduction

Minor millets play important role in human life as well as impressive source of powerful antioxidants and farmers are growing these millet crops on upper land having less production potential of soil in this tribal area. Recognizing the lack of modern processing facilities as one of the major obstacles in promoting millets across the country Generally three type of minor millets crops such as ragi called as finger millet, kodo millet and little millet called as kutki has been grown in Kanker district of Chhattisgarh. Farmers of these areas are not too much aware on cultivation and value addition of the millet crops. Farmers conventionally produce kodo rice, kutki rice and ragi atta by using locally made domestic pulveriser i.e. Jata and Dhekhi. This process was very laborious and highly time consuming. To solve this problem mechanical process is introducing as main objective of value addition of minor millet crops.

Materials and Methods

Transfer mechanically minor millet processing technology through organizing training programmes, demonstrations and exposure visit etc. Minor millet processing and its value addition units have been established in the Kanker district with the help of District Mining Development Fund (DMFT) of Kanker district (Fig 2). Front line demonstration of improved variety of minor millet crops like ragi, kodo and kutki has been done to increasing the production of these millets crops. Self help group having 300 members has been created and engaged these group members for production and collection of raw materials from members and other farmers for processing. Another two separate SHGs having members 10 to 12 in each group has been engaged in processing, packaging and marketing the value added product through making supply chain from farmers to consumers.



Fig 1: Processing of minor millets by traditionally

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Fig 2: Mechanical Processing Unit

Results and Discussion

Output of mechanical millet processing technology was found 6000 to 8000 kg (Fig.3) as compared to traditional practice was less i.e. 8 to 10 kg (Fig. 2) products was processed with in 8 hour (1 Days) and quality of these products was also not good hence minimum net return was got by the farmers. Processed products are selling into 245 Anganwadi centers of district under Chief Minister Suposhan Abhiyan since Jan 2021 and through Anganwadi centers these processed products has been given to an anaemic women and malnutrition effected children by preparing kodo/kutki

khichadi and ragi halwa as supplementary feed. Hence under the Government Suposhan Abhiyan women and children are getting nutritive and fresh food with in a time as well as women member's also getting self employment through procurements, processing and value addition of minor millets products in the district. On processed products SHGs members has been getting benefit Rs 15 to Rs 20 per kg of Kodo/Kutki rice and Ragi Atta respectively. They have earned Rs 7.43 lakh by supplying 2490 qt processed kodo/kutki/ragi into different Anganwadi centers within one year from these products.



Fig 3: Processing, packaging and selling of minor millets process products

Impact of this intervention

- Productivity has been increased by 20 to 25 percent by introducing improved variety of crops.
- Farmers are sold their produce directly to the SHGs members involve in this technology. Hence they have got profit Rs 5 to 7 per Kg of produce straight on field.
- Malnutrition level of the district has been reduce from 13.8% during the year 2021-22 through timely and nutritive availability of food.
- Cultivation area under minor millets crops has been increased from 5460 ha to 9500 ha. which is nearly 74%
- This intervention playing mile stone by doubling farmers income, generating self employments throughout the years and reducing migration percentage during pandemic situation in the district.

Conclusion

Mechanical processing technology has been good to process all minor millets and SHGs can be procured by small and medium scale processing industries to process the raw minor millets. The farmers can get more profit by selling the processed millets rather than the raw millets. Generating self employments throughout the years and technology also help to reducing migration percentage during pandemic situation in the district.

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