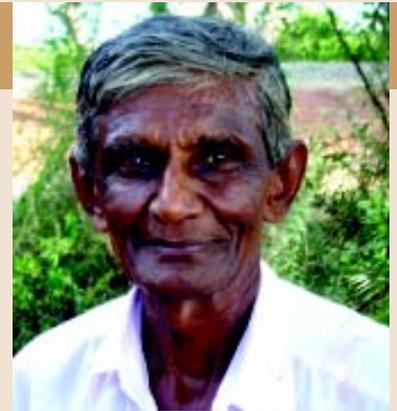


Youth in farming



Globalisation and WTO have resulted in the youth of our country losing interest in agriculture and going into cities to earn more money. The villages are becoming poorer and poorer and only old people are left there to do the agricultural operations. During the past two years, cost of food items like grains, pulses, oil and vegetables are increasing, month after month. China which has the second highest rate of economic growth and the first highest population becoming consumeristic, may need huge amounts of food and other items for which India has to pay a huge price to provide food security for its population. Hence, it is very important for the administration and the people to give top most importance for agriculture production. But this does not mean that huge external input oriented agriculture production. Family farming is the best approach for any country and particularly for India, to produce agricultural products economically, utilizing locally available resources and crop residues and manpower very efficiently and sustainably. But all of us think that industrial type of agriculture could produce food economically. In reality, external input agriculture needs and consumes fossil fuels which are very scarce and very soon may not be available.

Again use of any external inputs causes global warming due to long distance transport. Hence, younger generation has to think twice before going away to cities to get higher wages. If integrated system of agriculture is adapted like tree cropping, animal husbandry, agro forestry and food production, which are interdependent and self supporting, farming can be economically viable and sustainable. Because of “green revolution” technology lands have been degraded due to loss of humus, resulting in poor soil water holding capacity and the destruction of soil organisms and soil regenerating processes, demanding more and more agro chemicals. Punjab and Haryana are the examples of destructive external input agriculture. Fortunately, youth are getting into agriculture in a small way. But, for them it is very important that small scale farming or family farming is very important to be free from external inputs and in getting their soils become more productive year after year. Agriculture should not be compared with other professions only on economic gains. It is the noblest profession as there is no subordination to anybody except to nature, leading to lot of happiness and contentedness. But, with experience, I would suggest youth to visit many successful farmers and may be, work with them, before starting farming.

Beginners should go slowly at least for two years to understand and gain confidence in various aspects of farming. They should love and respect the land and nature and adapt a simple lifestyle. Dedication and involvement are very important for success in any

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profession particularly in agriculture. Subsidiary occupations like apiculture, aquaculture, sericulture, nursery, backyard poultry, goat rearing, sheep rearing, Dairy, Piggery could contribute in the economy of farming utilizing agricultural by-products. Youth should cultivate the habit of marketing directly to the consumers by value addition to their products. Vegetable cultivation under shade net and plastic sheets to produce good quality vegetables during odd seasons is a good practice to make better profits. Agriculture shall be a self sustainable occupation free from debts and tensions. It is very very important to make their own seeds and manure and family labour adds a lot of support for economic and sustainable farming.

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