



RESEARCH ARTICLE :

Social and economic empowerment of farm women in banana fibre based entrepreneurship for sustainable income

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SUMMARY : Banana is an important crop of world and India with 7.1 lakh ha area is under banana and fruit production of 26.2 million MT contributing 14.7 per cent of world production Apart from fruit, banana crop also generate huge quantity of biomass in the form of pseudostem, leaves, suckers *etc.* and this biomass mostly pseudostem is absolute waste in most of the states of India and Bihar in particular. Banana is cultivated in about 29 thousand ha in the Vaishali district of Bihar with an average yield of 412 q/ha. With the sizable area under banana (0.61 lakh ha) cultivation in Bihar, it is important to develop and popularize different value added products from banana pseudostem. After harvesting of fruits and leaves, pseudostem is cut near to the ground level and its yield ranges from 60 to 80 t/ha. Developing value added products from banana pseudostem is restricted mainly to fibre extraction and handicrafts making at national level. In the process of fibre extraction other components obtained simultaneously. These components are fibre (about 600 kg/ha), scutcher (30 to 35 t/ha), sap (15000 to 20000 l/ha) and central core (10 to 12 t/ha) all of it can be used in developing different value added products. Taking the initiative Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Vaishali, Bihar started giving training to rural farm women on fibre extraction technology on the wasteful harvested pseudostem as this district is an important banana cultivating district. The KVK encouraged rural farm men/women to take up simple and remunerative income generating enterprises from where they can earn additional income which improves its self confidence and socio- economic status having an overall impact on farm families.

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