

MUSHROOM CULTIVATION BROUGHT A RAY OF HOPE FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD AMONG THE FARM WOMEN IN CHURACHANDPUR DISTRICT OF MANIPUR

Mushroom cultivation brought a ray of hope for sustainable livelihood among the farm women in Churachandpur District of Manipur. Mrs. Ruth N. Singson, D/o (Late) Rev. K. Singson from Bethal Village of Churachandpur district in Manipur is a very sincere, hardworking and responsible woman. But as the ill luck, she became widow at a very young age and from that time onwards she has been working for the welfare of widows and widowers in Churachandpur District. Since, she is working for the welfare of the weaker section particularly for the women, she was looking for different enterprises which could help her while uplifting the women's economy in a sustainable manner. She came into contact of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Churachandpur and KVK team suggested her to go for Mushroom cultivation. Taking this opportunity, ICAR Research Complex for NEH Region, Manipur decided to conduct training and demonstration programme on cultivation of *Pleurotus* mushroom under Horticulture Mission for North Eastern and Himalayan States (Mini Mission I). Mrs. Ruth organized a group of farm women and formed Farmers' Club with the help from KVK, Churachandpur. ICAR, Manipur Centre along with KVK team conducted a hands-on training on mushroom cultivation and thereafter demonstrated the technology for two successive cropping season in two sheds. During the programme, necessary critical inputs such as spawn, paddy straw, polythene bag, drum, tarpaulin were distributed as community inputs from Horticulture Mission (MM I). Frequent visits of ICAR Scientists and KVK staff were made to monitor the programme successfully. The programme has created tremendous impact among the participants. After the training programme the group could earn a net profit of Rs. 60000/- from 800 bags in 2 cropping season. The waste products of the substrate were used in making compost for kitchen garden. After experiencing so much profit she has constructed a bigger and better cropping room to popularize this technology among the fellow farm women. Expertise from ICAR, timely monitoring by KVK, Churachandpur, availability of quality spawn from ICAR, demand of mushroom in local market and above all the hard work and dedication of the participants made this programme a grand success.

