

Role of Trainings to rural masses in value addition of arid fruits and vegetables

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Horticultural produces grown in arid region are of explicit quality with great nutritional, medicinal, organoleptic and economic importance. Some of the arid vegetables like *kachri*, *mateera*, clusterbean etc. and fruits such as *ker*, *khejri*, *ber*, *lasora*, *guarpatha* and *aonla*, etc. on barren lands are available to the rural masses to provide food and nutrition security. Most of the arid food resources are available in plenty during a particular season, but all cannot be utilized to the fullest extent due to many reasons. Thus people residing in arid areas hardly get on considerable advantage from the abundantly available resources. Rural masses consume these food resources as such available to them in the form of simple vegetable or by simply in the form of dehydrated product or fruits are consumed in raw form. However, there is much scope in evolving the techniques of value addition and providing market to such underutilized commodities for more net returns.

Various standardized techniques are practiced commercially for processing of arid fruits and vegetables (Table 1).

Table 1. Some potential value added processed products of arid horticultural crops

S. No.	Crops	Value added products
1	Ber	Ber candy, preserve, squash, RTS, Jam, chutney, pickle, powder
2	Aonla	Preserve, candy, shreds, powder, chyawanprash, pickle
3	Ker	Powder, Pickle
4	Aloe	Jam, squash, laddu, biscuit, pickle
5	Khejri	Sangri, pickle, biscuits, laddu
6	Mateera	Squash, RTS
7	Watermelon	Squash, RTS
8	Kachri	Dried vegetable, pickles, chutney
9	Clusterbean	Dried pickle

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Negligible quantities of value added products from arid fruits and vegetables compared to their production are available in the market. Thus rural masses can choose this enterprise for their employment and income generation. It requires proper technical knowledge and skill for preparing these value added products. For technical guidance proper trainings are required. Trainings can be helpful in creating awareness among the rural masses as well as can provide technical knowledge and skill in specific aspects. Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Bikaner is one such Institutes which provides various types of trainings to the rural masses including farmers, farm women and rural youth. Krishi Vigyan Kendra organizes various types of trainings as vocational trainings, on campus trainings and off-campus trainings (Table 2). During last five years 10 off campus, 6 on-campus and 1 vocational training were organized by Krishi Vigyan Kendra on value addition. Lecture cum-interactive demonstration technique were followed in the trainings in which participants themselves were involved in preparing value added products which instilled lot of confidence in them.

Table 2. Type of No. of Trainings on preparation of value added products organized by KVK, Bikaner during 2003 to 2007

S. No.	Type of trainings	Duration	No. of trainings
1	Off-campus	1 day	10
2	On-campus	2-3 days	6
3	Vocational	36 days	1
(under Rajasthan Mission of Livelihood, Jaipur)			

One 36 days vocational training on fruit and vegetable preservation was organized under the sponsorship of Rajasthan Mission of Livelihood (RMOL) Jaipur. This training also included other aspects related to marketing, labeling, packaging, Banking, etc. to make them confident in establishing their own small scale enterprise for self-employment.

Other extension activities like exhibitions and distribution of folders/leaflets help in motivating masses for utilizing the value added products. Five such exhibitions on value addition of arid fruits and vegetables were organized in which recipes prepared by trainees were displayed and awards were distributed to trainees whose recipes were adjudged the best. Aonla value added products by way of these above mentioned extension techniques have been popular from the last 4-5 years in Bikaner district (Table 3) and have motivated the fruit growers and unemployed rural women for income generation.

Table 3. Extension activities carried out on value addition of arid horticultural crops

S. No.	Type of activity	Title	Name of Author(s)
	Folders/Pamphlets	आंवला के विभिन्न उत्पाद	डॉ. नीना सरीन, डॉ. इन्द्रमोहन वर्मा, डॉ. अतुल चन्द्र एवं श्री अमरलाल गौड़
-do-		फल सब्जी परिरक्षण - एक व्यवसाय	डॉ. नीना सरीन, डॉ. इन्द्रमोहन वर्मा एवं डॉ. अतुल चन्द्र
-do-		विभिन्न प्रकार के अचार	डॉ. नीना सरीन
Exhibitions		Five exhibitions conducted	

After receiving the trainings 80 per cent of the participants started preparing some of the selected products like aonla, pickle, preserve, chutney, etc. at the household level. Three participants started their own units espe-

cially on Aonla Produces and are earning a good amount of money. Mrs. Prem Kumari Tanwar has established her own small scale unit on Aonla products (aonla juice, preserve of candy) and developed a good market in Bikaner and outside state also. Shri Amar Singh Sangwa has expertised in preparing Chywanprash and is earning good amount of money. Mr. Gopal Rathi has prepared dried aonla products.

Thus, considering the nutritional and medicinal importance of arid fruits and vegetables, general public has been attracted towards the value added products and have started consuming these products which in turn can give the economic benefit to the rural masses in general and farm women's and producers of fruits and vegetables in particular.

Most of the arid food resources are available in plenty during a particular season but all can not be utilized to the fullest extent due to many reasons. Thus people residing in arid areas hardly get on considerable advantage from the abundantly available resources. There is much scope in evolving the techniques of value addition and providing market to such underutilized commodities for more net returns. It requires proper technical knowledge and skill for preparing these value added products.

References

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