

## Vegetable cultivation in paddy field : A way of additional income for poor farmers in Tripura

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Received : December, 2010; Accepted : January, 2011

### ABSTRACT

In this study, an attempt has been made to assess the overall profile of vegetable cultivation in the paddy field, particularly in terms of its benefits and opportunities. The result indicated that vegetable cultivation in paddy field in off period showed a new path for poor farmers for earning additional income. It is evident from the study that marginal farmers were more interested for vegetable cultivation. In spite of its significant growth, farmers also faced various problems for cultivation. Thus, the paper suggests that vegetable cultivation in paddy field in off period may be useful for solving seasonal unemployment problems in rural areas.

Sarkar, Sukanta (2011). Vegetable cultivation in paddy field : A way of additional income for poor farmers in Tripura. *Internat. J. Com. & Bus. Manage*, 4(1): 49-51.

**Key words :** Benefit, Development, Market, Poverty, Unemployment

Agriculture has always been a core sector of the Indian economy being key to the rural development and critical to the economic growth in the country. Agriculture is both a way of life and the principal means of livelihood to 65 per cent of India's population. Our farm population is increasing annually by 1.84 per cent. The average farm size is becoming smaller each year and the cost-risk return structure of farming is becoming adverse, with the result that farmers are getting increasing indebted (Awias and Asif, 2009). The primary role of agriculture is to provide sufficient food, raw material, manpower to an expanding industrial economy and tertiary economy. Hence, agricultural sector is considered as the dynamic leading sector in the initial stages of economic development. Without development of agriculture resources base, it is difficult to develop and diversify industry, technology and manufacture activities (Verma, 2009). The basic objectives of this paper are (i) to assess the possibility of vegetable cultivation in paddy field during off period, and (ii) to identify the benefits of vegetable cultivation.

### METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Mohanpur R.D. Block of Sadar sub-division in Tripura. The Mohanpur block was selected purposely since agriculture is more

popular in this block where maximum people are tribal and presence of large amount of hilly land. Large portion of Mohanpur block falls under Tripura Tribal Area Autonomous District Council, shortly known as TTADC. In Mohanpur block, there are sixteen Panchayat, out of them Kamalghat Panchayat was selected. Out of 430 farmers, 200 were selected by using stratified random sampling *i.e.* 46.5 per cent. Data were collected by the investigator with the help of a well prepared, structured interview schedule employing personal contract. Thereafter, data were analyzed, tabulated and interpreted in the light of the objective of the study.

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Agriculture is the backbone of the rural people in the survey area.

Table 1 shows that in survey area more farmers cultivated vegetable in paddy field during the off period *i.e.* 88 per cent.

**Table 1 : Popularity of vegetable cultivation in survey area**

Sr. No.	Type	Number of farmers	Percentage
1.	Vegetable cultivation	176	88
2.	Not cultivated	24	12
Total		200	100

Source: Field survey

Table 2 shows that various types of vegetables were cultivated in paddy field during the off period, among them potato was more popular.

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