

# It is now possible to earn 2 lakhs in an acre of rainfed land..



**S**avara Surya Rao is a 38 years old PVTG tribal farmer who lives in Novguda tribal village of Pedarama (GP) Gram Panchayat, Seethempeta mandal, Manyam district, Andhra Pradesh. He lives in a joint family, father, mother, spouse, 3 children and his 6 siblings and their children live under a single roof. One of his brothers teaches in the Govt school and the rest do farming. His family owns land a total of 8 acres of which 3 acres are categorized as plain land and 5 acres in upland covered with horticulture. In the plain land, they grow Paddy in Kharif and soon after harvesting paddy they grow Ragi (in Dec/Jan) with an extent of 2 acres and the rest of the land is covered with vegetables and papaya. In the 5 acres of horticulture lands cashew nut, pineapple, Lemon, Mango and Tamarind trees were planted and grow turmeric and Ginger as intercrops.

on 2 acres and 18 to 20 quintals of Paddy on 3 acres (Kharif produce) and uses it for household consumption. Salary of his brother was excluded.

## TRANSFORMING AGRICULTURE

Mr Rao underwent training on Natural farming principles and integrated farming approaches. He learnt the cultivation methods of Guli Ragi and growing Guli Ragi for the last 3 years, in the past he used to get 4 quintals yield per acre under the traditional method. Through the Guli ragi method, he is achieving an average of 12 quintals / per acre for the last 3 years. He reduced the land allocation for ragi cultivation from 2 acres to 1 acre because of an increase in ragi productivity, the other one acre is extended for the cultivation of Marigold & Crossandra. He brought 2 cycle weeders to use in the inter cultivation operations. Agriculture Department also supported him to establish a flour mill.



Savara Surya Rao ■

In the year 2019, Surya Rao's annual income from farming was estimated at Rs.1.10lakhs sources of income Rs.30000 from the sales of vegetables, Rs.50000 from cashew nuts and Rs.30000 through sales of Marigold, Crossandra and Banana. He produces ragi 8 to 10 quintals



## IN CONVERTING FARM PONDS INTO ECO FARM PONDS

Mr Rao invested in the excavation of a farm pond sized 0.10 acres with 50% support from the COVID Livelihood program which was executed by WASSAN in the year 2020-21. The construction was done in April 2021 and the farm pond was filled with water in July 2021. He started fish culture in July. He bought 300nos advanced fingerlings sized 6-7 inches each (weight ranges from 100g to 120g each) from a neighbour fingerling entrepreneur Mr. Biddika Dharma Rao of Chinarama Village by paying Rs 3 per fingerling. Due to having enough water in the farm pond he also started raising fingerlings through

the release of 60k spawn in the same pond in August 2021 with partial support of WASSAN. A total of 100kg of fish has been harvested in 4 rounds. The last harvest was done on 17th April 2022 and earned a gross of Rs.14000. He used rice bran, cattle manure and Jeevamrutham to increase plankton in the pond which can be used as feed by fish. On the bunds of the farm pond, he planted Banana, Papaya, Redgram and cucurbits and earned an additional income of Rs.6000. Surya Rao realised a total Gross income of Rs. 20000 from a 0.10acre size Farm Pond in the first year itself apart from irrigation. He said that "second-year onwards the gross income will be increased up to 20% through the sales of Papaya and Banana". He estimated a total of 15000 fingerlings will be readily available from his pond to supply others by July 2022. Surya Rao also says that it is easy to earn a minimum of one lakh in an acre if we go with the Eco Farm pond concept.

## INTEGRATING DESI POULTRY IN ORCHARD LAND

In March 2022, Surya Rao made his own investment in the establishment of a small desi poultry breeding farm sized 10x15 feet on his 5 acres of orchard land and protected the forage area covered with 7 feet height green cloth. Introduced 25 hens and 5 roosters on the breeding farm. Income from this farm will be realized in the year 2023.

