

### Growing paddy for seeds is a better option for ryots



**Desamuthu has been growing the paddy variety for the past ten years.**

Paddy Cultivation has been the main occupation for a number of farmers in South India. Though the returns from paddy depend largely on the weather conditions and the market price, a majority of ryots continue to cultivate the crop with a handful of them drifting away from the regular paddy crop to other varieties.

Mr. M. Desamuthu, a progressive farmer of Keelambi village in Kanchipuram district, Tamil Nadu, has been cultivating paddy seeds for the past 10 years. Unlike other farmers in his area, Desamuthu is not content with growing paddy and selling it in the local market. He has entered into a contract to sell the seeds to the agricultural office in his area.

#### **Seed-to seed technology**

Commonly known as seed-to-seed technology the agricultural office supplies the seeds to the farmers and buys back the harvested produce directly from them.

According to Mr. C. Perumal, retired assistant agricultural officer, Kanchipuram, cultivating paddy seeds is a better option for ryots, because farmers get Rs.2 per kilo more than the market price by selling the seeds to the agricultural department.

Desamuthu, has been growing a hybrid rice variety, called *Ponni* in Tamil, in his eight hectare field. He had got the seeds for cultivation from the Department of Agriculture, Sirucauverypakkam, Kanchipuram. The seeds were first sown by broadcasting method on raised nursery beds prepared by mixing about 2 tonnes of farm yard manure and about 40 kgs of DAP (di-ammonium-phosphate) and irrigated, explained Mr. Desamuthu. On the 10th day about 5 kg of furadon was sprinkled over the beds to prevent stem borer

infestations.

### **Transplanted seedlings**

The seedlings were plucked on the 30th day after sowing and transplanted in the main field. Before transplanting, about 25 tonnes of farmyard manure, 50kg of urea and 20kg of potash and phosphorus each are applied to the main field and ploughed well. The seedlings were planted at 6 x 4 cms on raised beds and irrigated, according to Desamuthu. Weeding has to be done on the 25th and 45th day and two side dressings of about 75 kg of urea, 50 kg of potash and 2 kg of neem cake must be applied on the above-mentioned days.

### **Grain formation**

On the 60th day about 70-75 kgs of ammonium chloride or potash must be sprinkled over the crop, which helps in good grain formation. The crop comes to harvest in about 125 days after planting and from one hectare about 10 tonnes of paddy can be harvested. Growing paddy seeds is feasible for farmers who have about 5 hectares of land, according to Mr. Perumal. "Interested ryots can contact the local agricultural office in their area.

"Officials make a field visit to study the feasibility of the soil type, irrigation facilities and suitable variety that can be grown," said Mr. Perumal. A contract is then signed, which states that the farmer should sell his produce directly to the office, he explained.

### **Payment details**

Farmers are paid a part of the money immediately after their harvest. The grains are subjected to lab tests to make sure that they adhere to quality standards and the final amount is paid later. Mr. Desamuthu had spent about Rs.2,40,000 for cultivating paddy seeds in his eight hectares. His gross income after selling his produce is about Rs.3,60,000. His net income after deducting the expenses is about Rs.1,20,000.

**Contact Details:** Mr. M. Desamuthu, Keelambi village, Krishnapuram post, Kanchipuram district, Tamil Nadu, mobile: 93804-37744 and Mr. C.Perumal can be reached through mobile at 99940-91891.

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