

## Setting an example in harnessing the full potential of jackfruit

September 26, 2013



Versatile: The products are available at the Agro products display centre of CARD.— Photo: Special Arrangement

Jackfruit trees are found in almost all the districts in Kerala. It is estimated that in a year the State alone produces about 16 million fruits.

“But not all of the fruits are consumed; a large part goes waste. Our emphasis over years has been on ensuring employment and income generation for farmers more particularly rural women by making best use of this underutilized fruit along with papaya, pineapple, rose apple and plantains for making several edible preparations like halwa, toffee, fruitball, pickles, chutney powder, squash, jam etc,” says Dr. C.P.Robert, Programme Coordinator, Christian agency for rural development (CARD), Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Pathanamthitta, Kerala.

### Potential

CARD identified the potential of processing and value addition in jack to be a money spinning venture and developed a set pattern of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) as a guideline for making traditional preparations from the fruit which otherwise proved a major impediment in home scale production practices. The institute trained entrepreneurs on packaging and labelling with reference to GMP, setting up of facilitation centres, registration and licensing, quality control measures and effective marketing strategies.

“A 10 kg jackfruit can yield a net income of more than Rs.500. A single jack tree can generate revenues of Rs, 4,000 – Rs. 5,000 a year. For the last 15 years our institute has been taking serious effort in popularising this fruit through various refinement and product development strategies. But lack of proper technical and infrastructural facilities limited progress for some time,” says Dr. Robert. Efforts have also been on till date for refining the traditional products which have much demand in the local market. The institute has been conducting regular advanced national level training on jack- fruit production technology with special emphasis to processing and value addition. The training tried to explore hidden potentials of the fruit right from the propagation techniques to marketing.

### Different topics

“The training covered topics like propagation techniques, processing and preservation technologies, traditional food products, commercial food products, packaging/ labelling, processed products and quality standards, credit availability and preparation of new projects. The trainers were also taken on a field visit to see an SHG called GRAMA (Group Rural Agricultural Marketing Association) in Kottayam that has been producing and marketing over 30 jackfruit products.

According to Ms. Shana Harshan, subject specialist at CARD, “we have listed about 25 technological and 41 traditional products that are marketed by trained entrepreneurs in and around the district. The products are available at our Agro products display centre (APDC) which is run for showcasing our entrepreneur’s products.”

### **Number of women**

CARD's intervention in promoting this concept has brought to the limelight a substantial number of women entrepreneurs specialised in agro-processing and value addition. One among them is Ms. Meena Suresh a homeopathy practitioner from Ayroor Grama Panchayath. Ms. Meena was one of the 100 trainees selected under the Kerala Government Food Security Project implemented by CARD during 2009-10 for exploring the potential of jackfruit and other fruits to provide livelihood option to rural women.

“She utilises the Agro processing hub facility at the campus and presently manufactures 17 different products under the brand name ‘Yummy.’ All her products carry the phrase “promoted by CARD-KVK, Pathanamthitta” on its label thus instilling confidence among consumers to buy it,” says Dr. Robert.

### **Basic inputs**

Raw materials are mostly sourced from her own farm or locally. Processing, preservation, storing the pulps for value addition during off season are mostly done at the processing hub. She sells 25 per cent of her products through the APDC and is presently in the process of establishing her own food processing unit. On an average she earns about Rs.4,750 a month with net income of Rs. 54,000.

### **Reason**

“One reason for her success is that her production strategy is based on the seasonality chart for fruit availability in the locality. This enables her to organise and store raw materials all through the year,” says Ms. Shana. The entrepreneur tries new innovations in value addition which is otherwise scarce in the market. She was conferred a national award during the annual jack fest held at Thiruvananthapuram recently. A blog on jackfruit called [www.panasamwonders](http://www.panasamwonders) was created three years ago and it has registered over 68,000 hits and has 109 followers from 12 countries till date.

### **For More Details**

Ms. Meena Suresh can be reached at Kailath Karayamputhusseril, Ayroor, South.P.O.689611.

Phone: 04735213417, mobile: 9946933748 and

Ms. Shana Harshan, phone: 0469 2662094, Card-Krishi Vigyan Kendra-Pathanamthitta District, Kolabhagam Post Office, Tiruvalla (Via), Pathanamthitta, Kerala.