

## ICM Practices Revived Rice Cultivation



In Pathanamthitta district, rice is cultivated in Midland, Malayoram Ecosystem and Upper Kuttanad Ecosystem. Upper Kuttanad area where mainly rice is cultivated covers 6 panchayaths that forms the part of rice bowl of Kerala. In Midland and Malayoram ecosystem lands are interspersed with alternating hills and valley where as in Upper Kuttanad area three river systems viz Achenkovil, Pampa and Manimala flow in. However, the productivity of rice was only 2.8 t/ha which is not remunerative. Major reason being rice cultivation becomes less remunerative due to high cost of cultivation forcing farmers to leave rice fields fallow for years making it difficult for revival.

With this background, KVK Pathanamthitta introduced Integrated Crop Management (ICM) practices to reduce cost of cultivation of rice. ICM practices were initially tested at Kuttor panchayath of Pulikezhu Block of Pathanamthitta district in 2007-08 by a group of 11 women SHG members. As a result., farmers of Kuttor panchayath adopted ICM practices in 20 ha in 2008-09 under the guidance of KVK. Apart from this ICM technology was taken up in Ranny, Konny and Kulanada Panchayaths of this district in 4 ha and State Rice Seed Farm in Pullad taken up ICM cultivation in 0.4 ha by which they increased the production from 2.6 t to 5.1 t/ha. During 2009-10 to counteract labour shortage, mechanization with paddy transplanter, weeder, reaper, thresher cum winnower included in ICM technology and 1.0 ha was covered farmers of Pandalam Thekkera with the financial assistance from Department of Agriculture. Hybrid rice variety CORH-2 was on farm tested in 1ha and gave an yield of 10.2 t/ha. Farmers club sponsored by CADR-KVK with financial support from NABARD was started at Pandalam Thekkera and collective operations was done by



## Salient Features

- Brought down seed rate from 65-80 Kg/ha to 12 kg/ha in manual ICM transplanting and 30 kg/ha in mechanized transplanting
- Brought down nursery area from 1000 m<sup>2</sup>/ha to 20m<sup>2</sup>/ha in manual ICM and 40 m<sup>2</sup> in mechanized transplanting
- Used *Tricho*-cards for control of pest like leaf folder and stem borer replacing chemical pesticides application
- Reduced fertilizer application by 18- 25 %. through site specific nutrient management and Leaf Colour Chart (LCC)
- Saved irrigation water by over 50 % with practice of intermittent irrigation during the vegetative phase

Padashekara Samathis of different rice cultivating areas (Padashekaram) in mechanized transplanting. There is a strong linkage with concerned line departments for impleting ICM practices in rice in large area. In ICM, farmers were given choice of selection of suitable practices from the basket of options such as selection of locally adapted rice varieties, use of good quality seeds, practices in raising seedlings for transplanting, crop need based nutrient application, irrigation scheduling, IPM etc. there by reduced the cost of rice cultivation which resulted to revive rice cultivation from fallow lands kept years together.

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