

“ATMA KISAN HUT”

For agribusiness and entrepreneurship development in farming sector

Introduction of ATMA

Agriculture technology management agency- ATMA exist in almost every district of India. ATMA is supported by the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare - Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Government of India.

Concept of ATMA KISAN HUT

Enhancing income of farm families through value addition and product diversification has been one of the thrust areas of ATMA Amritsar. ATMA handhold the entrepreneurs to create brands, register them, obtain licenses and advertise. It established a unique facility, namely, ATMA KISAN HUT to display its branded value added products and to convey the message “Yes We Can” to entrepreneurs. The ATMA also opened an incubator for entrepreneurship development in Agriculture first of its kind in India, in collaboration with Management Institute with allotment of mentors to support the budding agri entrepreneurs . ATMA Hut is giving them an opportunity to introduce their products to public and obtain consumer feedback. Soon after the realization of these initiatives twelve enterprises dealing with the processing and marketing of value-added products from Honey, Turmeric, basmati rice, pulses, wheat dalia, wheat flour etc. emerged. These experiences clearly show how technological training in value addition of local produce along with other support measures (inculcating entrepreneurship, post-training assistance and linking entrepreneur to various other support agencies) can develop entrepreneurship among farmers including rural women and thereby contribute to their empowerment.

PROCESS AND PRACTICES FOLLOWED

1. Identification of farmers- ATMA started indentifying farmers with zeal for agribusiness and self marketing with ready to sell product like honey, turmeric ,pickles, murabba, chutneys, papar waria, pulsed, gur at local level with no brand and lacking platform to market it efficiently for getting good price from consumer .

2. Group formation and their grooming

In 2012 ATMA began its attempts by grooming eight farmers with groups who produce value added products and to serve as a constant source of motivation to other similar groups.

The biggest challenge before ATMA in the beginning was to ensure an assured income to the farmers sustain them in the production of these product so that theses can maintain the constant supply.. This was made possible by offering premises at CAO office with new hut named as ATMA KISAN HUT with 100% investment by ATMA Amritsar . The expenditure for running the HUT was met from the revolving fund of group and the income generated was ploughed back into the revolving fund.

3. Establishment of Incubation center for Training, capacity building and back end support

ATMA set up an incubation center at SAI Institute of Management first of its kind in India in its premises. The purpose of this center is (a joint initiative of ATMA and the Sri sai institute of management) is to give back end support and mentorship to agri entrepreneurs. This center works on how farmers can become businessmen or entrepreneurs ?

Three major components for setting up an enterprise, namely, training, credit and assistance .The bank was attracted to establish linkages with the ATMA as it could see several merits such as identification of genuine borrowers, easier assessment of techno-economic feasibility, technical support and follow up and thereby regular repayment and enhanced success rate of the enterprises.

4.Organisation of training programmes

Different training programmes on entrepreneurship development were conducted at Kheti bhawan Amritsar and SIM's training institute. The choice of the modules were done by the group members based on the local demand

Training at KHETI BHAWAN AMRITSAR



Training at Sri Sai Institute of Management Manawala Amritsar.



Incubation Centre for transitioning product to brand has established at SIM in collaboration with ATMA Amritsar.

How farmers can become businessmen or entrepreneurs ?

ATMA sensitized the farmer entrepreneurs to the importance of branding since it is not the product, but the brand that is being sold. The incubation center guides the entrepreneurs to create brands, register them, obtain licenses and make advertisements. The main focus of this incubator is to turn farmers into entrepreneurs

An initiative by ATMA Amritsar with the collaboration of Sri Sai institute of management Manawala Amritsar The first step in this direction was organizing seminars and training progs for budding entrepreneurs on Agriculture Marketing and Entrepreneurship.

Marketing of agriculture produce is a big headache for farmers ,to address this problem effectively and making farmers independent to market their produce by different methods like value addition food processing etc. and to equip them with marketing and management skills ,seminar was organized at Sai Institute of Management and planned into four sessions.

Role of Management in Agribusiness The first session role of Management in Agribusiness was taken by Dr. Sanjay Bahl, he emphasized on the importance of Planning, Organizing, Directing, Coordination and Controlling in Agribusiness.

Accounting for Agribusiness Second session was on accounting which was taken by Dr. Sarbjit Kaur, she gave the knowledge regarding the basic concepts of accounting , Book-keeping, Transactions, Cash – Memo, Invoice, Journal, Ledger, Purchase Book and Sales Book to the Farmers.

Agriculture Marketing and Branding. The Third session was taken by Mr. Dayakaran Singh on Agriculture Marketing and Branding, he told farmers about the importance of marketing and Branding in Agribusiness and how the profit can be increased with the help of Marketing and Branding in Agriculture

The role of IT in Agriculture. The fourth and the last session was taken by Mr. Arvindpal Singh Bhamra on the role of IT in Agriculture. He gave knowledge on the latest techniques like GIS and GPS that can be used by the farmers for farming and what role IT can play for increasing their profit in agribusiness. The sessions had various questions by the farmers. Three farmers even expressed their problems of Agribusiness in details.

Dr. Mandeep Pujara delivered PPT on agri produce marketing in USA and apprise farmers about how to use ICT and management tools to do agriculture production and marketing effectively with help of government web portals for weather ,mandi prices, toll free guidance by dialing 1800-180-1551 from 6:00 am to 10pm.



4. Linking entrepreneur to other sources of support

Subsidy from State Department of Agriculture and financial support for advertisement and participation in national and international trade fairs from the District Industries Centre.

5. ATMA KISAN HUT establishment for self marketing

ATMA KISAN HUT was set up in KHETI BHAWAN AMRITSAR to display and sell the branded value added food products from its Food Processing Unit in its final marketing form, in attractive containers, packets and labelling. The purpose of the ATMA HUT is to instil a confidence among the willing entrepreneurs and to send a psychological message to them that “Yes we Can”.



6. Market Linkage ATMA for linking entrepreneurs to market and Direct to consumers.

The market linkage was established by the ATMA ASR to display and sell branded value added products of enterprises functioning under KVK's and other line departments after ensuring quality. Exhibitions organized by the ATMA AMRITSAR, KVK and other national and international fairs also gave them opportunity to introduce their products to a wider audience and obtain consumer feedback and ATMA is helping them to take stall free of cost or by nominal charges paid by ATMA.



LESSONS LEARNT

Vocational training alone cannot make an entrepreneur. Transformation of a trainee into an entrepreneur calls for hand holding during pre and post enterprise establishment period.

ATMA should foster effective functional linkages between and among people's representatives, financial institutions, line departments, District Industries Centres and other similar organizations so as to achieve convergence at the entrepreneur level.

Benefit of value addition to farmers can be ensured only through promoting farmer entrepreneurs and farmer managed micro processing and value addition units.

What Governments could do?

Governments can support development of micro-enterprises in agriculture by adopting the following measures:

- a. Formulate schemes for establishing mini processing units at village level and earmark a fixed proportion of the plan fund for strictly utilising it in the processing sector. Enhancing the financial subsidy support for processing, in general and provision of incentives to set up processing units by producers, producer organisations/co-operatives and producer companies could encourage farmers to set up processing units at the local level.
- b. Shift focus of agricultural extension services of the state department of agriculture, KVKs and other extension agencies from promotion of production oriented technologies towards value addition and product diversification. But to do this, the capacity of extension personnel in the area of value addition and processing has to be significantly upgraded.
- c. Develop database on raw material availability of various crops (at the Panchayat level) and develop a manual on processing and value addition technologies.