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**Success story****Natural farming: Forming a habit of producing healthy****\*<sup>1</sup>Sonita rani Sethy and \*<sup>2</sup>Dipsika saho**<sup>1</sup>(SMS, Agril. Extension), KVK, Angul, Odisha, OUAT, BBSR<sup>2</sup>(Scientist, Ag. Engineering), KVK, Puri, Odisha, OUAT, BBSR\*Corresponding author: [Sonitasethy.11@gmail.com](mailto:Sonitasethy.11@gmail.com)

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Zero budget natural farming (ZBNF) is defined as the cultivation of crops without any use of external chemical inputs which eventually reduces the cost. The concept believes there is enough nutrients in the environment for growth of a plant which we have to make available to the plant. In simplest sense it's the cultivation of soil. Unlike input intensive agriculture it harmonizes with environment & guarantees sustainable profit to farmers.

In the mid-1990s Padma Shri recipient Subhash Palekar popularized the idea of natural farming in the country. He puts it as an alternative to the losses caused by chemical input intensive agriculture which will provide healthy meal to future generation. There are 11 states who are practicing natural farming with an area of 6.5 lakh ha and counting. In India natural farming is being promoted by Bharatiya Paramparagat Krishi Paddhati (BPKP) Programme. It promotes indigenous cow products (cow dung, urine) based farming where farmers will prepare the inputs from available resources in their farm avoiding use of synthetic chemicals & enriching the soil with beneficial micro-organisms.

Mr. Sisira Bhatta, a resident of village – Madhipotali, Pipili, Dist- Puri, Odisha is an ardent admirer of natural farming since when he came in contact with lectures of Mr Rajiv Dixit & Mr Palekar. Despite of passing intermediate in Arts his strong beliefs in science of farming led him towards this regenerative agriculture. In the year 2015 he attempted natural farming for the first time but couldn't get any satisfactory result due to heavy pest load. But he continued & started getting profit gradually. Earlier he started with paddy moving on to pulses like Green gram, Black gram & vegetables like pointed gourd, tomato, spine gourd, okra etc. earning a handsome profit with complete reduction in chemical usage.

**Current status**

Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Puri has been associated with the project "Out scaling of Natural farming through KVKs" since 2022. Under the project KVK, Puri came in contact with Mr. Bhatta & imparted formal training on natural farming. With his 8 years of experience he has become an asset to KVK as well as farmers of Puri district so far as natural farming is concerned. He is growing major field crops, pulses as well as vegetables in a natural way. With tremendous effort he has converted

80% of farmers of his village to natural farmers. He is acting as master trainer in various training programmes of the district as well as outside. He is also associated with various NGOs & imparting hands on training to farmers & helping to convert hectares of land under natural farming.

**Cultivation practices**

Mr. Bhatta uses the available inputs of his farm & collects from local market to prepare natural input. According to him he doesn't invest anything in this process other than his labour.

**Nutrient management**

He uses cow dung & urine from indigenous cows & prepares various inputs which are Jeevamrut, Handikhat, Bijamrut, Panchagavya, Ghan jeevamrut etc for maintaining soil pH. he also prepares one solution made up off waste fruits which he fondly named 'magic' uses as flower & fruit enhancer in fruits & vegetables. He also prepares dahi drabana, egg tonic to use as fungicide & fertilizer.



**Plant protection measures**

Mr. Bhatta prepares Brahmastra, Agniashtra for controlling major pests. He preferably sprays neemastra for preventive measures in various crops. He also practices intercropping & border crop for preventing diseases & pests. During initial years pest load was heavy in his fields. But after continuous practice he is able to control pest attacks. For weed control he practices straw mulching & does manual weeding whenever required.

Other than the above said products he also prepares the following natural inputs.

**Table no.1**

Sl. No.	Products	Major ingredients	Usage
1	Apple juice	Waste apple, grape	Hormonal effect(100ml/tank)
2	Machha puti	Fish waste products, cinnamon	Flowering(30ml/tank)
3	Dahidravana	Curd, turmeric, curry leaf, jaggery	Sucking pest
4	Egg tonic	Lemon, egg	Plant growth promoter

**Table no.2**

**Yield of major crops in his farm**

Sl.no.	Crop	Yield (q/ha)
1	Paddy	30
2	Green gram	15
3	Blackgram	12.5
4	Pointed gourd	80
5	Tomato	170
6	Spine gourd	70

**Linkage with technical organizations**

Mr. Bhatta is a very vibrant & well connected progressive farmer of Puri district. He is in regular contact with KVK, Puri for technological backstopping & district line departments. He has undergone skill training programme under the ICAR sponsored project "Out scaling of Natural farming through KVKs". Various farmers from the district as well as nearby & students come to his place to learn about know-how of natural farming. He is also linked with NGOs & acting as master trainer in practicing natural farming. He is also going to various state level trainings for knowledge up gradation.



**Output**

Many customers from Puri as well as Bhubaneswar come to Mr. Bhatta for his famous pointed gourd. He is well known for his chemical free & tasty pointed gourd in his locality which he sells at Rs.110-120/-kg at his doorstep. Seeing upon him many farmers in his locality have started natural farming. He doesn't sell his produce at double the price like organic farming & is not intended to. According to him farmers need to understand that one can get fair amount of net income by reducing the cost of cultivation rather than selling produce at higher price which is the core concept of ZBNF. He has been practicing pond based Integrated Farming System since four years as a sustainable source of income. He says one can reduce use of refrigerator as the



keeping quality of the produce is relatively high than chemical produce & eat fresh. He fondly

remembers the incidence during Covid-19 when delayed the harvesting of tomato due to marketing problem but could be able to harvest in good state form natural farming plot. He admits of reducing input cost to as low as 80% from chemical input intensive agriculture.

### **SUMMARY**

Natural farming is nothing but improved & scientific version of old agricultural practices. It uses all the available resources of the farm with the key component cow dung & urine of Desi cow to produce natural inputs (fertilizers & plant protection inputs) which provides a healthy produce. As Mr. Bhatta says a habit a producing healthy & consuming healthy needs to be inculcated in the farming environment & farmers have to be the frontrunner in this to save the future generation. Continuous practice of natural farming will reduce the pest load & enhance the growth of soil microorganisms which eventually increases the yield.