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From Soil to Success: An Entrepreneurial journey

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Enterprise Adopted- Vermicomposting



Abhishek Yadav, a distinguished alumnus with a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Agriculture, from Chandigarh University has emerged as a prominent figure among young farmers and entrepreneurs in Jhajjar, Haryana, India. His profound passion for the environment and soil health led him to explore vermicomposting as a viable profession. Driven by his ambition to become a renowned agricultural entrepreneur, Abhishek successfully implemented vermicomposting, demonstrating that dedication and strategic enterprise selection can yield remarkable success for young farmers.

Early life and beginning:

After completing his education at Chandigarh University, Abhishek Yadav, armed with a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Agriculture, had initially aspired to secure a government position. Although he successfully cleared the ADO exam, he unfortunately fell short in the interview stage. He then took up a private job at Syngenta, but his discontent with the role prompted him to reevaluate his life's purpose. As he explored new opportunities, Abhishek became increasingly aware of the critical importance of dedicated professionals in agriculture. He realized that this sector, which forms the backbone of national food security and economic growth, was in dire need of innovative and passionate individuals.

The Start of Journey:

A transformative moment arrived in Abhishek's life when he transitioned from a salaried professional to a passionate entrepreneur, launching his vermicomposting business on June 23, 2023. With

unwavering determination and a clear vision, he embarked on a journey to revolutionize sustainable farming practices. He began by establishing 20-30 beds on a 1-2 kanal plot of land. The vermicompost beds were carefully designed and constructed, featuring 10x3 feet wide and 1 foot high structures built with moisture-absorbing bricks in a shaded, well-ventilated area. Each bed was loaded with 8 quintals of manure waste, and Abhishek introduced 6-7 kg of *Eisenia foetida* earthworms, procured at ₹100-200/kg, to initiate the decomposition process. To initiate the vermicomposting process, Abhishek applied approximately one kilogram of earthworms per square meter of bed space. He meticulously maintained the beds' moisture levels at 40-50% and temperature between 20-30°C by periodically sprinkling water. A thermometer was placed within the bed to monitor temperature fluctuations, ensuring optimal conditions. Water was sprinkled every 8-10 days to maintain the desired moisture levels. After 100 days, Abhishek harvested his first batch of vermicompost.

Earthworms are categorized into three types based on their feeding habits: Epigeic, Endogeic, and Anecic. Epigeic species, which inhabit surface litter and feed on decaying organic matter, are ideal for vermicomposting. Among these, *Eisenia foetida* is the preferred species for vermicompost production due to its rapid reproduction rate and exceptional efficiency in recycling organic materials. This species can tolerate a wide temperature range of 0°C to 35°C, with optimal temperatures between 20°C to 30°C.

The Present Scenario:

Abhishek's entrepreneurial journey in vermicomposting has been marked by phenomenal growth. From humble beginnings with a production capacity of 1-1.5 tons from 20-30 beds, he has successfully scaled up his operations to over 300 beds, resulting in an impressive yield of 400 tons. His business acumen and strategic partnerships with various companies have been instrumental in achieving a turnover of ₹22,70,000 in 2023-2024, with projected revenues of ₹40 lakhs for 2025.

Vermiwash is a liquid that is collected after the passage of water through a column of worm action and is very useful as a foliar spray. It is a collection of excretory products and mucus secretion of earthworms along with micronutrients from the soil organic molecules. Mr Prateek is also trying to harness this technology, he drill a hole at the base of the container to fix a tab to it. The sprinkled water percolates through the tunnels made by the earthworms in the beds and the water is collected at the end. He has also experimented vermiwash preparation by bucket method, separately. In a year, he has collected 50 litres of vermiwash which he has sold @Rs. 275/ litre to the farmers or to the online site. In addition to vermiwash, Abhishek's product portfolio included a range of other offerings, such as vermicompost, earthworms, and organic manure. These products catered to the diverse needs of farmers and gardeners, providing them with sustainable and eco-friendly solutions for soil enrichment and crop nutrition.

Marketing of vermicompost, vermiwash, vermicompost earthworms:

' Bhumi Organics'

Abhishek's entrepreneurial venture, "Bhumi Organics," has been witnessing unprecedented success, with the demand for his vermicompost products far exceeding his current supply capacity. Encouraged by this overwhelming response, Abhishek has devised ambitious plans to expand his

vermicompost unit on a larger scale. This strategic expansion will enable Abhishek to increase production, meet the growing demand, and cater to a wider customer base. By scaling up his operations, he aims to strengthen his market presence, consolidate his position as a leading supplier of high-quality vermicompost, and explore new business opportunities. In addition to offline sales, Abhishek has also been successfully selling his products online through IndiaMART, a reputable e-commerce platform. By leveraging this digital channel, he has been able to reach a broader audience, expand his customer base, and increase his revenue streams.

Recognition and Awards:

Abhishek's remarkable journey in vermicomposting earned him the prestigious title of "Best Progressive Farmer" in his village, conferred by the state and district administration. This award was a testament to his innovative approaches and dedication to community involvement.

The recognition not only bolstered his confidence but also significantly enhanced his reputation, paving the way for new business opportunities and partnerships. Abhishek's story serves as an inspiration to others, demonstrating the impact of innovative farming practices and community engagement.

Dignitaries Visit:

Abhishek's farm has become a hub for knowledge sharing and innovation, attracting regular visits from higher authorities. The Department Director of Agriculture and Horticulture, in particular, makes frequent visits to his farm, recognizing the value of Abhishek's pioneering work in vermicomposting.

These visits not only demonstrate the government's interest in promoting sustainable agricultural practices but also provide Abhishek with opportunities to showcase his expertise and share his experiences with others. The exchange of ideas and knowledge between Abhishek and the visiting authorities has been instrumental in driving growth and improvement in his farming practices.

Constraints experienced:

In the initial stages, Abhishek encountered several challenges that hindered the growth of his vermicomposting business. The primary constraint was his lack of experience and training, which led to the untimely death of earthworms, resulting in significant losses. Additionally, his inexperience made it difficult to maintain optimal moisture levels, which fluctuated frequently. Furthermore, marketing his products proved to be a significant obstacle, as he struggled to find effective channels to reach his target audience.

Lesson learned and future aspirations

Abhishek's initial failures in vermicomposting taught him valuable lessons about the importance of proper techniques, maintenance, and patience. The ability to adapt to changing circumstances, such as fluctuations in moisture levels and earthworm mortality, helped him overcome obstacles and achieve success. His experiences show that self-directed learning, experimentation, and innovation can lead to breakthroughs and success, even in unconventional fields like vermicomposting. As Abhishek looks to the future, he envisions establishing an organization dedicated to promoting organic farming practices among farmers. His goal is to educate and train people on the benefits

and methods of organic farming, with the ultimate aim of transforming his entire village into an organic farming hub.

Abhishek's vision is driven by his passion for sustainable agriculture and his desire to empower farmers with the knowledge and skills necessary to adopt eco-friendly practices. By sharing his expertise and experience, he hopes to inspire a new generation of farmers to embrace organic farming, contributing to a healthier environment, improved crop yields, and enhanced livelihoods. Through his proposed organization, Abhishek plans to offer training programs, workshops, and demonstrations on organic farming techniques, such as vermicomposting, crop rotation, and integrated pest management. He also aims to provide resources and support to farmers, enabling them to transition to organic farming practices and improve their overall well-being.



Figure1: Method of vermicomposting



Figure2: Earthworms *Eisenia foetida*

CONCLUSION:

He is a self satisfied agripreneur now and wants to further accerlate his venture.He is selecting vermicompost production, enhancing their livelihood status, improving soil health and conserving beneficial soil micro-organisms. He is encouraging interested farmers to prepare this multifunctional quality product on their own farms so that farming community can be benefitted. Substituting these chemical fertilizers with the organic inputs, such as vermicompost, can provide an impulse for organic farming systems.In conclusion, Abhishek's inspiring journey teaches us a valuable lesson: consistency and perseverance are key to achieving success. Without regular effort and dedication, it's impossible to accomplish great things. Abhishek's story serves as a reminder that hard work and

determination are essential for turning dreams into reality. His experiences demonstrate that achieving something significant requires unwavering commitment, relentless drive, and a willingness to put in the effort required to succeed. As Abhishek's remarkable journey shows, staying focused, working tirelessly, and persevering through challenges can lead to extraordinary accomplishments. His story motivates us to adopt a similar mindset, encouraging us to strive for excellence and push beyond our limits to achieve greatness.