



EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN THROUGH VALUE-ADDED BANANA PRODUCTS: A SUCCESS STORY FROM THENI DISTRICT

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Introduction

Banana, fruit of the genus *Musa*, of the family *Musaceae*, one of the most important fruit crops of the world. is the second most important fruit crop in India next to mango. Its year round availability, affordability, varietal range, taste, nutritive and medicinal value makes it the favourite fruit among all classes of people. It has also good export potential. The banana is grown in the tropics, and, though it is most widely consumed in those regions, it is valued worldwide for its flavour, nutritional value, and availability throughout the year. A ripe fruit contains as much as 22 percent of carbohydrate and is high in dietary fibre, potassium, manganese, and vitamins B6 and C. High-income banana products. Incredible female entrepreneur story from the Theni district.in this article.

About the location

Let's discuss the female entrepreneurs who produce banana items and achieve significant financial success in Theni district Kamatchipuram. People in the Theni district work in agriculture as the area is mostly a farming-based district. Farmers in the Theni district occasionally face difficulties since they do not always receive adequate prices for their produce. The district is seeing an increase in farmers who add value to their produce and sell it for a profit because the cost of goods varies.

Agriculture Background

Preethi Krishnakumar, a banana farmer from Seepalakottai, nearby Chinnamanur in the Theni district, processes bananas similarly to make banana powder, which she then sells across various districts for a profit.

Krishnakumar and his wife Preethi Krishnakumar are from a farming family and have been cultivating crops such as bananas, grapes, tomatoes, and chillies for years. However, they have been struggling to earn a profit as the fruit is not always priced up to the mark in the market.

Innovative concept

During the coronavirus period, the agriculture industry was stopped, and banana grapes fruits stagnated in Preethi Krishnakumar's land. As a result, they developed an alternative plan to prevent losses of their produce. They aim to become entrepreneurs by innovating and marketing value-added products at affordable prices.

Value-Added Product Training Program

Based on this, Preethi went to the Cendect Krishi Vigyan Kendra Farm Science Center in Kamachipuram, near Chinnamanur, for value-added production training on bananas and grapes.

During this workshop, participants learned about four types of banana powder, banana health mix, banana navathaniya papad

(vadagam), banana chapatti mix, banana leaf soap, four types of multigrain health mix, curry leaves rice powder, thuthuvalai rice powder, and raisins. She manufactures and sells delightful stuff from home in a simple way.

Initially, she sold her products only to her relatives, but the products gained popularity soon. Later, she started marketing her products through social media platforms/e-commerce platforms. Preethi sells her products online in and around Tamil Nadu and other nearby states like Kerala and Karnataka.

Income generation

Preethi generates income by her skill, she creates four types of banana powders and other value-added goods from banana varieties such as Nali poovan, Nendran, Red Banana, and Grand Naine, earned profit around Rs. 10,000 per month.

Preethi, a woman entrepreneur, explained, "Production of value-added goods will be the solution to prevent agricultural industry losses. She attended value-added product manufacturing training at the Cendect Krishi Vigyan Kendra Farm Science Centre in Kamachipuram, where she gathered these product conversion technologies.

Ramya Sivaselvi, a subject matter specialist at Cendect Krishi Vigyan Kendra Farm Science Center, guided me in starting the business and thoroughly described the complexities of value-added product manufacture.

Benefits of Banana Powder

According to doctors, everyone should consume a banana each day. Many people intake banana as powdered mixture and mix it with milk every day to gain nutrients because of time constrain. The reason arises among many people to purchase banana powder. Because we are

banana growers, we occasionally receive inconsistent prices for the fruits.

Benefit cost

I sell banana powder for 250 rupees per kilogram. For every kind of banana has a different price. Because banana powder is consistently priced the same, it is quite profitable. Every month, I produce and sell over 10 kg of banana powder. The monthly income from this exceeds Rs. 10,000," she revealed.



Conclusion

Banana can grow from the poorest to the richest type of soil with varying success. The soil should be tested before banana cultivation. Banana growing is a significant economic driver in many countries that export bananas. It provides a steady income, recovers quickly from natural disasters, and has a relatively quick return on investment. It is benefit over all parts of banana.