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# INTENSIVE BANANA CULTIVATION

Onam is the most popular festival in Kerala and is celebrated with great pomp and show. It is celebrated every year during the month of August-September which according to the Malayalam calendar is the first month of the year. The festivities of the Onam last for almost ten days in which old and young participate with equal enthusiasm. Bananas in its raw and value added forms become an inseparable part of the feasts of Onam celebrations. Nenthran, a cultivar of banana, has better prospects as it is required to make banana chips and upperi (jaggery coated chips). Even though Kerala is one of the biggest consumers of the fruit, it's far behind in the production sector. In spite of the increasing demand, Kerala is unable to meet the requirement. Every year, the weeks leading up to Onam season are marked by the soaring prices of banana.

Collective farming is an important area of Kudumbashree, which aims at food security both at household and community level. The major crops cultivated are paddy, vegetables, banana, pineapple and tubers. Understanding this opportunity Kudumbashree has taken initiative to extend banana cultivation under the Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP). MKSP a sub component of the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) aims at increasing the visibility of women in agriculture, reducing drudgery and providing a livelihood opportunity by adopting sustainable and eco-friendly agriculture.

During the 2017 pre-onam market, 2867 tonnes of banana were sold out. The market analysis indicated extreme demand versus low production. In view of the analyzed trend the mission contemplated intensive banana cultivation for the coming peak period of 2018. Synchronizing the harvest in accordance, 9433 JLGs were engaged in 13429.1 acres of land. Here the term intensive does not indicate high density planting, but only expansion of area for increased production. This program envisages ample supply of banana to cater to the needs of the common in the peak requirement period and also setting a standard tool of measure to guard the price hike.

## GOALS OF INTENSIVE BANANA CULTIVATION

- Availability of safe to eat and nutritious bananas in the domestic markets during the festive season.
- Discourage the exorbitant prices and exploitation of consumers by the middlemen / hoarders during Onam 2018.
- Check the price volatility at peak periods of requirement.
- Additional income generation for the women through value addition and product diversification.
- To impart proper training to JLG members and capacity building as entrepreneurs and skilled workers among them.
- To enable food and nutrition security at household and community level.
- To enhance the export potential of commodity
- To create more job opportunities in the value chain sector.

## STATUS OF PRE-ONAM MARKET

District	Banana sold(Kg)
Trivandrum	138400
Kollam	38000
Pathanamthitta	80000
Alappuzha	26160
Kottayam	150000
Idukki	33405
Ernakulam	195269
Thrissur	33920
Palakkad	35000
Malappuram	22000
Kozhikode	20000
Wayanad	28800
Kannur	2000000
Kasaragod	66000
Total	2866954

Table 1: Sales report of pre-onam market in 2017

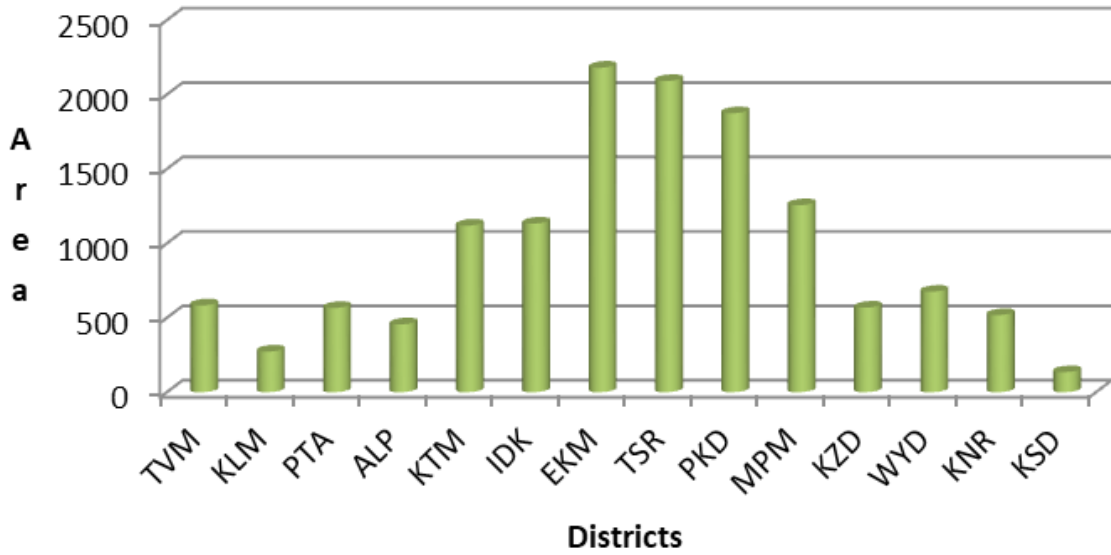
During the 2017 Onam season banana was grown in 3000 ha aiming the festive sales and the sales report of each district is tabled above. 2867 tonnes of banana was sold out in the pre-onam market, Kannur secured the top position with highest sales of 2000 tonnes and Kozhikode with least sales of 20 tonnes of banana.

## CURRENT STATUS OF BANANA CULTIVATION

District	Area under banana cultivation (in acres)	No. of JLGs engaged	Average expected production (in tonnes)
Trivandrum	583.5	506	4668
Kollam	273	185	2184
Pathanamthitta	566.3	461	4530.4
Alappuzha	456	347	3648
Kottayam	1119.3	632	8954.4
Idukki	1133	1372	9064
Ernakulam	2180	1828	17440
Thrissur	2091	1157	16728
Palakkad	1874	744	14992
Malappuram	1256.5	1139	10052
Kozhikode	568	278	4544
Wayanad	675	339	5400
Kannur	518.5	354	4148
Kasaragod	135	91	1080
Total	13429.1	9433	107432.8

Mapping of the current status of banana cultivation has been undertaken to assess the inflow of JLG produce to the market. Targeting this Onam season, 5000 hectares are already under cultivation with Ernakulam district having the maximum area under cultivation (2180 acres), followed by thrissur (2091acres). The expected total average production from these districts is around 107432 tonnes. So this program culminating during the Onam season 2018 is expected to hit the festive market with plentiful deliverance of bananas.

## Area under banana cultivation (acres)



## MKSP VALUE CHAIN PROJECT

Value chain development interventions in Kerala has huge potential for sustainable and more inclusive growth, diversification, possibility of generating substantial employment and further advancement in respect of industrial development in urban and rural areas. The rate of value addition in Kerala agriculture is below 2 per cent; value addition has a direct impact on poverty reduction and standard of living which are unexplored in Kerala. Now the role of value chain initiatives becomes extremely critical considering the immense and immediate challenge of feeding nutritional food to the growing population of the state.

Organization of agriculture along the value chain framework has been conceived as one of the strategies to bring more efficiency in the agricultural sector. Value chain interventions has capacity to harness forward linkages in agriculture and allied activities in order to efficiently convert part of the output to value added products acceptable to the domestic and international markets and thereby create enormous employment opportunities. MKSP Value Chain is a project exclusive



ഹരിതകേരളം പദ്ധതിയിൽ മലയിൻകീഴ് കുടുംബശ്രീ നടത്തിയ ജൈവ വാഴക്കൃഷിയുടെ വിളവെടുപ്പ് പഞ്ചായത്ത് പ്രസിഡൻ്റ് എസ്.ചന്ദ്രൻനായർ ഉദ്ഘാടനം ചെയ്യുന്നു

### ജൈവകൃഷി വിളവെടുത്തു

**മലയിൻകീഴ്:** ഹരിതകേരള മിഷൻ്റെ ജൈവകൃഷി പദ്ധതിയിൽ മലയിൻകീഴ് കുടുംബശ്രീ നടത്തിയ വാഴക്കൃഷിയുടെ വിളവെടുത്തു. പഞ്ചായത്ത് പ്രസിഡൻ്റ് എസ്.ചന്ദ്രൻനായർ വിളവെടുപ്പ് ഉദ്ഘാടനം ചെയ്തു. ശ്രീകൃഷ്ണപുരം വാർഡിലെ ഹരിത കുടുംബശ്രീ അംഗങ്ങൾ മുൻ പഞ്ചായത്ത് അംഗം ബിന്ദുവിൻ്റെ നേതൃ

ത്വത്തിൽ രണ്ട് ഏക്കറിലാണ് വാഴക്കൃഷി നടത്തിയത്. വികസനസമിതി ചെയർമാൻ വി. വിജയകുമാർ ചടങ്ങിൽ അധ്യക്ഷനായി. പഞ്ചായത്ത് സെക്രട്ടറി അജിത്, അടികുമാർ, തൊഴിലുറപ്പ് എൻജിനീയർ ജോയി, ആസൂത്രണസമിതി അംഗം വി.എച്ച്.കുമാർ, ഗ്രൂപ്പ് കൺവീനർ ഒ.ജി.ബിന്ദു എന്നിവർ സംസാരിച്ചു.



Intensive Banana Farming

for promoting value chain development interventions through producer's enterprise to establish market linkage and ensure better price realization for small and marginal women farmers. The project aims to transform the traditional way of food production by practices more akin to manufacturing processes, with greater coordination across farmers, processors, retailers and other stakeholders in the value chain. The main thrust of the project is to empower women in agriculture by shifting from traditional farming systems to agricultural value chains by adopting productivity enhancing technologies and federation of producer groups to improve smallholder production and participation in markets, and to create and sustain agriculture based livelihoods for rural women.

The project envisages farming by engaging 36500 Mahila Kisans in 706 villages in 120 blocks of 13 districts of Kerala. Collectivization of Mahila Kisans, capacity building, technical training, value addition and marketing interventions etc are main components of the Project. These are proposed to be carried out through master farmers, JEVA and MEC network that are created within the community based organization. The value chain network may be defined as a range of activities that are required to bring a product from its conception, through its designing, sourcing of raw materials and intermediate inputs, marketing and distribution, to the final consumer. It also creates space for improving farm industry linkages and has great export potential. Promotion of value chain initiatives helps to increase more employment opportunities, to make agriculture more profitable, to attract the younger generation to agriculture, to get fair price for farmers produce and to reduce poverty and inequality.

### TEMPORARY VALUE ADDITION UNITS IN BANANA

There is a huge scope for establishing temporary value

addition units along with the Onam market conducted at the CDS level. 600 such temporary value addition units in banana will be set up (4 nos / block) throughout the state supporting them with procurement and marketing activity. Training will be conducted at the community level utilizing the JEVA resource pool for creating awareness, mobilization and capacity building. 1200 JLGs would be identified and trained on value addition. Revolving fund of Rs.10,000 will be provided for these units for meeting the basic needs of establishment.

### PERMANENT VALUE ADDITION UNITS

85 value addition units in different crops and 10 Common Facility Centres (CFCs) will be established across the state as part of the value chain activity. The value addition units will be established by groups based on local availability of the produce and preference of the community. CFCs will be established at selected districts which cater to standardized packing, branding and marketing. JLG members can exploit this opportunity and more income generation is possible through sale of value added products.

### FUTURE PLANS

The timely and effective intervention with a vision makes every success a reality in farming operations. Committed to enhancement of livelihoods of the rural poor, every opportunity that can reflect this vision need be intervened for social and economic empowerment. Buoyant with the success of the previous Onam sales, a strategy for banana production for coming years will also be planned with a much broader strategy for value addition. More JLGs will be brought into the banana cultivation. CFCs can help in establishing a strong chain of end to end production sequence. Setting up of CFCs will be undertaken in a systematic way such that the bananas can be processed into diverse products by ensuring good package and quality standards for expanding the market value.