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***Maranta arundinacea*-encouraging results with non-chemical (organic) farming techniques in village of Bhopal district, M.P. India: An effort through awareness and capacity building**

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Despite much of the country practicing the traditional system of organic farming, the need of the hour is to vigorously disseminate the farmers the latest technological advancements for the non-food grain and high-value food commodities with support of Government. Encouraging results during our experimentation period from year 2010 helped to propagate and bring awareness among the farmers of Phanda block of Bhopal district for *Maranta arundinacea* (arrowroot) an untapped plant of medicinal value. Arrowroot powder is a healthier alternative and the only starch product with calcium ash which is important for the maintenance of proper acid and alkali balances in the human body. It is the purest form of carbohydrates which is highly digestible making it a suitable ingredient in making infant foods and medicinal tablets. The flour can be seen as possible substitute for wheat flour too. The demonstration land was fully fertilized with all non-chemical methods of practices. During the year 2013 the production depicted from an area of about 18017 sq ft gave 739 kg of the rhizome with an average height of the plant as 42 cm and during the year 2014, an area of about 18000 sq ft gave a productivity of about 1381 kg with an average height of 55 cm during the growing stages. Assuming that productivity in one acre a production of about 1787 kg and 3342 kg respectively can be attained for the years considered. The revenue at an average Rs. 250/- per kg depicts an income of Rs. 446,858/- per acre (for 1787 kg) as additional remuneration for the small and marginal farmers.

Biography

Padma Harshan has completed her PhD in Life Sciences in the year 1993 from Barkatullah University (formerly known as Bhopal University). She has quitted as Scientist from States Council of Science & Technology and later headed the Non Government Organization. She has more than 18 years of research experience in various research projects. She has a passion for project formulation on topics relevant to the underprivileged for awareness, dissemination and management with emphasis on hands on training at the grass root level for a sustainable livelihood. She has more than 18 research publications of national and international repute, life member/member of a number of institutions/chapters.

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