

# ***Economic Empowerment through Mushroom Production***

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## **Keywords**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This success story focuses on the inspirational journey of Mr. Chakan Boro, a farmer in Udalguri district of Assam who discovered fortune through mushroom cultivation after experiencing repeated setbacks in traditional mushroom farming. Beginning with little money, Mr. Boro created a profitable mushroom farm out of a small area in his house. Through tenacity, ingenuity and support from KVK Udalguri and other government institutes, he transformed his life and became well-known throughout Udalguri and its nearby districts. Today, Mr. Boro's perseverance and sustainable farming motivates aspiring farmers.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **The journey to success:**

**T**he beginning of the journey -Mr. Boro, a landless 51 years old farmer residing at Balisiha village, Udalguri learned that mushroom cultivation is more economical and feasible. Hence seeing market potential, he started Oyster mushroom cultivation during 2012 in small scale. The returns are considerably good and quick compared to other enterprises. Hence, he

started a Mushroom farm along with his wife, called 'Chakradhar Mushroom Industry' which is registered under DICCC, Udalguri in the year 2013.

a. **The turning points** - In 2014, he has attended a vocational training programme conducted by SBI RSETI in collaboration with KVK Udalguri. After attending the training programme he has come in to contact with the KVK for technical

guidance. KVK Udalguri conducted frontline demonstration programme on production technology of Oyster Mushroom in five different location of the district and he was one of the beneficiaries of the demonstration. The KVK also motivated him to participate in district level exhibitions. He has been trained for spawn production in KVK Barpeta with help from KVK Udalguri. Other than that, he has participated in the different training programmes on mushroom cultivation organized by ICAR- Directorate of Mushroom Research, Solan at ICAR-DMR, Solan (HP) and Directorate of Horticulture and food processing at Khanapara, Assam. He has also participated in the training programme on “Organic Farming” jointly organized by ICAR-National Organic Farming Research Institute, Sikkim and Directorate of Agriculture, BTC, Kokrajhar, Assam.

- b. **Activities and approaches** – At present he are producing Oyster (summer and winter), Shittake, Milky and Paddy straw mushroom in his production unit. He acts as a master trainer for mushroom growing farmers of the district. He is disseminating modern scientific mushroom production technology to different farmers of the district. He is also involved in selling of mushroom spawn by collecting from various sources. Because of which more than 350 farmers benefitted till date. He is invited by different organizations to act as a resource person in training programmes. Apart from that, he is also actively working in Biotech KISAN hub programme under Bodoland University, Kokrajhar (Farmers fellowship and demonstration). Under this programme he is producing fresh mushroom and value-added products. The left-over substrate of mushroom is used for vermicompost production. Mr. Boro is selling ready to fruit (RTF) mushroom beds with his

innovative ideas in addition to normal cultivation of oyster, milky and paddy straw mushrooms. His net income is Rs. 1,76,775.00 per annum with a B:C ratio of 2.81.

- c. Third person accounts of neighbors or others in the knowledge of the success: Mr. Boro helps other neighbouring mushroom growers in marketing by procuring their produced in bulk and sell to distant market. He also acts as a resource person and trained his fellow farmers in the scientific cultivation practices of mushroom in the training programme conducted by different organization. He supplies mushroom spawn to different farmers which helps in technology dissemination of the technology. His success of the effort has encouraged other farmers for taking up entrepreneurship activities on mushroom. Gradually their business grew and today they excel in the area.

#### Recognition:

- Recipient of farmer's fellowship from Biotech Kisan Hub, Bodoland University, Kokrajhar in 2022
- Progressive Farmers award in the District Kisan Mela organized by Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Udalguri

**Future Plan:** Mr. Boro is planning to produce mushroom spawn by his own.

#### Photograph:



**First demonstration programme by KVK Udalguri**



**Present situation**



**Resource person in training programme on mushroom production and value addition of mushroom**

## CONCLUSION:

Mushroom cultivation offers a promising path towards food security, environmental sustainability and economic empowerment. It gives a viable solution to use agricultural

waste while lowering pollution levels and improving nutrition. Mr. Boro is a perfect example of how perseverance and creativity can transform a tiny space into a profitable farming operation. Mr. Boro's journey from a struggling traditional crop farmer to a well-known mushroom farmer is one of adaptability, resourcefulness, and tenacity. Through tenacity, effective disease and pest management, and government support initiatives, he transformed a little idea into a prosperous endeavor that has benefited his community.

## REFERENCES

Author's own compilation