

# neem powder intervention in prawarda

*Study by students of Xavier Institute of Development Action and Studies, Jabalpur*

## **Objectives of the study:**

This project aims:

- To study the feasibility of Neem intervention in the project area.
- To study the scope of production and marketing of Neem powder in the project area of PRAWARDA.
- Analyse the option for machinery installation – investment, capacity and running cost.
- Profitability analysis.

There are about 74 villages in the project area. Since it is not possible to cover all these villages in the prescribed time, a sample of 7 villages has been chosen. Through the interview schedule method, it was decided to take interviews of at least 10 farmers in each village to gauge whether they are aware of Neem based organic product or not, and also in what quantity they use it in their agriculture field.

## **Neem Powder an Organic Manure**

### **Introduction of Neem Powder**

Application of Neem powder is gaining importance in agriculture, plantation crops and also in horticulture and green house cultivation. Neem powder has demonstrated considerable potential as a natural organic fertilizer for soil conditioning and has proved effective in controlling soil insects, nematodes and fungal disease. The major resistance for Neem powder usage by our farmers is non-availability of good Neem powder. Neem powder contains 95% min. – organic purity, 5% max. sand and silica, and 5-7% Neem Oil.

### **Benefits of Neem Powder**

- Neem powder contains all the natural properties of bitters and nutrients like – nitrogen, phosphorus, potash, and Sulphur that are essential for conditioning and healthy plant growth.
- Neem powder, which contains 85-90% organic matter, 5.2% nitrogen, 1.1% phosphorus and 1.5% potash, is used as fertilizer for crops. It helps in controlling soil insects, pests, termites, nematodes and fungal pathogens.
- It is blended with seaweed, which has proved to be excellent plant tonic for luxurious growth of plants.
- It supplements humus and increases the water holding capacity.

- When used as soil amendment it improves soil texture, pH, oxygen level, nutrients status and soil structure.  
When it is mixed with urea and other fertilizers, it acts as a good nitrification inhibitor due to its bitter limonoid constituents of Neem oil, which makes the soil more fertile by blocking soil bacteria from converting nitrogenous compound into useless nitrogen gas in the soil and thus nitrogen (urea) loss is minimised.
- It plays a vital role on reclaiming wasteland, saline, alkaline and acidic soils.

**Why Neem intervention in project area:**

- Raw materials are widely available in the project area
- Low cost technology is available in the local market
- PRAWARDA is undertaking a sustainable programme that involves creating awareness, and training.
- Farmers are moving towards organic cultivation
- It provides possibilities of generating additional sources of livelihoods in a backward area
- The manufacturing process of Neem powder is simple.

**FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION**

**Findings**

- From the present study it was found that organic product (Neem powder and neem cake) are not so popular among the farmers but they are moving towards Sustainable Agriculture. The awareness level of the farmers regarding the organic products is very low. Only the big and progressive farmers, who know the uses and benefits of the neem powder/cake are making use of it in their fields in a scientific manner according to the required dosages.
- From the study, it was found that the factors such as price, advertisement and results (more output) are the primary factors that affect the decision making process regarding the switching over to another product. So promotional scheme is an important factor. Farmers in the area believe in branded products.
- Farmers get information about the new fertilizers from their colleagues who already use the product in their field, and through pamphlets, and magazine (in the local language), Raitamitra Samparka Kendra and PRAWARDA. Promotional scheme is also a successful factor in introducing the new product.
- Procurement of raw materials is the main problem. Since the last 10 years no villager was collecting Neem fruits except in 1-2 villages because of some belief related to the local goddess. The poor women and old aged people and boys who go for grazing, agree to collect the fruits within the area but they want at least Rs. 20-30 a day for collecting this fruit, which is a source of additional income for them.

- Since the SARASWATI SHG is new and this business is a new concept in the area, so heavy investment at an initial level will be risky.
- As far as demand of Neem oil is concerned only a few fertilizer shops sell the oil because of low demand but the result is enthusiastic, if we see the sale of Raitamitra Samparka Kendra but that is also because the agriculture officers are providing only the branded Neem oil as pesticides at a high subsidy rate, on the other hand chemical pesticide is very popular among the farmers because farmers want to see quick results.

### **Recommendations**

- Procurement of raw materials should be done at local level to generate more employment opportunities.
- The SHG should purchase the dried Neem Fruit, so that it will be easy to store and control the loss in weight due to moisture.
- Consumers are unaware about the organic products. Hence the first and foremost thing is to make the target group aware about the organic product. Moreover the product should be advertised through all possible means so more and more people will come to know about it.
- At the initial level heavy investment should be avoided because the concept is new and demand for Neem based products like powder, cake and oil are less. Business can be started with 10 H.P pulveriser, which can create the market and then after that the Entrepreneur can plan about the expeller.
- PRAWARDA, should facilitate the SHG constantly in procurement of raw material, and distribution of the finished products apart from the local market.
- PRAWARDA should first cater to the captive market.
- Effective training is required to run the business because the SHG is new and they should be aware of the procurement, marketing and selling.
- As retail shop is the main place of purchase, so the distribution channel for neem powder, cake and oil should be.  
 Producer -> retailer -> consumer ->  
 The distributor should be eliminated at the initial stages because it will help in reducing the price for the consumers.