
Success Story of an Agriculture Graduate in Production of Millet and Fruit Cakes

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Published on: December 31, 2023

ABSTRACT

Salem Krishi Vigyan Kendra has been working through various programs to improve the economy of farmers and farm women in Salem District. Need based trainings are being conducted continuously related to processing and value addition of horticultural crops and minor millets to develop entrepreneurs among farmers, farm women, unemployed rural youths etc., Mrs. Sujatha, an agriculture graduate from Salem district, who attended this training, was motivated and inspired after gaining awareness about value addition techniques in horticultural crops and minor millets. With motivation and enthusiasm from KVK Scientists, she started a cake making business under the name of Tamizh Cakes. She was introduced to other farmers, farm women and entrepreneurs by KVK, Salem as a budding entrepreneur.

INTRODUCTION

Salem Krishi Vigyan Kendra has been working through various programs to improve the economy of farmers, women and unemployed graduates through dissemination of modern agricultural techniques through on farm trials, front line demonstrations and various trainings. It has been conducting continuous trainings on processing and value addition of horticultural crops

and minor millets for the benefit of farmers, women agriculturists, rural youths, students, Anganwadi workers and other extension officers and entrepreneurs.

AN AGRICULTURE GRADUATE DEVELOPING INTO AN ENTREPRENEUR

Mrs. Sujatha, an agriculture graduate from Salem district, who attended this training, was motivated and inspired after gaining awareness about value addition techniques in horticultural crops and minor millets. Sujatha, who was unable to pursue higher studies in agriculture, stayed at home during the Corona period and gained awareness about value addition by participating in various online training courses conducted by the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University and Salem Krishi Vigyan Kendra.



In the above training courses, she learned through agricultural scientists that the good food products provided with better nutrition and creativity will be very well received in the market and will become a profitable venture in the industry. She was encouraged to know details of various post-harvest technologies, value addition techniques, marketing techniques, business start-up grants, incentives and grants. She decided to start a business through an innovative technology in millets value addition.

Presently there are many problems in transporting our ancient minor millets to the consumers. To correct it, she succeeded in preparing different types of cakes innovatively with millets and fruit crops like banana through awareness got from advisories of KVK scientists.

Cake making, which entered our India through the British, has now become a very modernized industry and is very popular with the consumers nowadays especially during important events such as birthdays and important celebrations. However, additives like maida, sugar and the mixture of chemicals cause allergies to our body and harm our health. That's why Sujatha

believed that it would be a very good business to make the cakes in a healthy and hygienic manner without the addition of maida, sugar and chemicals. So by using minor millets, pulses like horse gram and horticultural crops like banana, she started to produce different varieties of cakes using jaggery.



ROUTE MAP TO TAMIZH CAKES

Sujatha tried to make various types of cakes in a healthy way with more taste by using millets like ragi, cumbu, thenai, pulses like green gram, horse gram and fruits like mango, banana and native sugar. Although many attempts failed in the beginning, her continued perseverance gradually brought her success. She made millet fruit cakes and set a good example for entrepreneurs in the training classes of KVK, Sandhiyur, Salem.

Her products were well received by the consumers and she shared her new range of cakes among her relatives and friends. Many suggested corrections and ideas. Accepting them, Sujatha succeeded in innovating her cake making business.

With motivation and enthusiasm, she started a cake making business under the name of **Tamizh Cakes**. She was introduced to other farmers, farm women and entrepreneurs by KVK, Salem as a budding entrepreneur.



Tamil Cakes were featured in the programs of Salem District Collector's Office, Exhibition organised by KVK, Salem in association with Periyar University on Minor Millet Foods and Annual Millet Festival organized by Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in Coimbatore. She succeeded in millet banana cake preparation through these different initiatives and her continuous hard work, she was introduced to many entrepreneurs.

Also many things were shared about not only production but also marketing in the industry. With that motivation, she made efforts in many ways to produce and market millet banana cakes. She made efforts to expand her business through modern technologies like Whats App, Instagram, Facebook, *etc.* Gradually many opportunities came up.

She ensured the quality of food products by using cleanliness, hygiene, healthy ingredients and natural colors to provide healthy food that does not compromise on taste. Also got food quality certificate as per the guidelines of KVK scientists. She specializes in taking cake orders for home, office functions, *etc.*,

Apart from that, she shares his business strategies with the farmers and women who participate in training at Salem KVK and encourages them to start such businesses. At present, she is participating as an instructor in the Panamaratpatti district office's self-help group's and is giving training to many women to become entrepreneurs.



To expand her business in the future, she is taking initiatives to collaborate with food selling platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, Zomato, Swiggy. There is no doubt that her efforts will win surely in the near future.

“Minor millets are our past, Let's innovate them, Let's achieve so many benefits”

CONCLUSION

KVK, Salem succeeded in developing an entrepreneur in millet and fruit cake making business through trainings and demonstrations apart from farm advisories. Tamizh Cakes of Mrs. Sujatha is such a model and lead entrepreneur in Salem District.