

Sakshi Excellence Awards 2018

CATEGORY: EXCELLENCE IN FARMING

Name of the Winner: MR. CHERUKURI RAMA RAO

Place: Koyachelaka Village, Khammam District

PROFILE:

Forty year-old Cherukuri Rama Rao is a model farmer from Telangana who adopts innovative, diversified and integrated farming methods. Through a self-sustaining model, he links production directly with the retail/terminal markets. This innovative approach ensures high returns, avoids intermediaries and enables communication with the consumer. The farmer and the retailer get connected eliminating middlemen, who are the bane of the Indian agricultural system.

Rama Rao's remarkable achievement lies in eco-friendly agricultural produce. He is committed to avoiding harmful chemical pesticide and fertilizers. His eco-friendly farming techniques contribute richly to the conservation of local species in soil, water and air. In short, soil management, water management and biomass energy management are integrated into Rama Rao's model of production.

The diversified crops on his land include, 11 kinds of vegetables, 2 cereals, 4 native fruit varieties and sugarcane, all of which are produced using traditional seeds, or heirloom seeds. In fact, farmers credit him with reviving a juicy variety of sugarcane, which is highly profitable to farmers.

With a low investment, Rama Rao generates good profits, resulting in the expansion of his farm from 6 acres to 25 acres, within a short span of 6 years. His entire family works on the farm and he has established a social service organization to spread awareness and knowledge on natural methods of food production. Rama Rao has set food processing units to produce sugar cane juice and also trains and motivates farmers to follow suit for better returns. He has been actively pursuing integrated farming, by rearing fish, goats, poultry chicken, sheep, buffaloes, cows and honeybees.

Cherukuri Rama Rao's innovative farming model has had a huge impact on farming in the district and many farmers have been emulating his farming methods.