

## **Profits apart, SPNF came as life saving option for her**

Satya Devi

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"For me, Subhash Palekar Natural Farming (SPNF) has turned out to be a life-saviour, besides being a profitable option," said Satya Devi, 44, an apple grower from Lafughati village in Theog block in Shimla district.

Unlettered Satya Devi has an apple orchard on 2 bighas. She has been managing it all alone with chemical farming all through for livelihood. Just a few years ago, she had a major health problem with the chemicals she was spraying in the apple orchards and the doctor advised her to stop using the chemicals.

"I do much of the work in the orchard myself as labour availability is limited. However, when I had health issues because of chemical sprays, it depressed me as the apple orchard was the only source of income for me and my daughter. It also made me think about the effect of such apples on those who eat. But there was no option," she narrated. However, when Satya Devi, the Mahila Mandal Pradhan in her village, came across information about Palekar natural farming concept in Himachal Pradesh in 2018 through Agriculture department, she had a reason to get inquisitive.

"I took part in the two-day camp on SPNF in my Panchayat and decided to take to natural farming. It gave me a way out to manage the orchard safely," she said.

She said after this she started using natural farming inputs like Jeevaamrit, Ghan Jeevaamrit, Dashparni Ark, made from 'desi' cow's urine and dung on certain plants in her orchard. Satisfied with the results, Satya Devi shifted to SPNF on the entire land in 2019 and started growing apples, peas, potatoes, rajmash and french beans with non-chemical natural farming. She said this brought down the input cost in her orchard from Rs 20,000 (which she mainly incurred on chemical fertilisers and pesticides) to around Rs 2000. Satya Devi said the production of apples in her orchard has increased

from 50 to 180 boxes (20 kilograms in one box) and the SPNF saved her apples from damage by hail and pests also.

"The natural farming technique has increased my income," she said, keenly reiterating that she is so satisfied now that she is giving chemical free healthy fruit to the consumers."

"I have a Pahari cow. I make the natural farming inputs from cow urine and dung myself. I will soon start making these inputs for other farmers also," she added.

Satya Devi's apple orchard is a centre of attraction for people, including political leaders and officers, in the area. Even the Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM), Theog visited her orchard to see how she was doing SPNF.

### **Quote:**

**I feel special when people talk about my apple orchard as a model of Subhash Palekar natural farming. I want to create awareness on SPNF concept and tell people how healthy it is to cultivate and consume the natural produce**

### **Details**

Village Lafughati, Panchayat Sandu, Block Theog, District Shimla

Total land- 2 bigha

Land under natural farming-2 bigha

Altitude of the orchard-2300 metre

Fruits and crops- Apple varieties (Golden, Red Golden, Royal), Peas, Potatoes, Coriander, Rajmash and French Bean

Chemical farming-Expenditure: Rs 20,000 Income: Rs 1,00,000

Natural farming-Expenditure: Rs 2,000 Income: Rs 1,15,000