

Abhinav Farmers' Club

Introduction:

A group of 12 progressive farmers formed the Abhinav Farmers' Club in Pune district of Maharashtra under the guidance of National Bank for Rural Development (NABARD), in the year 2004. These farmers were involved in cultivation of roses and carnations under protected conditions of a poly house. The Farmers' Club enabled the individual farmers to aggregate the produce and market it effectively in Mumbai and Delhi. The functions of production, logistics, marketing, branding were divided among the different members of the group. Gradually more farmers started becoming members of the club and the membership grew to more than 300. However, all the member farmers practiced floriculture, which resulted in excess supply and eventually led to reduced margins for the member farmers.

Intervention:

Abhinav Farmers' Club developed an innovative 1-acre hi-tech integrated organic farming concept, in which the farmers would grow different types of fruits, leafy vegetables, exotic vegetables and pulses. Abhinav Farmers' Club has also tied up with women Self Help Groups, who help in grading, packaging and delivery of the produce at the doorstep of the consumers. This is an integrated model, which focuses on growing a diverse set of products (in smaller quantities) needed every-day by the consumers and supplying them directly to the end-consumers. The USP of this model is that the high quality organic produce is directly marketed to the retail consumers, thereby eliminating all the intermediaries. This ensures higher margins to the member farmers.

Impact:

The current membership of Abhinav Farmers' Club is not just limited to Pune, but has spread to six states of the country, viz. Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka. The total membership is close to 1.5 lakh farmers, who produce organic fruits, vegetables, pulses on a 1-acre plot each and directly supply to end consumers. The coordination amongst these member farmers is facilitated through farmer leaders from each group (257 farmer leaders across the country), which are connected through a WhatsApp group and meet once in three months. Abhinav Farmers' Club provides the technical expertise regarding production and marketing of the produce to the new member farmers through the farmers' leaders. Thus, it has been able to reach a membership of around 1.5 lakh farmers.

Source: <https://www.abhinavfarmerclub.org/>, last accessed on 28th July 2020