

# From Sufferings to Success

AGEEWA helped me to gain Jeeva (Life)



<b>Name of the farmer</b>	Rage Suseelamma
<b>Husband's Name</b>	Rage Venkatesulu
<b>Village</b>	Kamarupalli
<b>Mandal</b>	Anantapur rural
<b>District</b>	Anantapur
<b>State</b>	Andhra Pradesh

Rage Suseelamma hails from Kamarupalli village of Anantapur Rural mandal. The life of Rage Suseelamma is the one like many farming family housewives in this area – who suffer due to recurring losses in agriculture year after year due to severe drought-proneness.

“My husband was always worried about the loss of crops” says Suseelamma expressing her anguish about the situations in which the family was living since her marriage with Rage Venkatesulu. They have 2½ acres of dry land on which depends the entire family comprising of her husband, 2 daughters, and her in-laws. Increased input costs, decreased outcome from the land, and fluctuating market prices have pushed their life into miseries.

“I very well remember the loss of Rs.50,000/- that we incurred during one season” recalls Suseelamma, when the entire groundnut crop has failed. Her husband, in a bitter depression has decided to set aside farming, and he was in a pathetic mood unable to bear the pressures from the money lenders. “At this juncture that I have come across REDS staff whom I met

during a meeting” she remembers the day of her interaction with the REDS team. “They explained me about the concept of Natural Farming – where the investments are low with assured returns through selective cropping / farming.” She became a member of the women farmers’ group in the village.

As per their suggestions Suseelamma started cultivating greens and vegetables in 0.5 acres of land, initially. The results were encouraging as she tasted some gains from this. This has raised hopes in her that she can still invest her energies and hopes in agriculture, as long as it is technically planned. REDS has involved her in several agricultural trainings including trainings in Natural Farming. Through the trainings she underwent as a part of AGEewa programme, she could grasp the techniques which will reduce the input costs on chemical fertilizers and pesticides. She started preparing organic manures like different types of Jeewamruthams, kashayalu, and pest repellents using the locally available materials.

As the time passed, she has, judiciously, extended the extent of cultivation into one acre, so that she can manage in all aspects – the availability of water, and other resources.

In the meantime, being a woman with knowledge in farming and exposed to the pros and cons in this sector, she has been selected as the President of Anantha Grameena Mahila Raithula FPO which was formed by REDS as a part of its AGEewa programme.

“In the beginning I was afraid of this position” says Suseelamma, “because I am not a highly learned woman. But with the support I received from REDS and their team, I gained confidence in dealing with the things.” She started taking the lead role in educating and training fellow farmers in the Natural Farming aspects and promoting cost effective farming in this village.

“What is most surprising me is the 5-layer model” responds Suseelamma in response to the question about the biggest change in her life. APMAS has supported her with an amount of Rs.5,000/- to develop her land into a 5-layer model plot. With this amount she has taken up the cultivation of 24 types of greens and vegetable in her 2.5 acres of land. Each of the crops she cultivated in this method was a profitable one as she adopted Natural Farming Techniques for the entire plot. She implemented all the techniques she has learned during the trainings.

“Thanks to REDS and APMAS for their support in my life. It was a time when my family has resigned from agriculture, I myself was uncertain if I could really succeed in my attempt to prove profits in agriculture. But the support came to me through REDS in the form of AGEewa programme and APMAS. From the position of an unidentified housewife, I have been raised to a position of a leader. Thanks to one and all for giving me the timely support in my fight to support my family – to prove that agriculture is no more a profession of losses, and also for elevating me to the position of a Leader of the FPO. The credit of my success, goes, equally, to REDS, AGEewa and APMAS.”

- R. Suseelamma





With the starting of the FPO office at Kurugunta and an NPM Outlet centre, she is also taking care of the sales of the organic preparations prepared by the FPO for sale to the farmers. In addition, the FPO is procuring millets, pulses and other locally cultivated minor produce, and marketing them after value addition. The profits from this business are being shared by the FPO members – giving them an additional income. In addition to the above, the produce from her model plot is also sold in the market after setting aside for the domestic usage of her family and other members of the FPO.

She feels very happy to be a successful woman and for proving herself in the village as well as bring back life to their 2.5 acres of land. She feels that the credit of her success goes, equally, to REDS, AGEEWA and APMAS.

