

SUPER NAPIER: ENSURING YEAR-ROUND AVAILABILITY OF GREEN FODDER FOR PROFITABLE DAIRY FARMING IN NORTH GOA

TRANSFORMING LIVELIHOODS: THE SUCCESS STORY OF A DAIRY FARMER

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PROBLEMS/CONSTRAINTS

The scarcity of green fodder poses a significant challenge for livestock farmers in Goa, particularly during the post-monsoon season when local grass resources are insufficient to satisfy overall fodder requirements. Farmers typically cultivate native grasses, namely Karad grass and Boro grass, during the monsoon season, yielding 19.6 tons and 68.8 tons per hectare, respectively. These limitations adversely impacted Mr. Mario Coasta of Karmali village, who possesses five cows. Due to inadequate fodder availability, he frequently faced challenges in supplying daily greens, leading to increased reliance on commercial feed and reduced animal health and productivity.

INTERVENTIONS

Mr Mario visited ICAR-KVK, CCARI, North Goa, to address the severe fodder scarcity. While there, he spoke with experts and toured the demonstration plot at the KVK. Super Napier's impressive growth performance motivated him to implement the technology. He acquired planting material and cultivated Super Napier on his own land, while receiving prompt technical support and agricultural advisory services regarding land preparation, planting techniques, nutrient and irrigation management, harvesting, and post-harvest handling of surplus fodder through silage production and sale to interested farmers. He recognised that Super Napier has the capacity to supply nutritious green fodder year-round, including during the post-monsoon season, making it a dependable choice for dairy farming systems with appropriate management and minimal resource expenditure.

IMPACT

Mr Mario dairy farmer obtained higher plant growth with 17.8 tillers per plant by cultivating Super Napier, resulting in a significant green fodder production. He generated 43.3 tons of green fodder from a 1,000 m² area, which was enough to cover the yearly needs of five cattle (36.5 tonnes). The yield was 21.1 times greater than Karad grass and 5.3 times greater than Boro grass yield. After meeting his fodder requirements, he generated a surplus of 6.8 tonnes of green fodder, which he sold at ₹3 per kg, yielding an additional income of ₹20,400. The continuous availability of high-quality fodder led to improved milk yield, enhanced animal health, and increased overall farm profitability. His success in green fodder production has influenced neighbouring farmers and encouraged other dairy farmers to pursue Super Napier production to meet their fodder demand.



Farmers Fodder Field