

The Bitter Gourd Farm of Onkar Patel

Onkar Patel of village Mahagaon in Sinapali block has been considered as a very successful vegetable farmer in this locality. Onkar has only about three acres of cultivable land in which he grows paddy and pulses in about two and half acres of land. In about half acre of land he has his house and the vegetable garden. He has a dug well which provides irrigation even during the summer months. Onkar grows a varieties of crops in this half acre, including cow pea, beans, maize, ladies finger etc. but he tells that the bitter gourd he grows during summer months gives him the best income. Just from about one fourth of an acre during the summer season he



earns about Rs. 50,000/-! While asking about the reason for such good income he says that he keeps his own seed which are high yielding and resistant to pest and diseases. Secondly, he uses only good quality compost and takes proper care of all the plants. Thirdly, he plans the timing of plantation in such a way that he will have the harvest while there will be acute shortage of bitter gourd and also the demand will be quite high. Onkar Patel is supported by his wife for managing the entire vegetable garden.

Inspired by Onkar several other farmers in the village Mahagaon and adjoining villages also now taken up vegetable cultivation and Onkar happily gives them necessary advice as and when needed. Onkar has been associated with SVA for the past several years as a Community Resource Person.

(Report: Paramananda Pradhan)