

## **The enterprising farmer : Debraj Rana**

Debraj Rana of village Bhengarajpur in Paikmal block is a small farmer who inherited two acres of land from his father-in-law. Apart from cultivation, Debraj Rana also works as a potter and also he and his wife collect NTFP from the nearby forest to supplement their family income. During the year 2009 Debraj decided to grow cotton in two acres of uplands which he took on lease. Because of proper care he got a very good yield of cotton but Debraj knew that it is risky to continue with cotton cultivation for which from the income of the cotton he purchased two milching cows to take up dairy activities. Earlier, he had only two local cows but was not getting enough milk. Debraj knows that dairy activities have a very good future and it can give him regular assured income. From 2011, Debraj on an average is getting 20 liters of milk per day and the nearby Paikmal town has a very good market for it. At present his average monthly net income from Dairy is around 10,000 rupees. But he hopes to add few more cows and increase the milk yield to about 50 liters a day very soon.

Debraj and his wife are making good quality compost using the cow dung and in their crop field they do not use any chemical fertilizer. With the increased income from dairy they have purchased three acres of land and hence now they have total five acres of land. Their son is now studying in Intermediate Science and he also helps Debraj to transport the milk to Paikmal in the morning. Inspired by the dairy activities of Debraj three other families in Bhengarajpur have also taken up dairy activities since 2012. Debraj is motivating other farmers and he thinks that if they will form a dairy cooperative in the village it will help everyone to upscale the dairy activities. Last year, Debraj has already built a beautiful pucca house and he is quite happy with his present income from agriculture and dairy. Debraj is a hard working person. He is also proud to be a traditional potter and during the summer months he never neglects to make tiles in his workshop. By selling tiles every summer he gets an income of 15,000 to 20,000 rupees. Debraj and his wife-both are very active in the farmers club in their village and his wife is also an active member in the SHG.

*(Report: Tahasil Rana and Hrushikesh Pradhan)*