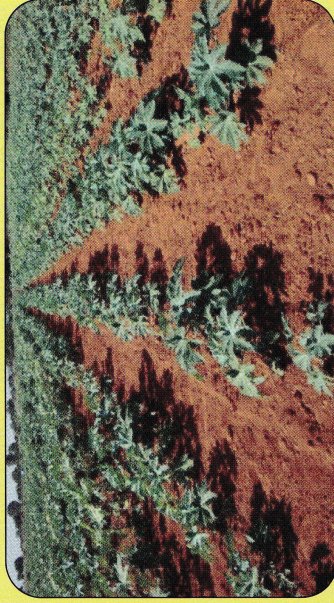


Castor Cultivation : A Boon to Chenchu Farmers

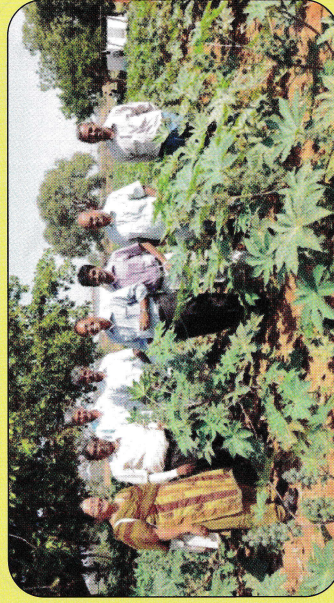
(A *Chenchu* Farmer's Success Story)

farmer, to understand the ground realities and changed his attitude accordingly.

He also learned the skills of castor hybrid seed production and had a tie up with DOR



DCH-519 castor hybrid seed production plot of Sri D. Nagaiah. Later, he produced castor hybrid of DCH-519 under the supervision of DOR scientists in which he got hybrid (F₁) seed of 12 q and male seed of 6 q from his 3 acres. He earned about ₹ 1.5 lakhs as net returns and in two years he earned around two lakhs.



Field Visit by the scientists of DOR & PDP

Sri Dasari Nagaiah, has since paid most of his debts and has become economically better. After witnessing the production and profits, now not only *Chenchu* farmers but non-*Chenchu* farmers are also growing castor in the village.

In his words, it is mainly management with care, one can get higher returns from castor about ₹ 5000-8000/acre, as compared to groundnut crop under irrigation during *rabi* season. Further he said promotion of castor has intercrop in groundnut during *rabi* is more beneficial than groundnut alone in his village, because after the harvest of groundnut, allowing castor for two more months would give good castor seed yield. Generally, after groundnut harvest, land would be left as fallow.



Sri.D. Nagaiah addressing the gathering near his field

Sri Dasari Nagaiah is moving ahead with adoption of improved technology obtained from DOR and his efforts are being appreciated not only by the fellow *Chenchu* farmers but also non-*Chenchu* farmers. He has become a role model for other castor growers.



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Castor : A Versatile Non-Edible Oilseed Crop

Nallamalas also called as Nallamala Ranges are a section of the Eastern Ghats which stretch primarily over Mahabubnagar, Kurnool, Guntur, Prakasham and Nalgonda districts of Andhra Pradesh. There are more than 330 villages including *Pentas*, *Gudems*, *Thandas* etc. The Nallamalas have a warm to hot climate throughout the year.



Nallamala Range covering in Mahabubnagar district

The rainfall of these Ranges varies from 750 to 900 mm per year and most of it received during South-West monsoon (June –September). In Mahabubnagar district, the Nallamala ranges spread across ten mandals, among them Amrabad mandal is one, which is located in the middle of forest above Mean Sea Level of 2050 feet.



Sign board indicating adopted villages under TSP-2011-12

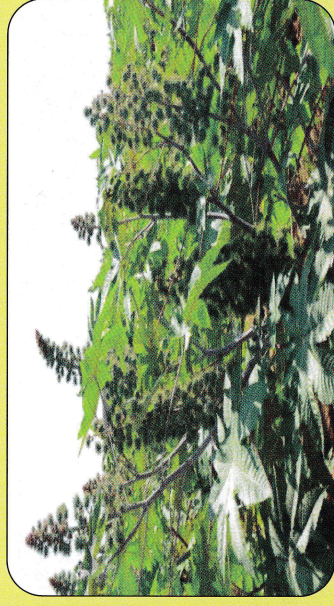
The mandal has 18 Grama Panchayats, while Jangamreddypalle is a tiny gram panchayat close to forest hillocks, wherein 55% of residing families are *Chenchus* and are basically depend on the forest products like roots, leaves, tubers, wild fruits, gum, honey, seeds of nuxvomica, chiranji, rita, etc., for their livelihood. In recent past, government provided land to most of the *Chenchu* families, now majority of them are practicing agriculture too. Among the *Chenchu* farmers, Shri Dasari Nagaiah is one, who functioned as grama surpanch for more than seven years, yet he never ignored agriculture.



Training on castor production to Chenchu farmers at their door step Even at the age of sixty, Sri Dasari Nagaiah, collects forest products like honey, gum, tubers

for livelihood. He has five sons and two daughters and all of them got married and living independently. They help each other in agriculture. *Chenchus* mainly cultivate jowar, bajra, redgram, groundnut and paddy crops. Directorate of Oilseeds Research (DOR) – Rajendranagar, Hyderabad, which has got an opportunity to work with the Tribals of Nallamala Ranges, because of the financial support received from ICAR under Tribal Sub-Plan during 2011-12 & 2012-13, with that resource, DOR has organized training programmes on castor production technology and demonstrated the improved practices of castor on the fields of *Chenchus*.

Initially *Chenchu* farmers were reluctant to grow castor, because they experienced the crop loss in earlier years due to botrytis. But, Mr. Nagaiah volunteered willingly and has grown castor in his own field during 2011-12, 2012-13 and harvested good seed yields.



Excellent crop of castor in Sri. Nagaiah field

Despite resource constraints, especially on ground water, electricity, discouragement from other farmers, he never got discouraged or left the castor cultivation, but, by sheer determination he strived and laboured as a