

Value addition of NTFPs in Sericulture : A Means to Economic Empowerment of Women

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Abstract:

Sericulture is an agro-based, labour intensive, foreign exchange earning commercial activity. It has been considered as an excellent medium for generating employment for women and for poverty alleviation. Adoption of new technology in sericulture is must because, it can make the enterprise more remunerative and lucrative also. Though, the production has gone up faster over the last several years as a result of improved management triggered by the release of high yielding varieties both at mulberry and sericulture sector. Still farmers are facing a lot of problems in getting good quality silk.

Some non-wood forest products are reported to have the insect growth regulatory effect (hormonal) on growth, development and uniform maturation in silkworm without any adverse effect on economic traits. This gave an idea of utilizing NTFPs to control physiological processes of *Bombyx mori* L., a silk secreting insect of high economic value for production of high quality silk.

By keeping the above problems and facts in the mind, an economic product named as '*Samriddhi*' was developed for the sericulture farming. Its application reduced the cost of silk production in terms of mulberry leaves, manpower days, infrastructure and time besides giving a good quality and quantity of silk. Various Training programmes for sericulture farmers were also organized in different villages of Uttarakhand, India and especially women's were trained with advance technological practices for high production of silk and its processing.