



Chinnar 20 – an improved paddy variety

Smt Ariyammal and Smt Pushpam

Ramnad, Tamil Nadu

Scout: SEVA

Ariyammal, her husband (late Chinnar) and Pushpam developed Chinnar 20 variety using selection method from ADT-46 paddy variety. This variety is a short duration variety well suited for rain-fed and wetland cultivation. The variety is drought tolerant and high yielding.

Chinnar (55 years, demise in 2009) was a marginal dalit farmer owning about an acre of wet land. His land is now taken care by his widow, Ariyammal and their son. Pushpam is also an illiterate dalit farmer owning five acres of wetland. She has been cultivating *chinnar* paddy variety for the last 5 years. Their place is inhabited by about 100 dalit families who are mainly agricultural laborers and marginal farmers. The farming is entirely dependent on rain and tank water. As agriculture is on the vagaries of monsoon many families especially men migrate to nearby Kerala to work as plantation laborers during off season.

During 2004, Chinnar and Pushpam had cultivated ADT (Aduthurai) - 46 variety developed by Tamil Nadu Agriculture Department. Pushpam had sown the seeds in her field as direct sowing crop. At the time of weeding Pushpam found a paddy plant different in color and marked that plant. Chinnar, who had his farm next to hers, collected the seeds from that plant separately and raised it in the corner of his field. This plant was completely purple in color with good tillering with the grains being elongated and fine. With the help of Ariyammal, in the subsequent year he cultivated his entire land and obtained relatively more yield of paddy as compared with the other local varieties viz. ADT-45, 43 etc. Adopting selection method for production of seeds, they checked the stability of characters for five years.

The Chinnar paddy variety

This variety is a short duration variety well suited for rain-fed and wetland cultivation. It is also drought tolerant and high yielding. The plants have purple pigmented leaves and culm hence weed removal is easy. The grains are fine and long with good cooking quality.

The variety is suitable for direct sowing as well as for transplanting. The yield of the variety is about 2700-3000 kg/ acre. The color of the plant is very attractive to the farmers. Seeing the yield of the variety, elongated and fine grain and less incidence of pest and disease attacks has attracted many farmers to cultivate this new variety. The fertilizer requirement is also lesser as compared to other locally grown varieties. The farmers get Rs 100 extra payment per bag of paddy seeds from local traders due to its quality. This improved variety is now being cultivated by about 150 farmers in more than 300 acres of land in the villages in Ramanathapuram district and even in neighboring Sivaganga & Pudukottai districts. The seeds of the

variety are now being preserved by Ariyammal and Pushpam.

