



Integral Institute of Agricultural Science & Technology (IIAST) Integral University, Lucknow

Training Program on “Jaivik Kheti me Vermicompost ka yogdaan: Samuhik Anubhav evam gyan” On occasion of International Women’s Day

Department of Agriculture, Integral Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology (IIAST) celebrated International Women’s Day on 07/03/2024. On this occasion a training program was organized for female farmer’s and students on Jaivik Kheti me Vermicompost ka yogdaan: Samuhik Anubhav evam gyan. Vermicompost, often referred to as "black gold" in the world of organic agriculture, is a nutrient-rich and humus-like organic fertilizer produced through the natural collaboration between earthworms and organic waste. Earthworms, particularly species like *Eisenia fetida* (red wigglers), play a vital role in breaking down organic materials into a high-quality compost known as vermicompost. The theme of the training program resonated with the theme of International Women’s Day i.e. “Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress”.

The vermicompost training program commenced with a concise introduction by Dr. Pallavi Srivastava. Dr. Shipra elucidated the intricate process of vermicomposting. She provided a comprehensive explication of the key constituents of vermicompost. The vermicomposting process involves the strategic introduction of specifically selected earthworm species, such as red wigglers (*Eisenia fetida*), into a meticulously engineered environment. In demonstrated environment, the earthworms consume organic matter, including kitchen scraps, garden waste, and other biodegradable materials. Through their digestive processes, the earthworms excrete nutrient-rich castings, which form the foundation of vermicompost. This dark, granular, and odorless substance is replete with essential plant nutrients, beneficial microorganisms, and enzymes. Vermicompost enhances soil structure, augments water retention capacity, and fosters optimal conditions for plant growth and development. Widely acclaimed for its sustainable and eco-friendly nature, vermicompost is a valuable resource for organic farmers, horticulturists, and environmentally conscious individuals seeking to enrich the soil and promote the cultivation of healthy, thriving plants.

The significance of the vermicompost training program was described by Prof. Saba Siddiqui, Head, Department of Agriculture, IIAST. In her words, Vermicompost occupies a pivotal role in sustainable agriculture, environmental conservation, and community development initiatives. It imparts invaluable skills to individuals and communities, enabling them to harness the benefits of fostering healthier soils, augmenting agricultural productivity, and cultivating a more sustainable and resilient agricultural future. The program empowers female farmers by equipping them with knowledge and competencies that facilitate informed decision-making regarding sustainable agricultural practices. This empowerment contributes to the resilience and self-sufficiency of farming communities specifically women farmers. The vermicompost training program extended its reach beyond theoretical knowledge by providing the female farmers from nearby villages with vermicompost bags. It aimed to promote and encourage the cultivation of



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their own vermicompost for utilization in kitchen gardening and small-scale agricultural activities. The trainers and faculties assured the participants of further assistance in the form of information dissemination and the provision of supporting materials. This comprehensive approach ensured that the training program not only imparted knowledge but also facilitated the practical implementation of vermicomposting techniques.

The fundamental objective of the vermicompost training program was to educate women farmers about an effective method for recycling organic waste, including kitchen scraps and agricultural residues. It imparted knowledge on efficiently converting these waste materials into valuable compost, thereby mitigating the environmental impact of organic waste disposal. Farmers were educated on the potential to commercialize vermicompost or related products, creating an additional revenue stream for themselves and their communities. Furthermore, this training program aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5), "Gender Equality." It provided a valuable learning experience, aiding female farmers and students in comprehending the vermicomposting process.

The program garnered an impressive attendance of approximately 70 female farmers, students, and staff members. Its seamless coordination and execution were facilitated by Dr. Faria Fatima, Dr. Deepti Srivastava, Dr. P. Smriti Rao, Dr. Srishti Thakur, Dr. Setu Ratnam, Dr. Shipra Yadav, Dr. Ruquaiya Bano, Dr. Pallavi Srivastava, Dr. Kalpana Bisht, Dr. Sunil Kumar, and Dr. Nitish K. Pandey, and the supporting staff, Mr. Suraj Awasthi and Mr. Faisal Kirmani. The program culminated with a vote of thanks extended by Dr. Pallavi Srivastava, Department of Agriculture.

Glimpses of the training program





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