

Horticulture – “The right alternative to gambling with groundnut ”

- A case study of Groundnut farmer turned horticulturist.

Accion Fraternal has been promoting horticulture (fruit trees) as a partial alternative to the groundnut crop in Anantapur district as it creates safety net to the farmers and enhances farmer’s capacity to withstand the routine crop failures. From an ecological point of view it creates sustainable greenery and biomass in cultivated areas which are otherwise denuded and parched. Horticulture diversifies the agricultural production from the mono crop of groundnut to perennial tree crop. When horticulture promoted on a sizable scale across the district, it has potential to change the economic and ecological face of Anantapur district.



The case of Mr. Rama Mohan Reddy of Yerraborepalli village proves the point and he is one among the thousands of farmers who have been successfully doing crop diversification with alternate fruit trees.

Mr. Rammohan Reddy is a poor farmer from Yerraborepalli project village. He has only 4 acres of dry land and had been cultivating groundnut for ages, until AF started its watershed programme in his village in 2002. The high initial investments on groundnut crop and the continuously recurring droughts had left him high and dry. His indebtedness started growing year after year. In 2002, with AF’s support, he planted 256 mango trees in all his 4 acres of land. Mango grafts were planted in the month of September 2002. Mr. Rammohan Reddy and his family took utmost care in maintaining spacing, planting, staking, watering, weeding and protection. In the absence of any crop returns, he had to struggle hard for 3 years. AF provided him with monthly incentives for pot-watering the mango plantation. However in the third year he managed to install a drip irrigation system for his plantation with AF and Government support.

“ AF helped us and we worked very hard all these years. Now some annual income is ensured” said Mr. Rammohan Reddy to AF Staff”.

**Mr. Rammohan Reddy, Farmer,
Yerraborepalli**

This year the plantation has started yielding and he got an average yield of 20 Kgs., per tree from his 256 mango trees. He has earned Rs. 52,000/- during the first year itself and the yields are expected to multiply many more times in next few years. He has also cleared most of his debts and his family is very happy now.