

## Success Story

### Natural Farming Transformation: A Role Model for Diversified and Sustainable Agriculture

Sh. Balwan Singh, a 66-year-old farmer from Village Bolian, Doda district of Jammu & Kashmir, has emerged as an inspiring example of how small-scale farmers can transition from chemical-based agriculture to a sustainable, profitable, and eco-friendly farming system. Belonging to a traditional farming family, Mr. Singh inherited 1.5 hectares of land and had been practicing conventional mixed cropping, cultivating maize, rajmash, paddy, and seasonal vegetables while also rearing three cattle. Despite his hard work, his annual income before intervention remained around 1.5 lakh, with declining soil fertility and rising input costs.



His journey toward transformation began after coming in contact with **Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Doda**, where scientists introduced him to the concept of diversified organic and natural farming. Motivated by their guidance and supported by targeted training and demonstrations, Mr. Singh shifted from traditional fertilizer-based farming to an integrated natural farming system, setting an example for farmers in his region.

### Identification of Entrepreneurial Potential

KVK scientists identified Mr. Singh as a progressive farmer with a strong willingness to learn and experiment with innovative farming methods. His traditional farming knowledge, combined with openness to adopt scientific approaches, made him an ideal candidate for promoting natural farming in Doda. KVK recognized his potential not only as a practitioner but also as a local resource farmer capable of inspiring others in his community.

### Systematic Capacity Building

Mr. Singh underwent intensive hands-on training through KVK Doda in natural farming practices, including: Preparation and use of bio-inputs: Beejamrit, Jeevamrit, Ghanjeevamrit, and botanical extracts like Dashparni Ark and Derak Astra for soil and crop health. Vermicompost production: Establishing vermicompost units to recycle farm waste and produce nutrient-rich organic manure. Soil health management: Adoption of mulching, crop residue recycling, and cow-based formulations for improved soil organic carbon. Diversification strategies: Training in integrating cereals, vegetables, spices, fruits, pulses, and aromatic crops to ensure year-round income. With KVK's support, Mr. Singh gradually converted his entire farm to a chemical-free production system by 2022. He was also introduced to community-level exposure visits to the university, strengthening his technical skills and vision.



## Diversified Natural Farming Model

Component	Crops/Coverage (ha)	Key Highlights
Vegetables & Spices	0.1 ha	Knol-Khol, Tomato, Chili, Radish, Garlic, Onion
Fruits	0.75 ha	Apple, Walnut, Pear, Apricot
Cereals & Pulses	0.25 ha	Paddy, Maize, Rajmash
Aromatics	0.2 ha	Lavender cultivation
Millets	0.25 ha	Recently introduced for diversification
Allied Enterprises	-	Mushroom cultivation, fish farming, apiculture

### Overcoming Challenges

Transitioning to natural farming was not without hurdles. Mr. Singh initially faced challenges like limited technical know-how, increased labour requirements, and skepticism from other farmers. However, with continuous mentorship from KVK Doda, he systematically implemented vermicompost units, bio-formulation preparation facilities, and diversified enterprises. This reduced costs, improved soil fertility, and helped him secure premium returns in the local market.

### Financial Performance

Component	Returns (/Year)
Fruits	5,00,000
Cereals & Pulses	1,50,000
Vegetables	1,00,000
Lavender Nursery	1,50,000
Fishery	60,000
Apiculture	50,000
Mushroom Farming	30,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,40,000</b>



### Impact and Influence

Today, Mr. Balwan Singh is recognized as a role model farmer in his region. He has received appreciation and awards from district and state-level authorities for his contribution to sustainable farming. Farmers from neighbouring villages regularly visit his farm to learn natural farming practices. His success story proves that: Natural farming ensures ecological balance by restoring soil health and biodiversity. Diversification enhances income stability through multiple revenue streams. Farmer-to-farmer extension accelerates adoption, with Mr. Singh emerging as a local trainer and resource person.

### Key Lessons for Farmers

Balwan Singh's journey emphasizes that with proper training, local resources, and scientific guidance, even small and marginal farmers can achieve sustainability and profitability. His adoption of natural farming is not only transforming his own livelihood but also inspiring a shift toward chemical-free agriculture in Jammu & Kashmir's hill regions.