

FEBRUARY 2024

# Newsletter

ISSUE NO. 38



## Solidaridad

**GOOD FARMING - GOOD FOOD - GOOD HEALTH**



Netherlands Enterprise Agency



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## From the Desk of Programme Coordinator



**Dr. Suresh Motwani**

**Dear Readers,**

As we bid adieu to the winter chill, February brought with it a flurry of activities on our farms and in our communities. This month, we celebrated the successful harvest of our mustard crops, a vital component of our agricultural landscape. Mustard, not only a versatile crop but also a source of rich oils and essential nutrients, symbolizes the bounty and resilience of our farming practices. The harvest season not only represents the fruition of our labor but also underscores the importance of sustainable farming practices.

We are proud to contribute to the abundance of mustard, a staple ingredient in our kitchens and an integral part of our culinary heritage.

With our harvesting activities, we remain vigilant about post-harvest management to maintain the quality and freshness of our produce. Through proper storage techniques and timely processing, we ensure that our harvest reaches consumers in optimal condition, maximizing both nutritional value and taste. By prioritizing post-harvest care, we uphold our commitment to delivering farm-fresh goodness to tables across our communities.

Beyond the fields, this month, we organized training sessions for Anganwadi workers, empowering them with knowledge on nutrition and health. These frontline workers play a crucial role in educating families, particularly mothers and young children, on the importance of balanced diets and healthy eating habits. By equipping them with the necessary tools and information, we aim to foster a culture of wellness from the grassroots up.

As we reflect on the achievements of February, we are filled with gratitude for the unwavering support of our farming community and partners. Together, we strive to cultivate a future where good farming practices translate into good food and, ultimately, good health for all.

**Thank you for joining us on this journey of growth and prosperity.**





## Good Farming

### FARM INSIGHTS

## Activities on the Demonstration Plot

### Harvesting of Mustard, Wheat, and Gram: Yield Data Assessment with Random Square Method and Test Weight

**H**arvesting plays a pivotal role in agriculture as it marks the culmination of months of cultivation and signifies the yield obtained from the crops. We will primarily focus on assessing yield data using the Random Square Method along with evaluating test weight, a crucial parameter determining the quality of harvested grains.

**Yield data estimate with Random Square Method:** To assess the yield of mustard, wheat and Gram a random square method has been employed. This involves selecting random squares within the field and harvesting all the crops within those squares. The harvested plants are then threshed to obtain the seeds, which are weighed to determine the yield per unit area.

**Test Weight Assessment:** Test weight, commonly expressed in pounds per kilograms per hectoliter, refers to the weight of a specific volume of crop grains. It is often measured by weighing a standardized sample of grains, typically 1000 grains, and calculating their weight. This measurement reflects the density and plumpness of the grains, providing essential information about their physical characteristics.



### Optimizing Post-Harvest Management for Wheat and Mustard Crops

Post-harvest management is a critical phase in agricultural operations, significantly impacting the quality, market value, and storability of harvested crops like wheat and mustard. Effective post-harvest practices, including sun drying, moisture reduction, threshing, winnowing, cleaning, grading, and safe storage, are essential for preserving crop quality and minimizing losses. Let's delve into each step:



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### Sun Drying:

After harvesting, wheat and mustard crops often contain excess moisture, which can promote mold growth and spoilage during storage. Sun drying is a traditional method employed to reduce moisture levels and enhance crop storability. The harvested grains are spread in a thin layer on clean, dry surfaces under direct sunlight for 3-4 days, allowing natural evaporation to reduce moisture content to safe levels. Proper drying ensures better grain quality and prevents post-harvest losses.



### Reduction of Moisture:

Even after sun drying, residual moisture may remain in the grains, especially in humid climates or during rainy seasons. To further reduce moisture levels, farmers can employ techniques such as aeration or mechanical drying using fans or dryers. Ensuring adequate ventilation and monitoring moisture content is crucial to prevent mold growth, insect infestations, and heat damage during storage.

### Threshing and Winnowing:

Threshing is the process of separating grains from the harvested plants or pods. For wheat, this involves separating the grains from the straw or chaff. Mustard seeds are separated from their pods through threshing. Winnowing is then employed to separate the grains/seeds from the chaff by tossing them in the air, allowing the wind to carry away the lighter chaff while the heavier grains/seeds fall back onto the ground or into a container. Threshing and winnowing are essential steps to obtain clean, marketable grains/seeds.



### Cleaning and Grading:

After threshing and winnowing, the grains/seeds undergo cleaning to remove any remaining impurities such as dust, broken grains, straw, or chaff. This is typically achieved using sieves, screens, or air aspirators. Grading involves sorting the grains/seeds based on size, weight, and quality parameters. Grading ensures uniformity and consistency in the crop, which enhances market value and facilitates storage and marketing.

### Safe Storage:

Proper storage is crucial to maintain the quality and marketability of wheat and mustard crops post-harvest. Grains/seeds should be stored in clean, dry, and well-ventilated storage facilities such as silos, bins, or warehouses. Pests and rodents must be controlled using appropriate measures such as fumigation or insecticide application. Additionally, storing grains/seeds at recommended moisture and temperature levels helps prevent spoilage, mold growth, and insect





## Good Food

### MEETINGS & TRAINING

**A**s a part of the nutrition awareness campaign, the Nutrition team, initiative of the Good Farming Good Food Good Health programme of Solidaridad, organized meetings and training sessions in the marked project areas of Madhya Pradesh. The team organized culinary training sessions among Anganwadi workers and MDM cooks and explained to them various ways in which they can enhance the nutritional value of the mid-day-meals. The workers were also told about the nutritional values of soy, Srijan leaves and curry leaves and ways in which they can use them in the meals.



The team also monitored the condition of the Poshan Vatikas (Nutrition Gardens) and made suggestions on improving the same. The team also conducted meetings with farmers (men and women), and explained to them the importance of consuming soy and benefits of incorporating it in their routine meals.

The team also monitored the condition of Poshan Vatika's planted in the homes of the farmers and made suggestions on how to improve the same.





## MDM COOK – SARITA SINGH, LEELA KHEDI VILLAGE

From school to home, taking a step towards change that transforms lives.

### SUCCESS STORY

Sarita Singh had a busy morning along with two other MDM Cooks. They were hastily preparing Dal and Bati for the students, for a special lunch one winter afternoon. The

lentils were being boiled (Dal) and wheat balls (Bati) were being prepared in traditional manner. One of the cooks started cutting coriander to add it as a topping in the dal when Sarita Sarita Singh said, “Don’t forget to add Srijan tree leaves as well!”

Yes, this is a normal morning in the life of Sarita, who is a Mid-day meal cook in the primary school of Leela Khedi, a remote village of Sehore district. She cooks for more than 80 children each day and has a smile of content every time she serves the children hot meals. “Now they are hot and healthy meals,” she says.

Sarita was introduced to Solidaridad through her friend. She attended the culinary sessions conducted by the nutrition team of Solidaridad, organized under the Good Farming Good Food and Good Health initiative of the organization. “During the session, I was told about the importance of Soya and Srijan tree leaves and how much they are beneficial for our health. The nutrition team suggested me to add these in the mid-day meals and see the change in the health of the children here.”



As asked to do, Sarita immediately started adding Soy to the mid-day meals. She could not change the menu, but she could improvise. “I started adding Srijan tree leaves in any vegetables along with coriander leaves as a topping. I also started using curry leaves while preparing Dal and Kadhi. Instead of bhajiya, I started using Soy chunks in kadhis,” Sarita says.

Sarita says that she has complete support from the government bodies like the Department of School Education and also ICDS to incorporate Soya in the midday meals.

The results were good and children loved the food even more, she claimed. “They are more active and they even tell their parents at home to start using soy in the routine meals. Thanks to the nutrition team of Solidaridad, that not only these children are getting healthy, but they are trying to implement this change in their families as well,” she adds.





## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

### Ingredients: (For 4 servings)

- Soyachunks - 25 g / ½ cup
- Gram flour (बेसन) - 75 g / ¾ cup
- Spinach (पालक) - 100 g
- Green peas (मटर) - 75 g / ¾ cup
- Potato (आलू) - 85 g / 1 piece
- Green chilies (हरी मिर्च) - 4-5 pieces
- Ginger (अदरक) - 5 g
- Salt (नमक) - as per taste
- Oil (तेल) - 40 ml

### Soya Vegetable Cutlet



### Method:

- Boil the Soyachunks and squeeze out the excess water thoroughly.
- Boil the potatoes, peas, and spinach.
- Mash the Soyachunks, spinach, and peas, and mix them with boiled potatoes.
- Roast the gram flour (besan) slightly.
- Mix the paste of green chilies and ginger with the mixture. The dough for the patties should not be too soft; it should be firm enough to easily shape into patties.
- Shape small patties and fry them on a hot griddle with a little oil until they are cooked and crispy on both sides.
- Cook them on both sides with a little oil over low heat.
- Serve the delicious patties with chutney.

Ingredients	Grams	Calories	Protien (g )	Fat (g)	Iron (mg)
Soyachunks	25	86.5	13	-	5
Besan (Gram Flour)	75	279	15.6	4.2	6.8
Potatoes	85	97	1.6	-	-
Green Peas	75 gm	132	10	-	2
Spinach	100 gm	74	5.0	-	31.3
Oil	40 ml	360	-	40	-
Ginger	10	7.8	0.26		0.3
Total	-	1036	45	44	45

### Nutritional Value (Soya Vegetable Cutlet)

Nutrient (grams) Nutritional Value per serving

Energy 259 calories, Protein 11.2 g, Fat 11 g, Iron 11.2 mg



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## Good Health

### HEALTH & NUTRITION

**R**ekha Malviya, in her mid-fifties, works as an MDM cook in the Anganwadi of Birgod village a remote village, cluster Tarana, in Ujjain district of Madhya Pradesh. She is on her normal routine to school and cooking mid-day meals for little children of her village.

But a two years ago, her life was in a turmoil after she suffered from a major slip-disc operation that left her bed ridden.

“After my husband’s demise, I took care of my son and myself, and started working as a MDM cook. Responsibilities took a toll on me and my health was neglected. I started getting frequent backpains and weakness due to exertion and stress. Gradually pain in my back increased and two years ago, doctors advised me to undergo a slip-disc operation,” she recalls.

The operation was successful, but due to lack of proper nutrition, her recovery rate was very slow. “Even slightest movement of my body was an effort for me. Then I met Solidaridad’s nutrition team in a meeting conducted in my village around 1.5 years ago. I learnt the benefits of consuming soy and brought sou chunks at home to try how it tastes,” she said.



“Due to my frequent illness and weakness, I had to take a lot of leaves from work that hampered my work,” she said.

Rekha, didn’t just incorporate soy in her meals, but also started using it in the mid-day-meals. “I re-gained my strength. I consume soy by adding it in my wheat flour in the proportion of 1 kg soy flour to 9 kg wheat flour. I prepare curries made from soy chunks and also make soy Kurkure and nuts,” she said. Now, that Rekha has recovered and is energetic, she has an extra income by stitching clothes for women. “Earlier, I was dependent only on the income from my MDM cooking. But since soy helped me regain my strength and stamina, I am working double and earning more, improving my lifestyle. Thank you Solidaridad for introducing me to this superfood.”





## Agri-Nutrition Resource Centre



### TRAINING



The Agri-Nutrition Resource Center, Bhopal, organized a workshop on Capacity Building and Health Benefits of Soy & Millets and Soy processing for Anganwadi Workers of Bhopal district from 15 February 2024 – 07 March 2024. The workshop was an endeavor to enlighten the Anganwadi Workers about the nutritional value of Soy-based food products. The participants were demonstrated the right technique to process Soy and prepare dishes like Soy Nuts, Okara, among many others. Activities, games and music made these sessions even more interesting. At the end of each session, participation certificates were awarded to each Anganwadi Worker. This workshop catered to the capacity building of approximately 175 Anganwadi Workers.





## VISIT



The students of Sarojini Naidu Government Girls College visited the Agri-Nutrition Resource Center on February 24, 2024. During the tour, the students visited the ANRC Resource center to understand the functioning of the center. They were also demonstrated the right method to process soy to make it fit for consumption. The tour enlightened the students about the functioning of the center and were told about the different kind of activities conducted at the center.

## Events

### FAIR



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NATIONAL BUREAU OF AQUACULTURE



**A** day long Career fair was organized at Government Geetanjali Girls College, on 27 February 2024. Under the Nutrition Programme of the Good Farming-Good Food-Good initiative of Solidaridad, the nutrition team put up a nutrition stall to promote the consumption of millets based foods in the routine meals. The stall included Millets Papdi, Millets Papdi Chat and Millets Mathri.



## CONTACT US:

FOR MORE DETAILS ON PROGRAMME / ANY QUERY

**GOOD FARMING-GOOD FOOD-GOOD HEALTH**

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