

From Food Grains to Sweet Profits: The Journey of Mr. Gurpreet Singh

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Basic Details

Village: Choti Ghandua
District: Fatehgarh Sahib
State: Punjab
Name of farmer: Gurpreet Singh
AGE: 62
Landholding: 3.24 ha
Family: wife, two sons, one daughter in law and one grand daughter



Story

Many farmers are quitting agriculture nowadays and moving to cities in search of better livelihood because of lot of challenging circumstances as, low profits due to raising inputs costs, unstable market prices and even low yield. But still there are many farmers who still believe in the potential of agriculture and it benefits on multiples points. like Mr. Gurpreet singh a farmer from Choti Ghandua village who for many years has followed the regular rice-wheat cultivation like most farmers but profits were very low due to high input costs and decline fertility. His family struggled financially and he was almost ready to give up on farming until he was invited to attend a PAU training program on sustainable sugarcane initiative

Challenges Faced

For many years, farming was a struggle for him and his family. Despite putting in long hours of hard work, the returns were discouraging. His rice yield had dropped to just 14 quintals per acre and wheat to 12 quintals per acre, far below what he had once hoped for. Each season, the rising temperatures and lack of timely rainfall made things worse, leaving his fields dry and his harvest uncertain. The expenses of farming kept climbing chemical fertilizers and irrigation costs took up most of his earnings yet the grain he brought to market fetched low and unpredictable prices. With no proper irrigation system in place, he often watched crops suffer when water was most needed. These challenges not only reduced his production but also pushed him deeper into debt, leaving little room for savings or security. At times, the future of his farming seemed uncertain, and he wondered how long he could continue under such pressure.

Innovations Adopted

In 2019 Gurpreet decided to diversify into sugarcane cultivation by following technical guidance from the Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) and Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK). As he worked to improve his sugarcane cultivation, Gurpreet looked for practical ways to save effort and get better results. Using machinery like tractors and harrows made field preparation much easier, cutting down on the heavy manual work of breaking soil and

removing weeds. For the crop itself, he chose the *CoPb92* variety, an early-maturing type recommended by PAU, which quickly proved reliable in both yield and sugar content. To care for his soil, he reduced chemical fertilizers and instead used compost and cow dung manure, keeping his fields productive in a natural way. Since his resources were limited, he went with the flat bed method of planting, a simple and effective option. He also tried intercropping rice with sugarcane, which not only made better use of his land but also helped conserve water. By working with the local Cooperative Sugar Mill, he no longer had to worry about selling his produce. He got fair prices and timely payment. Finally, he adopted practices from the Sustainable Sugarcane Initiative, like planting single-bud seedlings at wider spacing, which gave him healthier crops with fewer inputs



Results/outcomes

Slowly, the hard work started to pay off. For the first time in years, he could see real improvement in his fields. Where earlier he struggled with low yields of rice and wheat, his sugarcane now gave him nearly 12 tons per acre. The change felt like a turning point. His income, which used to be around ₹1,00,000, almost doubled to ₹2,20,000 with sugarcane and intercrops. What made him happiest was the steady cash flow from intercrops, he no longer had to wait nervously for one harvest to meet the family's needs.

His costs also went down. By using cow dung manure and compost instead of relying too much on costly fertilizers, he not only saved money but also saw his soil become healthier and more fertile. The new irrigation practices meant he was no longer wasting water, and his crops looked greener and stronger. With fewer worries about expenses, he was finally able to clear old debts and even put aside some savings something he had never imagined before.

At home, life became easier. He could manage household expenses without borrowing, and he proudly began investing in his children's education. The stress that once weighed heavily on him and his family slowly eased. Neighbours started noticing the change too. Farmers who had seen him struggle before now came to his fields to ask about the new methods he was using. For him, this recognition was as rewarding as the higher income, it gave him dignity, confidence, and the feeling that farming could truly secure his family's future.

Impact

In just two years, Mr. Gurpreet did something he once thought impossible, he cleared all his debts. The constant worry that had followed him for so long was finally gone, and with it came a new sense of freedom. With his earnings, he built a new irrigation well, giving him the peace of mind that his crops would never suffer from lack of water again. He also bought a tractor, something he had dreamed of for years, which made his work faster and less tiring. As his farm flourished, people around him began to notice. The cooperative sugar mill recognized him as a progressive farmer, and soon he was known in his block as a lead farmer. What made him most proud was not the awards, but the fact that other farmers started coming to him for advice. They saw in his journey a path they could also follow, and he was always ready to guide them, sharing what he had learned.

Today, Mr. Gurpreet is seen as one of the successful farmers of Fatehgarh Sahib. For his community, he is more than just a farmer, he is a role model, a source of hope, and a living example of how patience, innovation, and determination can change a life.

Conclusion

Mr. journey from rice-wheat to sugarcane demonstrates that with the right knowledge, technology, and crop diversification, farmers can significantly improve their income and livelihood. From struggling with low yields and heavy debts, he managed to turn his life around with patience, hard work, and new ideas. Today, he stands proud as a successful farmer, free from debt and respected in his community. More than his income, it is the trust and admiration of fellow farmers that he values most, as they now look to him for guidance. His journey reminds us that even in the face of hardship, change is possible, and with the right steps, farming can once again become a source of pride and prosperity.

The soil may test you, but it will also reward you if you care for it and keep learning.