

CARNATION CULTIVATION IN CHURAH VALLEY OF CHAMBA

The Churah valley of Chamba district was an extremely backward area with the farmers having very small land holdings and no irrigation facilities. The major cropping systems of the area were Maize-Wheat and Silvi-pastoral systems. The farmers were earlier producing small amount of grains (millets, kodra, cereals etc.) mainly to meet their domestic requirements and were poor. The urge to uplift the living conditions was felt by KVK scientists and some enthusiastic officers in the state who belonged to this area. They were instrumental in facilitating the liasoning with the Parvatiya Gramin Bank. The unemployed youth were the obvious choice to start the enterprise. The agro climatic conditions of the area were found suitable for the cultivation of cut flowers mainly carnation, gladiolus, liliium and orchids. The main problem was the financial assistance, marketing channels and the technical knowhow. For this the Bank, KVK and the Private Company were identified for further assistance. Initially a group of 11 motivated farmers took up the cultivation of carnation in some villages falling in 3 panchayats. The KVK assisted in the registration of a society which is now popularly known as "Churah Valley Fruit, Vegetables and Flower Growers' Association". The technical back up support was provided by the KVK to start the venture. The necessary inputs at the first instance were provided by Floritech and facilitated by the Parvatiya Gramin Bank and the returns were such that some farmers even paid back a major part of their loans from the first crop.



