

## First Steps Towards Pro-poor Change

### Need for Managing Ginger-disease

An estimated 50% of ginger farmers in Nepal suffer from disease in their ginger crops. In some instances, the spread of this rhizome rot is so high that farmers face total crop failure. As a result, many farmers are now moving out of ginger production because of their inability to manage disease. This has potentially devastating consequences, since ginger cultivation is crucial to poor farmer households, with increases in ginger income directly reducing indebtedness and providing funds for food and education.



The system of bio-fungicides and other chemicals for ginger disease management is dysfunctional in Nepal. One of the leading bio-fungicides to control rhizome rot in ginger is 'Trichoderma'. Trichoderma is al-

ready used in the tea and vegetable sub-sectors overseas, primarily in India. However, these bio-fungicides are often not known to farmers and are in limited supply in the field. Although importers and agro-vets know Trichoderma and carry it in lim-

ited supplies, they do not promote its use in ginger disease management. Some donor-funded projects have previously supplied Trichoderma directly to ginger farmers or through local authorities, but this has not resulted in steady or sustained access to the product.

### Stimulating supply of disease management products

Samarth-NMDP, the first programme to apply a 'making markets work for the poor' approach in Nepal, is addressing the causes, rather than just the symptoms, of this dysfunctional disease management system. Instead of taking a direct role in supplying Trichoderma, Samarth is unlocking the potential for two national Trichoderma importers, Crop Pro Tech Nepal (CPTN) and Everest Agro Trade Nepal (EATN), to improve the supply of trichoderma to smallholder farmers. Taking a 'market systems'

lens, the programme asks why these players currently lack the incentives and capacity to drive innovation – which will continue to generate better results for the poor long after Samarth-NMDP comes to an end. In the case of Trichoderma-suppliers, the aim is to develop a win-win solution for both farmers and national importers: smallholder farmers will have improved access to this essential product – and in turn increased incomes, with increased revenue for the commercial players.

## Preliminary Activities

- 21 demonstration sites are being established-15 will be conducted with technical support from Samarth-NMDP, the remaining 6 will be conducted by private sector partners alone.
- CPTN has subsequently stocked 50 Lt. in liquid and 100 kg in powdered Trichoderma for use in the demo sites and instant sales, all at their own costs (approximate market value of Rs. 79,000).
- Also at its own cost, EATN has placed an order for 50 kg of powdered Trichoderma with a market value of Rs. 17,500.



## Next Steps

- It is expected that farmers in the areas of Makawanpur, Ilam and Palpa, as well as around the demo sites will begin to access Trichoderma through the intervention-supported sales agent model by May 2013.
- Over the course of the ginger project it is expected that 21,000 smallholder farmers will improve their annual real incomes with an average of NRS 7,500.

## About Samarth-NMDP

Samarth-NMDP is a five year DFID-funded rural market development programme that aims to reduce poverty in Nepal by increasing incomes of 300,000 smallholder farmers and small-scale entrepreneurs. The programme follows the Making Markets Work for the Poor (M4P) approach and aims to improve the underlying pro-poor performance of rural sectors, leading to opportunities for better access and improved growth for poor and disadvantaged people.

Samarth-NMDP implements the ginger-project in partnership with Mercy Corps Nepal.

For more information visit [www.samarth-nepal.com](http://www.samarth-nepal.com)

## Samarth-NMDP in the Ginger-sector

Ginger is indigenous to the Indo-China region with Nepal being one of the most suitable countries for ginger pro-

duction. An estimated 200,000 farmers produce 190,000 MT/year of which the poor produce 30%. Ginger cultivation is well suited to the mid-hills, where many of the socially excluded groups reside including Janajatis and Dalits. The ginger market is predominantly for export to India, and is therefore prone to price fluctuations due to competition with Indian production.

Samarth-NMDP is engaged in the ginger sector with two different interventions:

### 1. Disease management

With improved access to disease management poor ginger farmers will increase productivity by reducing the risk of crop failure.

### 2. Low-cost Storage

Similarly, forced harvesting and sales of ginger due to unforeseen fluctuation in price of fresh ginger will be minimized with adoption of low cost technology.

### MR. RAJESH SHRESTHA

The Proprietor and Executive Director of CPTN

“In the past we have supplied Trichoderma to the farmers through an NGO who distributed the bio-fungicide at a subsidized rate. After the project phased out, and with it the temporary supply linkage provided by the NGO, Crop Pro Tech Nepal could not supply the product to the farmers as we lacked a formal channel despite the demand.

By strengthening the market system, the Samarth project is supporting the private sector and the farmers in a more sustainable manner.”

The lack of knowledge among ginger farmers on the management of Rhizome Rot disease poses a major challenge in increasing ginger yield across the country. Many farmers fall victim to purchasing harmful chemicals to fight Rhizome Rot disease. This has impacted the quality of ginger negatively.

### MR. NAGENDRA PANDEY

Executive Director of EATN

This project has helped us in increasing our outreach. We have direct incentive in reaching more farmers and providing embedded services such as information on disease management through correct application of Trichoderma, as well as sustainable farm practices such as best ways of intercropping for ginger farmers.