

Want to increase milk production? Cultivate drumstick, the Milma mantra



Babu, a farmer, harvests 'moringa' in Pallur, Attappadi | EXPRESS

A SATISH @ PALAKKAD

MILMA'S efforts to increase the milk production have taken an innovative streak. Cultivate 'moringa' (drumstick). As per the plan, the the Malabar Milk Union of Milma has decided to cultivate 'moringa' in the 30 acres of land at Attappadi and in five acres at Eruthenpathy of Palakkad district.

The inspiration: A similar effort in Anand at the unit of the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB).

K T Thomas Mathew, the manag-

ing director of Milma, told Express that the scheme is funded by NDDB. "NDDB is providing assistance to the farmers to prepare the land. They are also giving seeds of 'Moringa Oleifera' (scientific name of drumstick) free of cost. The drumstick seeds costs ₹1,000 per kilogram in the open market," said Mathew.

Pushparajan, the milk production officer of Malabar Milma, said three plots were ready for harvest in Attappadi, while two have already been harvested. "Once the monsoon begins, moringa will be cultivated in all the 30 acres", he

said. "The milk societies of Pudur, Pallur and Thavalam have already begun the cultivation of 'moringa,'" he said.

Pushparajan said 'moringa' can be given to the cows along with hay during summer which will increase the milk production. "The



NDDB is providing assistance to farmers to prepare the land. They are also giving seeds of drumstick free of cost. One kg of the seeds cost Rs 1000 in open market.

Thomas Mathew, Milma MD

Attappadi scheme has an outlay of ₹22.05 lakh. The farmer who cultivates one acre of 'moringa' gets a subsidy of ₹58,805 from Milma," he said.

Mathew said: "Rearing more cows is not feasible in the current scenario and therefore the only

Drumstick and milk production

Moringa is highly effective in increasing the production of milk because and it has a rich content of protein - 20 per cent.

way out is to increase the production of milk."

Mathew said the fodder cultivated by the farmers will be purchased by the respective milk societies at ₹3.50 per kilogram.

"The milk society will pay the farmer ₹2.50 per kg and the remaining ₹1 will be paid by Milma as subsidy

In the last financial year, Malabar Milma had purchased 3,300 tonnes of fodder from the farmers and allotted them the subsidy," he added.

Milma is also mulling 'moringa' cultivation in Wayanad.