The information about the farming activities being implemented by Kudumbashree in Kerala was explained in ‘Making an Impact Article-07’. Today I will elaborate about our intensive banana cultivation project in agriculture livelihoods. During the onam season of 2016, the market price for banana was more than Rs.60 per kilogram. This higher market price motivated us focus more on banana cultivation. During October 2016 itself, we framed a programme called ‘Intensive Banana Cultivation’. We initiated this programme anticipating higher cost of banana during Onam season. Women farmer groups would get better profits if they opt for banana cultivation.
As a result of this campaign focusing the onam markets of 2017, our farming groups cultivated banana in 5260 acres of land during 2016 - 17. They recorded an overall sales of Rs 2.2 crores. Though we extended banana cultivation in 2017, aiming at the onam markets of 2018, the unprecedented floods spoiled the dreams of our farmers.

After the floods, we again motivated the JLGs (Joint Liability Groups of women farmers) for banana cultivation, keeping an eye on the onam markets of 2019. A total of 12,099 women farming groups did banana cultivation focusing on the onam markets of 2019. Though the floods of 2019 affected their cultivation adversely, they were able to cultivate 9764 tonnes of banana. And this quantity reached Onam market. As per this our farmers recorded sales of Rs 6.11 crores during the onam season of September 2019, for the banana cultivated during 2018 - 19.

Hoping that there wouldn’t be any natural disasters like before, and hoping for the best from experiences from these successes, we are motivating our farming groups to do banana cultivation focusing on the onam markets of 2020. Till date 11,334 JLGs have started intensive banana cultivation, eyeing Onam 2020. The total area under banana cultivation crossed 10,000 acres of land.

Kudumbashree team is implementing focused projects like this in tune with the market trends and needs. Our teams are guiding and motivating the women farming groups for producing safe to eat products.