

Konger Agritech

Dr. Sosang Longkumer, Founder and Director, Konger Agritech, has been at the forefront of mushroom farming in Nagaland. As a scientist working with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, it is safe to say that he was well versed in the methods and techniques of farming. However, he took the idea one step further. He started Konger Agritech, a venture that not only grows mushrooms but also helps others start their ventures.

Mushroom cultivation has not only become a common activity among self-help groups, several youths are also now involved in the trade. We spoke with Dr. Longkumer about his journey, what makes Nagaland special for mushrooms, and whether he plans to scale up his operations.

Mushroom cultivation has been a practice in the state for many years, especially Oyster mushrooms. However, earlier, it was more of seasonal cultivation during the winter months due to the unavailability of spawns. After the spawn production unit, I have trained the farmers, especially the youth, to plan and take mushroom cultivation as a full-time venture. With proper planning, training and market potential many of them realised that it can be a full-time venture with year-round cultivation.

Every Naga household takes to kitchen gardening very naturally, so cultivating mushrooms is easy. That said, Mushroom farming is very underrated but now it's gaining some momentum as people are realising its worth. It's extremely cost-effective and does not require too much space and investment either and has good returns in a short period.