

**UNDERUTILISATION OF CAPACITY
AND THE PROBLEM
OF OPTIMISATION IN
ERICULTURE IN ASSAM : AN
ECONOMIC ANALYSIS**

*Manjit Das**

ABSTRACT

Ericulture, a major component of sericulture has been a traditional practice of the poor tribal villagers of Assam since times immemorial. It has been a secondary occupation of the womenfolk during their leisure time which adds to their family income to some extent. Moreover, their by-product pupae which is full of protein is a favourite delicacy of the tribals. Though the occupation requires very small amount of investment, the rearers are not utilising it to their full capacity. It is because of the fact that the rearers are highly dependent on wildy grown feed leaves of castor, the primary feed leaf of eri worm. It is observed that even if the rearers cultivate castor, it will undoubtedly raise their costs of production. However, it will certainly help them to raise their level of income and thus their profit even at the present technological set-up. This paper tries to find out the underutilised capacity of ericulture and suggests means to develop this traditional primary occupation of Assam.

* Department of Economics, M.C. College, Barpeta, Assam - 781 301.