

APEDA and IRRI South Asia Regional Centre organize workshop for healthier rice-based food innovations

APEDA's initiative to promote export of non-basmati rice varieties

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The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry jointly with IRRI South Asia Regional Centre (ISARC) organized a workshop on “Profiling of Potential Varieties of Non-Basmati Rice and Value-Added Products of Rice” at New Delhi on 29th August 2024.

The workshop showcased the outcome of two pioneering research projects, “Comprehensive Grain and Nutritional Quality Profiling of Non-Basmati Rice” focusing on identifying high-quality aromatic, nutrient-rich rice low glycemic index (GI) varieties with geographical indication (GI) tag germplasm from various Indian states; and “Value-Added Products from Rice and Rice-Based Food Systems”, a project aimed at creating innovative, healthier rice-based products like nutrient-dense rice muesli, whole grain rice cookies, popped rice, rice flakes, and instant upma.

These significant projects, supported by APEDA, are conducted at the state-of-the-art Centre of Excellence in Rice Value Addition lab at IRRI's South Asia Regional Centre in Varanasi. During the event, IRRI presented the profiling of potential non-basmati rice varieties across India and showcased value-added products with global market potential.

Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, Shri Rajesh Agrawal in his keynote address acknowledged and appreciated the joint efforts of APEDA and IRRI for coming up with the focused research on the potential varieties of Non-Basmati Rice. He emphasised that this joint initiative has huge potential and the identified varieties of non-basmati rice not only possess significant export potential but also have health benefits such as low glycaemic index and is climate resilient. He further drew attention to the value addition and branding of the non-basmati rice varieties for tapping into the export potential and marketability of these varieties.

Chairman, APEDA, Shri Abhishek Dev shared some insights on the importance of rice industry in India, the need for value addition, and research to improve sustainability and global competitiveness. He also expressed the need for collective effort to increase rice exports and benefit all stakeholders in the value chain. Further he stressed upon a starting point for developing strategies for increasing rice exports and rice-based products. Additionally, during his address, Chairman, APEDA also appreciated ISARC's efforts, stating, “These projects not only respond to the growing demand for healthier food options but also capitalize on traditional rice varieties to create value-added products.”

Building on the success of APEDA's initiatives, the strategic collaboration with stakeholders, alongside targeted marketing efforts by the industrial stakeholders, will be key to expanding both domestic and international market reach, thereby contributing to the premium economy and enhancing export potential under the non-basmati category.

APEDA's support has significantly contributed to the success of these projects, enabling ISARC to pioneer advancements that will shape the future of India's rice industry. The combined approach of developing low GI

rice varieties and nutrient-dense value-added products is set to boost India's export capabilities and promote significant economic growth within the agricultural & food processing sector.

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