



## Press Release

### India Rice Conclave 2015

24th- 25th June, 2015, The Lalit Great Eastern Hotel, Kolkata

**Kolkata, 24<sup>th</sup>June,2015:** Speaking at the “India Rice Conclave 2015”Jointlyorganized by The Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, The Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Government of India, Department of Agriculture, Government of West Bengal, ICAR, IRRI& The Indian Chamber of Commerce from 24th - 25th June, 2015.

**Guest of Honour Dr R S Shukla Principal Secretary, Department of Agriculture & Agricultural Marketing, Government of West Bengal** in his address mentioned that farmers are left with very little to re-invest in agriculture and that is a hindrance to the further development of agriculture. If rice yield/unit of land can be increased then the left out land might be used for production of other crops. Minimum selling price needs to be introduced in West Bengal as early as possible. He has also stressed on the importance of development of a niche market for aromatic rice varieties in India. He has also mentioned that geographical indexation of crops might be the need of the time. Dr. Shukla advised that since farm mechanisation is hard with small land holdings; hence, FPOs and FIGs might come forward to create an ambience of cooperation. At present the prime objective of the West Bengal government is to get more money in the hands of the farmers.

**Mr. P K Majumdar Adviser-Agriculture to Hon’ble Chief Minister, Government of West Bengal** in his theme address added that condition of Indian farmers is far worse than that of the international farmers; yet they are testing their might against all adversaries. Sustainable farming is the main challenge ahead. Better post-harvest management in a holistic way is required to realise profit through farming activities. He has also mentioned that Yield per hectare for rice is far high in West Bengal than the national average. The sector is such strong that even adverse atmosphere has not resulted in higher price for the agricultural produce in recent years. The country as well as the state needs to adopt hybrid varieties of paddy cultivation and that would eventually raise the production by 25%

**Prof Asit Kumar Chakravarti Vice Chancellor, Bidhan Chandra Krishi Viswavidyalaya** in his special address added that rice is one of the most important contributions of India to the world. India currently produces 106 Million tons of rice and that will rise to 156 million tons by 2030. He mentioned that if yield per unit of land can be increased through use of new high yielding varieties of rice seeds and better agricultural practises then production of rice can be increased by no less than 50%. Rice bran oil can be an important side product of rice and all the related possibilities should be cultivated.

**Prof Swapan Kumar Datta Pro - Vice Chancellor, Visva-Bharati University** in his keynote address expressed his concern that though the production and yield of rice is increasing but procurement of rice is declining. International experience teaches that price is important for the sustainable rice cultivation. Industry should take the responsibility to create forward and backward linkages and development of market related with rice. Rice cultivation activities are still fragmented and should be integrated to bring holistic development to the concerned agricultural produce. In order to reduce the cost of rice production; input cost should be reduced. More crop per drop is the future.

**Dr J S Sandhu Deputy Director General - Crop, ICAR** in his special address mentioned that Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana and National Food Security Mission are two of the central projects that have given positive boost to the agricultural sector of India and more specifically to the rice cultivation. He has also emphasized that to bring meaningful benefit to the farmer supply and demand side of rice cultivation needs equal emphasis. Branding is very important for further development of the rice marketability. Shift to high yielding varieties of rice seeds can give quick result. Emphasis on sustainable agricultural practises and management is required. It is satisfactory to note that even after erratic monsoon, flood and other calamities last year the production of rice in India has increased. Reduction in water use and development of zinc, iron enriched rice varieties and those with low glycaemic index is needed as soon as possible.

**Mr Rudra Chatterjee Chairman, ICC Agri Business Initiative** in his welcome address informed that food security is of paramount importance. Though India is ahead of USA and China in terms of food grain production and second next to China in terms of rice production; but per hectare yield is low in India. Small holding, lack of research and development and mono-crop farming are the main cause that is hindering further agricultural growth. He has emphasized on the branding of aromatic rice in West Bengal and specifically picked up Gobindo Bhog and Tulaipanji. He sought for minimum selling price for aromatic rice.

**Ms Madhuparna Bhowmick, Head-Food and Agri Business & Joint Director Indian Chamber of Commerce** offered the vote of thanks

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