

30-day Entrepreneurship Development Programme on nutri-products of pearl millet organized for women entrepreneurs by CAZRI, Jodhpur

The Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) on pearl millet nutri-products was organized by ABI, ICAR-Central Arid Zone Research Institute, Jodhpur from July 15 to August 14, 2022 for the Laghu Udyog Bharti (LUB), Jodhpur involving theoretical and practical technological training of the fifteen women trainees.

The month-long training programme included theory and practical training on *Bajra* based nutritionally rich products like pearl millet biscuits, chocolates, Kurkure and flakes. The training helped women entrepreneurs to think for starting a small-scale business enterprise.

The interactive sessions with Sh. S.L. Paliwal, General Manager, District Industries Centre and Sh. Manish Manda, District Development Manager, NABARD helped the participants to understand various supportive programmes of state and central governments for women which can nurture their professional skills and encourage starting their own entrepreneurial ventures.

During the inaugural programme held on 14/7/2022, the chief guest, Sh. Prakash Chandra of LUB emphasized that the pearl millet being local crop of Western Rajasthan, the efforts to prepare value added products from pearl millet is a welcome initiative on CAZRI's part so that its beneficial nutritional effects are made known the general public and which will also empower the farmers of the region economically through proper marketing. During the valedictory programme held on 16 August, 2022 the chief guest, Prof. (Dr.) Ajay Kumar Sharma, Vice Chancellor, MBM, University, Jodhpur, lauded the efforts of CAZRI scientists to train the upcoming women entrepreneurs. He said that such an initiative will help Indian millet farmers get decent revenues by capitalizing on their crop getting international recognition but the proactive role must be played by agricultural research institutes by taking measures to help our farmers reap the benefits.



Dr. O.P. Yadav, Director, CAZRI expressed that the humble millets are set to go global as the millets got international recognition with the United Nations (U.N.) declaring 2023 as the International Year of Millets. The resolution, sponsored by India and supported by more than 70 countries, declaring 2023 as the International Year of Millets is intended to increase public awareness on the health benefits of millets and their suitability for cultivation under tough conditions marked by climate change. He further said that to do this, the subject and policy experts must coordinate. The efforts like a value addition training on millets will take a lead in popularizing the theme in a strong manner and such initiatives will provide golden opportunity to add millets to the export basket. But a practical meticulous plan must be evolved. The millets which have three different dimensions of climate, nutrition, and cultural quotient as they are climate-resilient, suit dryland farming, have a high nutritional value and further, it is also related to culture being an integral part of food habits, he said.

The EDP was conducted by ABI under the expert supervision of Dr NV Patil and the faculty of Division of Agricultural Engineering and Renewable Energy of CAZRI headed by Dr. Dilip Jain and Course Co-ordinator, Dr. (Mrs.) Soma Srivastava. As a feedback of training programme, the trainees expressed confidence in the production and marketing of pearl millet products as the positive response of consumers in their products have assured them of reaping good profits.