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MESSAGE

I am delighted to know that the Uttar Pradesh Council of Agricultural Research (UPCAR), Lucknow and Integral Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology (IIASAT), Integral University, Lucknow are jointly organizing the **International Congress on “Post-Harvest Technologies of Agricultural Produce for Sustainable Food and Nutritional Security”** at Integral University, Lucknow during 10-12 November, 2016.


The concept of food security developed over the last 50 or more years addressed primarily the need for the production and access to adequate food grains to feed the world’s increasing population. Nutrition security, a later development, has a much broader concept since nutritious and safe diets alongside adequate biological and proper social environments ensure appropriate growth and development during childhood and helps promote health and prevent diseases in adulthood.

While the nation is debating on achieving food and nutritional security, millions of tons of fruits and vegetables are being dumped into dustbins in its backyard. India is a country which can not afford to loose 30% of fresh fruits and vegetables. The report of ASSOCHAM mentions that in India postharvest loss touched Rs 2.13 lakh crores in 2011-12 and crossed Rs 2.50 lakh crores in 2013-14. Processing of fruits and vegetables is as low as 2%, 35% in milk, and 6% in poultry products. India’s population is expected to reach around 1.6 billion by 2050, adding almost 29% more mouths to be fed by the agricultural sector. The total food grain demand of the nation is projected to be around 400 Million tonnes by 2050. As per the specifications of **National Institute of Nutrition** at least 300 g of fruits and vegetables are to be consumed daily by an individual for a balanced diet.

Hon’ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated that it is his dream to see farmers double their income by 2022, when the country completes 75 years of independence. He also pitched in for value addition and use of scientific methods in agriculture to double income of farmers. Agro-processing and value addition would provide tremendous backward and forward linkages and multiplier effects, with respect to: increased access to markets that are distant in space and time; extension of the reach of food, also in space and time; creation of non-farm employment and income generation opportunities; reduction of post-harvest losses; and improvement of food quality and safety. Investments require the development and scaling-up for value addition of strategic crops, livestock and fisheries; building of viable and effective public-private partnerships (PPP) for post-harvest handling and value addition; mainstreaming of nutrition into value addition and processing; crops, livestock and fisheries research and development processes; and building the regional capacity for value addition and processing of crops, livestock and fisheries resources.

To achieve the goal of food and nutritional security, food availability needs to be also increased through reductions in food losses at farm, retail and consumer levels. To achieve this, all the scientists, farmers, industries and policy makers need to coordinate their efforts in production, marketing, economic analysis, food processing and transfer of the technology to harvest synergistic output.

I am happy to know that a Souvenir is being published on this occasion. I compliment and congratulate the organizers for taking this initiative and convey my best wishes for a grand success of this event.


(A.K. Singh)