

Kashmiri saffron gets GI certification

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In a momentous decision, the Central Government on Saturday issued certification of geographical indication (GI) for saffron grown in Kashmir Valley. Calling it a historic step in bringing the valley's brand on the global map with authentication, Lieutenant Governor G C Murmu said, "with GI tag, Kashmir saffron will acquire more prominence in the export market and it would help farmers get the best remunerative price."

According to Principal Secretary Agriculture Production Department Navin K Choudhary, the GI certification will stop prevalent adulteration of Kashmir saffron and authenticated saffron will fetch much better prices.

Key Highlights

- Kashmir saffron is the only saffron in the world that is grown at an altitude of 1,600 meters which adds to its unique characteristics like longer and thicker stigma, natural deep-red colour, high aroma, bitter flavour, chemical free processing and high quality colour strength, flavour and bitterness.
- With the completion of the sprinkler irrigation system and inauguration of [Spice Park](#), the population associated with saffron will witness sea change from its production to marketing.
- Meanwhile UT's Lt General said that restoring the pristine glory of Kashmir saffron is top priority of both the governments at the UT and at the Centre.
- With the GI tag, Kashmir saffron will acquire more prominence in the export market and will help farmers get the best price for it, he said. Murmu said that with the completion and inauguration of the State of Art Spice Park next month, these measures will prove to be a game changer for Kashmir saffron.

- The official said that an area of 2,500 hectares has been rejuvenated so far and a bumper production is expected during the current season. Expressing happiness over the development, the Jammu and Kashmir LG said that this is the first major step to put saffron produced in the Kashmir Valley on the world map.
- Under the NMS, a project of Rs 411 crore was approved by the Union government under which an area of 3,715 hectare for saffron was proposed to be rejuvenated. “The GI certification will stop the prevalent adulteration of Kashmir saffron, thereby, authenticated saffron will fetch much better prices,” an official said.

SOURCE:*The New Indian Express, Economic Times*