



Chandauli Black Rice Initiative

Chandauli is popularly known as the “Rice bowl of Uttar Pradesh”. Fertile soil, water availability and climatic conditions are favourable for paddy cultivation. In 2018, Chandauli was included in the list of aspirational districts, thus requiring focused attention. The District Administration, Chandauli began to search a high value crop that could increase farmer’s income and ‘black rice’ was identified.

‘Black Rice’, a variety of rice that could be grown in the climatic conditions of Chandauli and increase farmers’ income manifold. One kg of black rice sells up to Rs 300 per Kg. vis-à-vis common rice that sells only for Rs 30-50 per Kg. In 2018, a pilot study was carried out to test the viability of ‘Chandauli Black Rice Initiative’. The study was carried out with 30 progressive farmers. The district agriculture department distributed black rice seeds to these 30 farmers and conducted educative seminars for them at Krishi Vikas Kendra.



Black Rice offers a variety of health benefits that enables it to command a higher price in the market. It is rich in anti-oxidants especially anthocyanin which is good for diabetics, prevents risk of cancer, obesity and cardiovascular diseases and is a good source of iron, zinc, micronutrients, proteins and fiber.

Each stage of cultivation was carried out under the supervision of experts including occasional visits by scientists of International Rice Research Institute, Varanasi. The farmers were advised not to use chemical fertilizers or pesticides as organically produced rice would fetch them better price. Black rice paddy was cultivated in about 10 hectares of land and 300 quintals of the crop was produced. The lab test reports confirmed the black rice so produced was nutrient rich and chemical free.

To explore the market, wide publicity was given in print and electronic media. Black Rice was exhibited at various national exhibitions and sold at Rs 200/kg for seeds and Rs 300/kg for rice. To popularize it amongst farmers, it was discussed at various forums like Kisan Pathshalas, Nyay Panchayat, Kisan Goshthas, Kisan Melas and exhibitions. Sufficient quantity of seed was preserved for Kharif, 2019.

The manifold increase in realization per hectare generated by black rice during pilot phase was a pleasant surprise for farming community. In Kharif 2019 more than 400 farmers opted to grow black rice in about 250 hectares. A committee comprising of officials of the departments of Agriculture, Industries and Krishi Vikas Kendra (KVK) was entrusted the task to facilitate bringing the produce from farm to market. A society under the name "Chandauli Kala Chawal Krishak Samiti" was registered comprising of black rice farmers as members. District administration provided handholding support.

An application for collective trade mark, to register CKC (Chandauli Kala Chawal) as a community property of black rice farmers of

Chandauli, was filed at Trade Mark Registry, New Delhi by the Samiti. Attractive packaging and logo were designed for the produce to compete in the retail market.

Around 8000 quintals of black rice paddy was produced in Kharif 2019. Chandauli Kala Chawal Krishak Samiti office bearers were sent to various national exhibitions to promote and market the product. It was also showcased at Gulfood, Dubai World Trade Centre. An arrangement with millers having state of the art milling technology was coordinated by the administration.

For retail sales, arrangements for product placement were made with ITC Chaupal at Sagar, Malls, Hotels and Kashi Vishwanath temple help desk. To tap export market, list of rice exporters of the country was obtained from APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority) and black rice samples were sent to them. A buyer seller meet was organized at Chandauli. It was attended by good number of exporters. Wholesale trade price was finalized at Rs 8500/Quintal. A part consignment was exported to Australia.



Chandauli black rice has high nutritional and medicinal value, which fetches it much higher price than common paddy. The cultivation being organic its cultivation cost is lower also low. The following table illustrates comparative profits that farmers' made by cultivating black rice paddy instead of common paddy per hectare of land:

S. No.	Parameters (per hectare)	Common Paddy	Black Rice Paddy
1	Seeds	30 kg	15 kg
2	Productivity	62 quintals	35 quintals
3	Cost	Rs 58000	Rs 42000
4	Revenue	Rs 1,12,530 (@1815/qtl)	Rs 2,97,500 (@8500/qtl)
5	Profit	Rs 54,530	Rs 2,55,500





From the above, it is evident that farmers' income increased several times by cultivating black rice.

The area under black rice cultivation in Kharif 2020 doubled to 500 hectares and more than 1000 farmers cultivated black rice. The district administration now plans to convert Chandauli Kala Chawal Krishak Samiti into an FPO (Farmers Producers Organization), capable of exporting their produce themselves to other countries which will further improve their profit margins and incomes. To boost retail sales, administration further plans to utilize e-commerce platform in the current season.

Success of the Black Rice Initiative in Chandauli has encouraged farmers from other districts to grow

black rice. Farmers from more than 15 districts of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar sourced seeds of black rice from KVK Chandauli, Agriculture department Chandauli and Chandauli Kala Chawal Krishak Samiti to start cultivation of black rice.

Being environmental friendly, black rice cultivation fits into the model of sustainable farming, It is economically profitable to farmers and beneficial to consumer's health. Black rice production can increase at the rate of more than 100% annually in coming years, as more than 5 lakh metric tone paddy is produced in Chandauli annually and there is lot of scope for its substitution with black rice. The high value product has huge export potential and earn substantial foreign exchange for the country.