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# CSIR labs coming to aid by providing food

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By **Manbeena Chawla** | May 1, 2020



csir-labs-coming-to-aid-by-providing-food

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### CSIR has a track record of providing emergency interventions

Apart from being known for its R&D and S&T knowledge base, CSIR has a track record of providing emergency interventions in the past during major calamities in the country.

The country’s most prominent food technology research institute, the Mysuru-based CSIR-Central Food Technological Research Institute (CSIR-CFTRI), has over the years developed innumerable food and food processing technologies that have not only benefited farmers but also led to highly nutritious value-added food products.

This time around, CSIR-CFTRI stepped in to provide 10 tonnes of high-protein biscuits, 1 tonne of spirulina *chikki*, 10 tonnes of cardamom-flavoured water, and 5 tonnes of nutrifruit bars to more than 56,000 migrant labourers, patients, doctors and police in two metropolises.The food items supplied by CSIR-CFTRI have longer shelf-life and so sustain for a longer time. They are also supplemented with micro-nutrients that boost immunity and help to fight against the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

For instance, fruit bars contain added Vitamin C and Zinc which are known to improve the immunity. Spirulina chikki, a snack, provides micronutrients from spirulina and micronutrients such as Vitamin A, Beta Carotene and easily digestible algal proteins.In the cardamom-favoured water, the spice extract (cardamom flavour) has been infused to make it a healthy alternative to commercially available beverages.

In fact, the CSIR-CFTRI also supplied 500 kg of high protein biscuits and 500 kg of high-protein rusks to the AIIMS-New Delhi for recuperating COVID-19 patients, on special request from the AIIMS.The biscuits are 60-80% richer in protein than usual biscuits.

“The nutritious products were chosen in such a way that they supplement the staple with either protein or minerals and vitamins that affect immunity positively, because the severe anxiety and uncertainty associated with lockdown and isolation need both these to be boosted,” says Dr. KSMS Raghavarao, Director, CSIR-CFTRI.

Palmpur-based CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (CSIR-IHBT), another Institute well-known for its food processing technologies, has supplied 5000 boxes containing 60 tons of Dal Chawal Aloo Mix, 2.16 tons of ready-to-eat local (Kangra) cuisine, 1500 Spirulina Peanut Bars, 1000 Multigrain Energy Bars, and 1500 Multigrain Protein Powder not only for the migrant labour but also for frontline workers like doctors, paramedical staff, health workers and policemen. The food is free of chemicals and preservatives, has probiotic effects and its shelf-life is 12 months.

CSIR-IIP, in Dehradun has also been providing food for the past one month to nearly 300 persons every day.

CSIR-Institute of Minerals & Materials Technology (CSIR-IMMT) in Bhubaneswar also delivered 30 Kof ready-to-eat food (Khichidi)  along with hand snitizer, and soap provided by CSIR-IHBT to the Commissionerate Police, Bhubaneswar.

The staff of CSIR-Central Institute of Mining and Fuel Research (CSIR-CIMFR) posted at the Donimalai Iron Ire Mine in Karnataka also put in their bit by distributing food packets containing essential rations for the needy.

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