

## Govt puts focus on food processing entrepreneurs at Ladakh

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### Ladakh Food Processing Summit gathers huge participation



Ladakh Food Processing Summit “Building Partnerships for Inclusive Growth in Food Processing Sector” was organised by the Department of Industries & Commerce, Ladakh in partnership with the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Government of India and Invest India, the national investment promotion & facilitation agency, in Leh.

The summit was inaugurated by Reema Prakash, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Food Processing Industries, GoI joined by Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Saugat Biswas. The primary objective of this summit was to carry out a value chain mapping of food processing in Ladakh and to recommend strategies for integrating local population into food processing and agriculture activities, to maximize the potential of this sector.

The summit was attended by food producers of Ladakh specially, apricots, barley, seabuckthorn, organic vegetables, peas, apples, milk and meat both from Leh and Kargil district. Apart from officers from MoFPI, technology experts from NITFAM, IIFPT, Banks working in Ladakh, and also buyers from the Army participated in the summit.

During the inauguration, Secretary Industries & Commerce, Ladakh said that the Administration of UT Ladakh is making efforts to give a fillip to the food processing industry in Ladakh. He said that food production added with value will reap maximum benefit for the local growers. He mentioned about the vision of the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh to promote local population by providing the platform to boost their interest and talent through expert guidance from Government of India and supporting agencies.

Addressing the gathering, Reema Prakash explained about the role of Ministry of Food Processing in ensuring value addition of produces through food processing schemes and programs. She said that the Ministry is focusing on promoting food processing in UT of Ladakh for both Leh and Kargil. She informed about the prepared Ladakh Action Plan for Food Processing Industries in consultation with the local stakeholders and stressed on endeavors to ensure actionable steps at ground level. She expressed her hope towards a positive outcome in developing food processing units in Ladakh, with

maximum benefit for the locals. Though almost sixty producers from Kargil district participated through video conference, a separate workshop will be organized specific to Kargil in the coming months Biswas informed.

Director Industries & Commerce Ladakh, Moses Kunzang highlighted the existing issues, potentials and requirements of industries in Ladakh, through a detailed power point presentation. He said that this summit is the first in a series of steps necessary to fulfill the overall goal and as a next step the Ministry of Food Processing Industry, along with appropriate agencies will develop implementation plans for the critical areas identified.

Invest India presented on various schemes available under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries to support the sector followed by presentations by representatives from National Institute of Food Technology and Entrepreneurship Management (NIFTEM), Indian Institute of Food Processing Technology (IIFPT) for providing required technical and skilling expertise.

An open house question answer session was also held wherein the local participants shared their doubts and problems. Ideas for marketing promotion and financing were also shared by Invest India and officials from J&K bank.

The summit was attended by around 170 participants including government officers, senior procurement officers from Indian Army, bankers, farmers, entrepreneurs, cooperatives, bakers, dairy farmers and unemployed youths.