

IISR-Kozhikode develops new high-yielding pepper variety

The variety named 'IISR Chandra' is expected to be a game changer in the black pepper industry

November 20, 2023 06:39 pm | Updated 06:40 pm IST - Kozhikode

THE HINDU BUREAU



'IISR Chandra', the new black pepper variety developed by a team of researchers at the Indian Institute of Spices Research, Kozhikode. | Photo Credit: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Indian Institute of Spices Research (IISR), Kozhikode, has successfully developed a new high-yielding variety of black pepper. The variety named 'IISR Chandra' is the result of an extensive research and development process at the Institute which has also completed the whole genome sequencing of the variety.

The researchers behind the variety said they adopted a unique approach in its development deviating from the conventional method. Two pepper varieties- Cholamundi and Thommankodi - were crossed to produce a hybrid variety which was back-crossed with Thommankodi ensuring the retention of all the desired parental traits, they said.

According to them, the novel approach in varietal development ensured that IISR Chandra possessed unparalleled potential both in quality and yield. With long spike, compact setting and bold berries, this variety would be able to give a potential yield of 7.5 kg pepper per vine. The distinctive traits, including an optimal spike intensity greater than any of the existing varieties, would further make it attractive.

R. Dinesh, Director, IISR, said the new variety would be a game-changer for black pepper economy in the country. He also pointed out that IISR- Chandra had the capability to outperform and potentially replace some of the reigning black pepper varieties in cultivation.

The research team that worked behind the new variety included M.S. Sivakumar, B. Sasikumar, K.V. Saji, T.E. Sheeja, K.S. Krishnamurthy and Sivaranjani. IISR officials said they would be extending licences to interested individuals, farmers and nurseries for the commercial production of the newly developed variety. Eight such licence agreements for commercial production would be executed on November 22 at the institute, they added.