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ICAR-CIPHET hosts webshop on effect of Covid on post-harvest food handling

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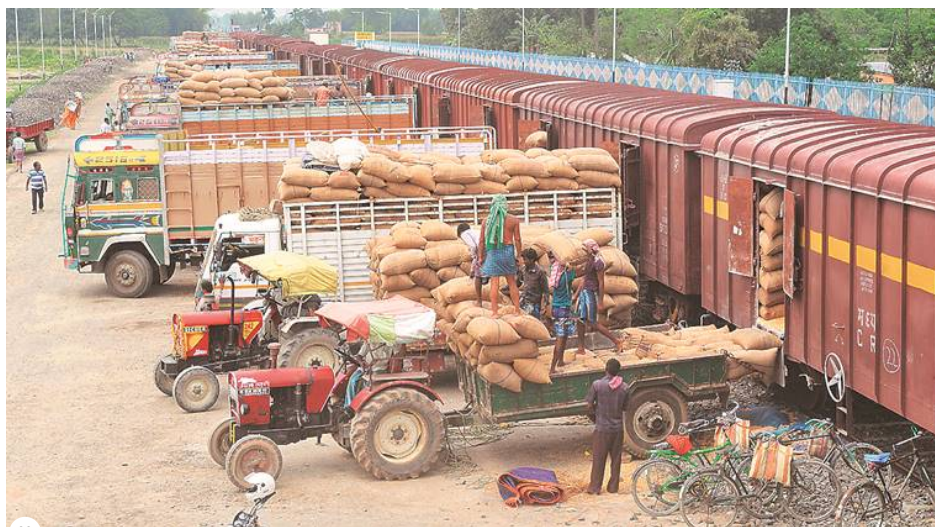
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Written by **Raakhi Jagga** | Ludhiana | Published: June 15, 2020 2:46:13 am

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Experts from South India said the supply chain has adversely affected and had greater impact on overall agriculture. (Representational)

The ICAR-Central Institute of Post-Harvest Engineering and Technology (CIPHET), Ludhiana, organised a day-long web-based workshop (webshop) on 'Challenges posed by [Covid-19 pandemic](#) on post-harvest food handling systems and the way forward during-and post-Covid-19 periods'.

The aim was to formulate a policy paper on combating the [coronavirus](#) in the production mechanism system for action and guidance of national agencies to ensure zero loss to farmers in production and post-production processing. Experts from the North-East stressed more on processing and value addition of local fruits and vegetables. They said that they have a mobile pineapple processing unit which can serve in production catchment. Impact of Covid-19 is less in the North Eastern region as compared to other states. But the supply chain has still been affected.

Experts from South India said the supply chain has adversely affected and had greater impact on overall agriculture. Dr R K Singh, director of ICAR- CIPHET, Ludhiana, said, "A farm to fork model was suggested because the price of most of the fruit and vegetables was slashed by 60-70 per cent. Farmers can't hold produce, hence they are under loss. We need innovative solutions for storage of surplus and contact less supply chain."

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Dr Singh gave a national perspective on how all pre-harvest and post harvest operations were affected due to Covid-19. He said migration of labour was the main reason, supply chain disruptions, closure of all restaurants, hotels, companies reduce consumption which in turn reduce demand of dairy, livestock produce by 30-40 per cent. Cereals are also not being used to full capacity and are lying in godowns due to pandemic situations. It was highlighted by speakers that million tonnes of food is being wasted, farmers have also been throwing produce on roads.

The CIPHET director said promoting R&D in the area of development of food can boost the immune system.



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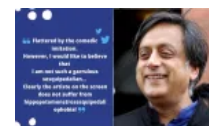
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