

Colored wheat developed by scientists at NABI Mohali has improved income of farmers in aspirational districts of Punjab

The colored wheat (black and purple) developed at National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute (NABI), Mohali is a rich source of the health promoting antioxidants due to presence of plant pigment anthocyanins. Research at the institute showed good effect of colored wheat on the control of blood glucose and body fat in high fat diet induced mouse models.

This wheat was grown at the farmers' field in the aspirational districts of Moga and Ferozpur under the DBT funded project for societal development. 29 farmers from 6 villages have directly benefitted due to the project. Farmers were happy as they could get Rs. 2000 to 4000 higher income per acre after the sale of their produce. Further, the intervention at farmer's field increased iron, zinc and protein content of grains that has addition health benefits for the consumer. Farmers are looking at it as an opportunity for higher income generation and making and selling products at the village level.



New healthy colored wheat has improved income of farmers in Aspirational district of Moga and Ferozpur, Punjab under the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) funded project entitled “*Bio fortified antioxidant rich colored wheat cultivation under organic and agronomic supplementation (Fe, Zn, Protein) strategies to increase farm income and improve their health status*”. The crop has been developed under DBT’s Societal Development Program.

Industry is looking on it as a new opportunity in the health food sector. It can be easily stored, consumed daily and cooked easily, and a wide range of food products like chapatti, biscuit, dalia, bread, roasted snack etc can be developed from it. NABI has shared its technology with more than 20 companies after signing MOU/NDA with them. Companies are interested in

contract farming and marketing different products like atta, dalia, roasted snacks and bakery products. Black wheat is attracting attention of farmers, consumers and industry and it is expected to increase to huge level in the coming years.

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