

**GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA**  
**DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & PUBLIC**  
**RELATIONS**

**Workshop on Food Processing Opportunities in Meghalaya**

**Shillong, 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2019** : A two day workshop on 'Food Processing Opportunities in Meghalaya' organised by the Directorate of Food Processing in



partnership with Meghalaya Institute of Entrepreneurship (MIE) and Meghalaya Basin Management Agency (MBMA) is being held at the State Convention Centre in Shillong.

The workshop aims to create awareness of the tremendous opportunities for self employment and enterprise in the food processing sector amongst the target group especially the unemployed youth in the State.



Addressing the gathering at the inaugural function Chief Minister Conrad Sangma urged the people especially the young entrepreneurs to utilise the opportunities in the food processing sector.

Stating that processed food accounts for only 10 percent of the total agricultural produce of the State the Chief Minister stated the need to expand the sector to create avenues for livelihood generation through entrepreneurship and improve the economic status of farmers.

‘Value addition has been one of the key focus area for the Government. Keeping this in mind the Government has recently created the Directorate of Food Processing to tap the potential and give adequate thrust to agro processing activities in the State’, he said.

The Chief Minister also stated the need for proactive participation from farmers at the grassroots level and rural entrepreneurs for the food processing industry to move forward.



‘It is not simply enough for the government to come out with policies or the agriculture and food processing industries to come up with innovative programs and initiatives. Ultimately all this can only be activated when all concerned stakeholders are part of this process. It is the entrepreneurs, the farmers and the people to ultimately bring all of this together. I am of the firm belief that it is only through entrepreneurship that the economy of the State can move forward. We need participation from all to make the State grow and prosper’, the Chief Minister added.



The Chief Minister informed that the government is taking a keen interest for the development of entrepreneurship in the State and has embarked on various programs to handhold, nurture and assist the budding entrepreneurs in the State.

‘I want to see young people get into entrepreneurship. I want the people of the State to develop an entrepreneurial culture. That is the reason why the government has initiated various programs to help young people to take up entrepreneurship as a viable option for self employment and in turn create livelihood opportunities for others as well’, he added.



The Chief Minister also urged the people to look beyond domestic markets and look at neighbouring countries as a source of marketing the goods produced in the region.

‘We share close to 440 kms of international boundary with Bangladesh. This is a huge opportunity for us, to market and sell our products to nearby neighbouring countries and beyond’, the Chief Minister said.

Speaking at the function, Agriculture Production Commissioner, K.N. Kumar informed the gathering that according to the report of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries the total value of Food Processing Industry will touch 3.45 Lakh Crore in 2020. ‘We need to take advantage of the rapid growth in the sector. We need to sensitise the people about various government schemes so that they can seize the opportunity of the current growth in the food processing sector’, he said.

Stating that massive investment for the development of agriculture and horticulture in the past decade has created a problem of ‘plenty’, it was necessary to make the right investment in the food processing sector to find the market for the surplus produce and reduce farmer distress.

‘Through the right initiative and approach we can emerge as a major food processing hub in the North Eastern region as well as the country’, he added.

The Agriculture Production Commissioner also said that apart from the food processing industry being at a nascent stage in the State the factors contributing to its low level of penetration were the lack of capacity building, inadequate awareness about available schemes and technology, lack of schemes to induct agro processing machinery and poor banking support.

‘This kind of workshop should create the right platform to understand the requirements needed for the sector in terms of the processes, technology, finance and help in capacity building of the participants’, he added.

The Food Processing Technical Manual was also released by the Chief Minister at the inaugural function.

The workshop is being attended by more than 600 farmers, agri entrepreneurs, IVCS members, TRYSEFA graduates, Farmers’ Friends, Chefs and

food processors from all over the State along with a host of other food processing experts from institutes of national repute and officials.