

## Reviving MushkBudij: A Heritage Rice of Kashmir

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Scented rice, MushkBudji, a mixture of aroma, taste, and rich nutritious elements, organoleptic and medicinal properties is grown in the higher reaches of Kashmir valley. This short-bold rice is one of the hundred landraces mentioned in the agriculture annals of Kashmir. MushkBudji is one of the heritage rice's of Kashmir Valley. This heritage landrace of Kashmir earlier replaced by the high yielding varieties from the paddy fields of valley is now gaining fast currency among the farmers. The modified line of MushkBudji is now having high yielding potential, disease resistance and growing market. MushkBudji is now becoming a dish of elite gastronomy, thus it is being served in restaurants, hotels, guesthouses, marriage ceremonies, festivals and other auspicious occasions. Although its consumption in Kashmir is limited to elite circles but it has its consumer base all over the globe as the e-commerce sites and social media platforms are new means of selling this heritage landrace. The readily available departmental support is an added advantage to the grower. This landrace has now the capacity to enrich and empower the grower. Thus grower has every reason to grow this heritage rice of Kashmir.

This verity of heritage landraces is best suited to our environment and ecology. Unlike other high yielding foreign varieties, it does not cause harm to our ecology. Although the foreign varieties give a high produce but they affect our environment and ecology. Thus reviving

this variety also shows our commitment to protect our ecology and save our natural heritage. Before the grower can go for its full scale production the government, the agriculture department and agriculture university have to work hand in glove with the grower. Rice will remain an important and staple food for the people of Jammu & Kashmir. However, there has been considerable decrease in area under paddy cultivation in Kashmir valley due to switch over to horticulture crops particularly apple orchards besides housing and developmental projects. Though, the productivity levels got improved over time, still the gap of self sufficiency is widening which is evident from the growing import and off-take of rice stocks and burgeoning rationed population under PDS system of the state. The trio had to work together to remove the whims, doubts and barriers; financial, technical, medicinal and technological of the grower. The grower needs to be cover under crop insurance schemes and gives loans on low interest rates to meet out his medicinal and other expenses. To his satisfaction he should be given a direct access to specialists in agriculture department, experts of Agriculture University and local field staff of agriculture unit falling within his vicinity. He should be provided expert advice throughout the growing process. The concerned department should also provide him market facility. In this way we all in collaboration with each other can revive this heritage landrace of Kashmir.

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