

# Millet farmer from Sangrur strikes gold in exports

Facilitated by APEDA, the supergrains have found a market in Australia

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There was a time when Dilpreet Singh, a farmer from Sangrur, was going from pillar to post to sell his millet. Local shops were turning him away. But now, a lucrative overseas market has suddenly opened up for him.

It all happened when Singh was browsing the internet looking for sales avenues for his millet. He came across the site of APEDA, the Centre's agri export promotion agency.

Using its help, he got an exporter's license and completed other formalities such as fumigation to send his first consignment to Australia. It turned out to be a golden deal for Singh, who sold the millet at a rate that was over seven times what other exporters, on average, receive.

"I have already received \$35,000 and will receive the re-



Dilpreet Singh

maintaining amount soon," Singh told *businessline*. He grows millet on a 14-acre land and says he ensures there is no mix with any other grain, and the entire crop is chemical-free. Singh is also confident in meeting the importing country's stringent condition – delivering the products to Australian Customs within 21 days of fumigation done in India.

## **FIRST BOX**

The first export consignment of 14.93 tonnes of millets and

millet *atta* valued at about \$45,000 was flagged off by APEDA Chairman Abhishek Dev on January 31.

"It is heartening to know our farmer is exporting millets from Punjab to Australia after meeting their requirements," Dev said.

The Sydney-based importer Jasvir Singh, who joined the virtual flag-off ceremony, expressed confidence in importing more such consignments in the future as the Sangrur farmer has complete value chain control from end-to-end.

Dilpreet Singh grows millets in his own farms and also does both primary and secondary processing in his own unit, including packaging.

The first consignment included different millet varieties – Proso, Kodo, Foxtail, Little, Browntop, Barnyard, Ragi, Bajra, and Jowar – both in the form of grain as well as flour.

Narrating his journey, Singh said that the first time when he packed his products in a 500-gram pack and took it to a local shop, the trader refused to buy and advised him to sell at *mandis* in bulk. Undeterred, Singh kept trying.

"I started looking for export opportunities. As people from the diaspora normally help and I knew the current buyer earlier, I got in touch with him and he showed interest in my products," Singh said.

## **RIISING EXPORTS**

India has exported 95,373 tonnes of millets worth \$45.46 million (₹375.71 crore) during April-November of the current fiscal. In 2022-23, the millet export was 169,049 tonnes worth \$75.45 million (₹608.12 crore).

APEDA has facilitated around 500 start-ups in marketing and exporting millet-based value-added products.