



OBJECTIVES OF THE FESTIVAL

- **PROMOTE AWARENESS** Highlight the nutritional, economic, and cultural significance of roots and tubers to urban communities.
- **CELEBRATE DIVERSITY:** Showcase the variety of local and regional root and tuber species and their traditional and innovative uses.
- **FOSTER KNOWLEDGE SHARING:** Provide a platform for farmers, researchers, chefs, and consumers to exchange insights on cultivation, processing, and utilization of these crops.
- **STRENGTHEN MARKET LINKAGES:** Create opportunities for producers to connect with buyers, processors, and stakeholders in the value chain.
- **PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE:** Highlight the role of roots and tubers in advancing climate-resilient farming practices and enhancing food security.
- **ENCOURAGE VALUE ADDITION:** Explore ways to integrate roots and tubers into cultivation practices and value-added products to increase their economic potential.

JOIN US ON THIS SPECIAL DAY!

⌚ **30th January, 2025**
10 AM onwards

📍 Killoguda Village, Sagara Gram Panchayat,
Dumbriguda Mandal, Alluri Seetharama Raju District,
Andhra Pradesh



This exciting event promises to be a unique celebration of biodiversity, community, and cultural heritage.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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A MELA FOR FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

EMBRACING THE DIVERSITY AND RESILIENCE OF ROOTS AND TUBERS



INTRODUCTION

Root and tuber crops, among the oldest cultivated staples, trace their origins to the dawn of human civilization. These resilient crops have played a pivotal role in global food systems for millennia and remain vital for farmers today. In India, a rich diversity of wild species and traditional varieties provides essential starch, minerals, and vitamins, contributing to nutrition and food security, particularly in tribal and rural communities.

Renowned for their adaptability to diverse climates and drought tolerance, root and tuber crops are well-suited to sustainable farming, especially as climate change challenges traditional agricultural systems. Beyond their ecological benefits, these crops hold deep cultural significance, prominently featured in local cuisines, festivals, and India's culinary heritage.

Efforts by the Central Tuber Crops Research Institute (CTCRI) have uncovered a wealth of species across India, with over 2,000 documented varieties showcasing unique characteristics and applications. Historically, they have also been valued for medicinal properties in Ayurveda, with traditional knowledge of their cultivation and uses passed down through generations.

Despite their versatility and importance, root and tuber crops face challenges that limit their wider adoption. The dominance of staple grains like rice and wheat in policies and diets, combined with social perceptions of these crops as "food for the poor," has overshadowed their potential. Issues such as storage, marketing difficulties, and limited consumer awareness further compound the problem.

Overcoming these barriers requires a shift in perception, policy support, and efforts to highlight their nutritional, economic, and ecological value.



A VIBRANT CELEBRATION OF ROOTS AND CULTURE

WASSAN and **SANJEEVINI**, in collaboration with **CTCRI** and **Keystone Foundation**, are hosting a community festival in the Araku Hills, Andhra Pradesh, to highlight the region's diverse tubers and roots. Over 200 tribal farmers will showcase their collections and exchange genetic material, alongside participation from CSOs and FPOs. This event celebrates the cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and ecological importance of these vital crops, fostering awareness and conservation efforts.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Increased awareness of the health and ecological value of traditional roots and tubers.
- Strengthened local food systems through indigenous crop cultivation and consumption.
- Enhanced farmer knowledge in sustainable practices.
- Conservation of genetic diversity in indigenous crops.
- Networking for farmers, NGOs, FPOs, researchers, and the culinary community.
- Innovation in value-added products and business opportunities.

STRATEGIC FOLLOW-UPS

- Documenting and cataloging roots and tubers.
- Photo and recipe documentation.
- Establishing biodiversity blocks with CSOs and FPOs.
- Developing and propagating nutritious tuber seeds.
- Standardizing recipes and promoting local outlets.
- Creating educational materials and exploring marketing opportunities.

