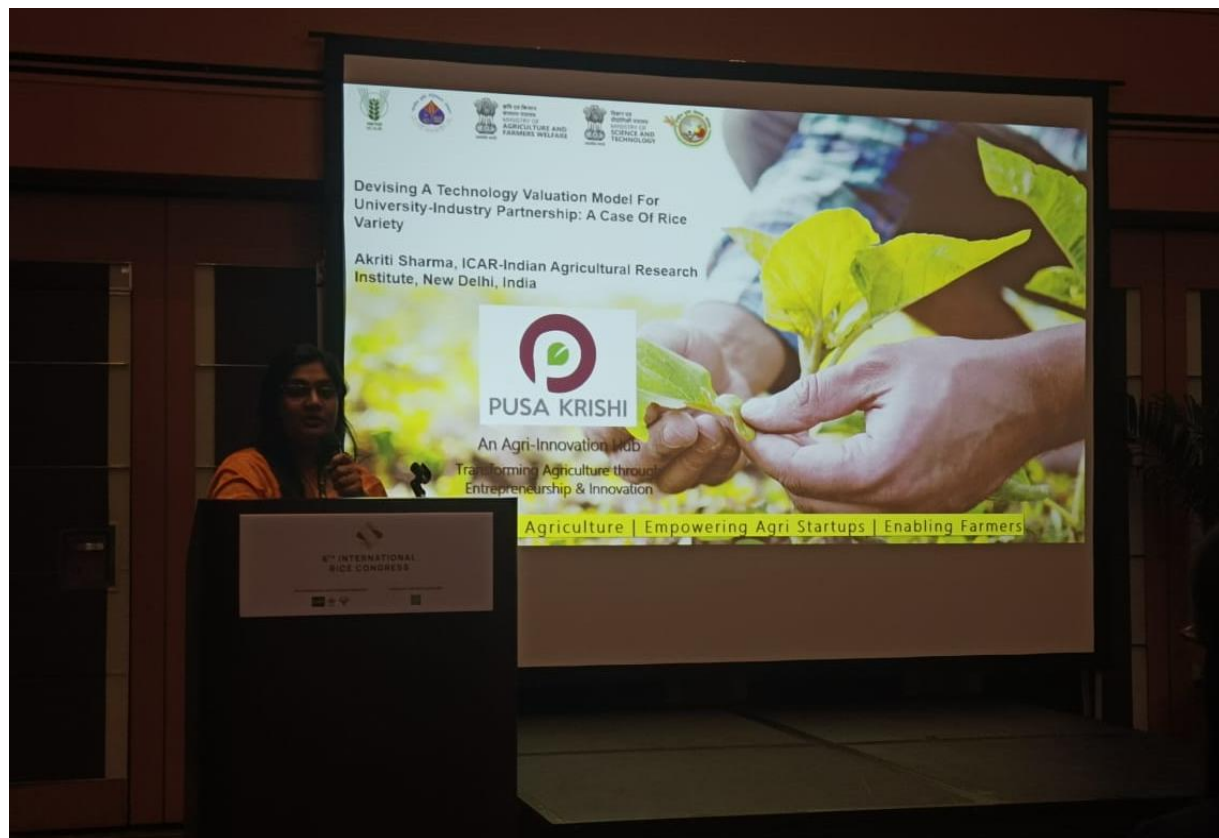


ICAR-IARI Scientists Attend 6th International Rice Congress (IRC) 2023 in Philippines

The 6th International Rice Congress was held from 16-19 October, 2023 at the Philippine International Convention Center, Philippines.

Dr. AK Singh, Director, ICAR-IARI, Dr. Akriti Sharma, CEO, Pusa Krishi along with many other scientists attended the four-day conference.



Dr. Ajay Kohli, Acting Director General of IIRRI, officially started the event by welcoming researchers, policymakers, experts, and the private sector to the 6th International Rice Congress.

The 6th International Rice Conference is a platform for the global rice industry that covers around 1,000 scientific presentations, including 8 plenary keynote addresses, specialized conferences, and a trade exhibition.

To address the growing problem of diabetes worldwide, researchers at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) identified the genes responsible for the glycemic index (GI). low & extremely low of rice. All the updates on the research behind this project were presented to the President of the Philippines, His Excellency Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., during the opening ceremony of the 6th IRC. This ground-breaking

discovery is said to transform widely consumed rice varieties into low and ultra-low GI refined rice through conventional breeding techniques, while preserving grain quality.

President of the Philippines, H. E. Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. in his opening speech thanked everyone for organizing the 6th IRC. He said, "I will surely promote the development & use of high-quality rice varieties and technologies like ultra-low glycemic index rice or extremely low GI rice. The discoveries in this conference will pave the way for better strides in the rice industry not just in the Philippines but the entire world."

Michael Graham, head of Bayer's Crop Science Research and Development Breeding Division, in his keynote speech on the first day of the 6th IRC said, "Collaborative action & advancement of direct-seeded rice can be an important solution for food security & climate change challenges. Bayer's work on direct-seeded rice can help shape the future of rice by building a system centered around the growers."

According to Da Bei Nong (DBN) Group Director of Rice Research and Development, Yangjun Zhang, China's high-tech rice industry is witnessing significant growth and holds promising prospects for the future driven by research collaboration & cooperation. He added that the development and progress of China's rice sector highlights the importance of the advancements in the industry not only for agricultural transformation but also for the broader goal of national prosperity.

The second day of the IRC 2023 highlighted the outstanding women-driven innovations in the rice sector. Many scientific sessions were organized to recognize & honor the invaluable contributions of women towards the development of the rice industry. Undoubtedly women have played important roles in every aspect of the rice sector, from farming & research to leadership and policymaking.

The third day of the IRC 2023, experts as well as innovators from all over the world came together to explore sustainable solutions & resilient practices in the rice industry. From advanced farming techniques to resilient crop varieties, the deliberations aimed at paving the way for a brighter, climate-resilient future for rice.

In addition, gender and social inclusion experts also took part in the panel discussion - Intersecting Identities of Gender, Youth & Class: What Matters Most for Research for the Development of Rice-based Food Systems, to discuss the more complex components behind the issue of gender equality & inclusion to attain transformative change. These include how social dynamics & identities shape the rice-based food systems; effects of technological change on gender; implications of research, policy & gender-

responsive practices; and opportunities & gaps in understanding of equality & social inclusion in these systems.

A book titled "Global Handbook of Rice Policies" was also launched at the 6th IRC on 17 October 2023. The new book expands on the coverage of the Handbook on Rice Policy for Asia published in the year 2013. Like its predecessor, it is likely to revolutionize the understanding of global rice policies and provide important insights to researchers, trade analysts & policymakers.

RiceTec Vice President for New Product Development, Dr. Jose Re talked about the pioneering technologies & stakeholders' collaborations that the company adopted to drive sustainable food production & positively impact farmers' lives. It is worth mentioning that RiceTec has developed novel technologies to revolutionize rice farming.



A special tribute was paid to Dr. M.S. Swaminathan for his dedication to advancing agriculture, sustainable farming & food security on the last day of the 6th International Rice Congress.

The four-day event concluded successfully on October 19, 2023.