Indi’s ‘Kagzi Lemons’ months away from getting GI tag

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Karnataka is just months away from securing the geographical indication (GI) tag for a rare variety of lemon largely grown in the northern plains of the state, especially in the Indi taluk of Vijayapura district. Often referred to as ‘Kagzi Lemon’, this is the second lemon variety in India to get the label after Manipur’s ‘Kachai Lemon’.

After five years of efforts, the Karnataka State Lime Development Board (KSLDB), supported by scientists of the Horticulture University of Bagalkot, is awaiting the final clearance from the GI Registry of India in Chennai.

The cultivation of ‘Kagzi Lemons’, a distinctive variety of Central India, was started across Vijayapura as early as 1980. However, the ones cultivated in Indi are known for their unique texture and high acidic value.

Vachshetharayagouda V Patil, MLA of Indi and IDF that all necessary documents pertaining to the history and uniqueness of the crop had long been submitted. However, in the absence of follow-up action by the state government, the issue had taken a back seat. But now, scientists from Bagalkot have offered insights into the uniqueness of the fruit and relevant documents have been submitted for final clearance,” he said. Santosh Sappandi, Managing Director of KSLDB, said the GI registrar has asked questions in the past and an expert committee was appointed for clarifying doubts. “In the last few months, the Board has cleared more than 20 objections that were raised by the GI office in Chennai. They had sought information pertaining to the history, cultivation area, studies on the academic values along with other technical details. We are expecting the GI tag for Indi lemons in a month or two,” Sappandi said.

Compared to other varieties, Kagzi Lemons of Indi have a thinner rind and have more juice, adding to the overall weight of the fruit. Karnataka is the fourth-largest contributor of lemons at the all-India level. Vijayapura produces 60% of the state’s lemons.

SANATH PRASAD

OR a doctor who is treating one of the most dreaded diseases, cancer, finding time off from work is quite challenging. However, Dr Narasimhaiah Srinivasaiah is a person who wants to be close to ‘Mother Earth’. An individual who likes to see, smell, and live amidst nature, he believes this to be the cure of all ailments. When he is off medical work, Srinivasaiah is a horticulturist, forest and agriculturist. Thanks to his extensive travel around US and Europe during the early 2000s, it made him realise the untapped horticultural space in India. Thus gave birth to Nandi Nisarga Dham (NAND), an eco-museum situated on the foothills of Nandi Hills, in Chikaballapur.

Srinivasaiah calls this place, a region carved out of the ‘Mother Earth’ where one can visit and attain solace, peace, and stay connected to nature. Growing up in a farmer’s family, Srinivasaiah was raised amidst hardship that come along in a farmer’s life. However, his vision for farming was something beyond. Started 20 years ago with the sapling of a wild mango, the five-acre land came into its full potential only in 2019.

The eco-museum is nothing short of a mini-forest that is home to a wide range of seeds, fruits, vegetables, herbs, pond, peacocks and even some monkeys. “This eco-museum was curtailed to drive education to the people, especially kids about mother nature. From talking about the diversification of seeds we cultivate to knowing the rivers that originate from Nandi Hills, this eco-museum should ignite young minds about environmental concerns,” says Srinivasaiah, who is also a lagerocopic and robotic surgeon.

Srinivasaiah has also created five sizable water bodies named after the five rivers originating from the hills. “I have adapted the age-old traditional method of water conservation with the Rajakaluve model. I believe in preserving the nativity of agriculture rather than giving room for modernity,” adds Srinivasaiah, who wants children to explore his farm and hone their agricultural skills early on.

He also calls this eco-museum an amalgamation of tropical flowering forestry and wild forestry. “I have cultivated all this because it brings life to nature. When I am in the hospital, I wear a white coat, while I am on the farm, I wear my shorts and become an absolute farmer. This is my sort of individual social responsibility where I am giving back,” says Srinivasaiah, who adds the eco-museum has moulded him to be a better person. “Farming has immense psychological and physiological impact. As a doctor, it has made me more diligent, patient and I realise that even small things make me very happy,” says the 46-year-old.

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“Sometimes you win & sometimes you learn”