

### **34<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day Celebration of ICAR-NRC On Yak, Dirang, Arunachal Pradesh**

The ICAR-National Research Centre on Yak, Dirang, Arunachal Pradesh, celebrated its 34<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day today on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 at its Administrative and Laboratory Building located at Dirang. Dr. Mihir Sarkar, Director, ICAR-NRC on Yak set the celebration to motion by hoisting the ICAR flag. The event was marked by tree plantation drive, sports competition, farmers-scientist interaction and input distribution.

In his welcome address, Director, ICAR-NRC on Yak, outlined the Institute's progress and achievements through the years since its inception. He highlighted the various technologies developed and the support extended by the Institute to yak farming communities in various ways be it in the form of inputs or technological assistance. A progressive yak farmer who has recently established a semi-intensive farm at Lubrang village implicated modernization of younger generation and lack of economic remuneration offered by the occupation as the primary reasons for the declining yak population. Another farmer entrepreneur who has taken up value addition of yak milk and fibre advocated for organizing in the form of self-help groups to reap higher profits.

Shri J. Toko Obi, ADC, Dirang in his address, emphasized the social, cultural and economic significance of yak to the yak rearing communities. He also appreciated the efforts of the Institute to improve and conserve this precious livestock of the Monpas.

Mr. G.S. Bhatti, Executive Director, Central Wool Development Board(CWDB), Jodhpur urged for continuous effort towards sustainable yak farming through financially viable and profitable option of farming. He urged to seek opportunities in the sector of yak wool processing through various grants/schemes offered by the Government of India. He expressed keen interest in working with the state for promoting yak wool and assured complete support of CWDB in this regard.

Dr. D.B. Shakyawar, Director, ICAR-NINFET, Kolkata, was in agreement with Mr. G.S. Bhatti on tapping the opportunity for funding and stressed the importance of value addition of the products through entrepreneurship development. He acknowledged the need for a strong and sustainable supply chain and promotion of the unique selling proposition of yak products by branding it as "Organic". He believes that such branding will boost its market value even at the international level.

The programme was also attended by Dr. V.K. Mishra, Director, ICAR RC-NEH, Umiam, Meghalaya who congratulated the institute and suggested to promote yak-based integrated farming model. He also advised to take up natural farming practices to create model or climate smart villages. Director, ICAR-DPR, Hyderabad, Dr. R.N. Chatterjee greatly complimented the institute for its endeavors despite facing serious constraints like remote location and manpower shortage. He also proposed an integrated farming system with poultry birds to supplement the

livelihoods of yak pastoralists. Dr. Chatterjee also urged the scientists of the institute to take up studies related to yak microbiome and value addition of yak meat.

Dr. Neeraj Bhagava, CMO, IV Battalion, ITBP, Dirang gave a brief presentation on the importance of holistic approach to heart health. The event also witnessed distribution of inputs like salt, compounded feeds, tarpaulin, gum boots etc. to the yak farmers.