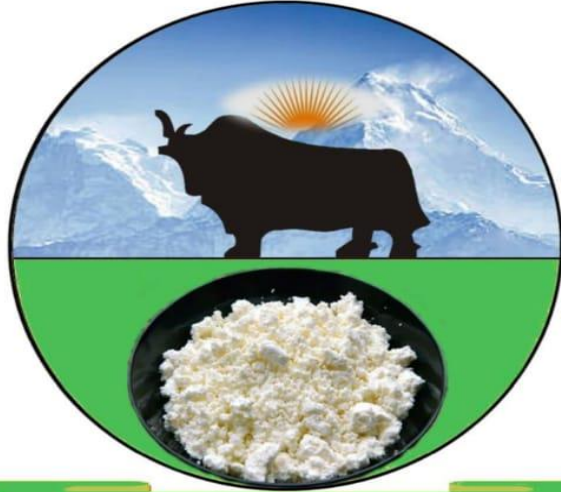


First ever yak milk product, Arunachal Pradesh Yak Churpi, gets GI tag

Churpi is prepared from the milk of *Arunachali* yak, which is a unique yak breed found in West Kameng and Tawang districts of Arunachal Pradesh. In a major boost to the pastoral production systems and yak rearing in the country, Yak Churpi, a naturally fermented milk product made from yak milk, has been given the recognition as a Geographical Indication (GI) of Arunachal Pradesh- Dr Mihir Sarkar, Director, ICAR- National Research Centre on Yak informed. Churpi is an excellent source of proteins and is frequently used as a substitute for vegetables by tribal yak herders in the vegetation-starved cold and hilly mountainous regions of the state. It is also mixed in vegetable or meat curry and is eaten with rice as a staple food in the tribal households. It is considered an integral part of the tangible cultural and tribal heritage of Arunachal Pradesh- says Sarkar.

This breed is reared by tribal yak pastoralists known as *Brokpas* who migrate along with their yaks to higher reaches (at an altitude of 10,000 ft and higher) during summers and descent to mid-altitude mountainous regions during winters. Since the product is prepared at such a high-altitude, it is also expected to provide benefits to the tribal herders against cold and hypoxia besides providing enriched nutrition, Dr Vijay Paul, Principal Scientist of NRC-Yak who was associated with the GI application process informed.

ICAR-National Research Centre on Yak situated at Dirang in West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh applied for registration of this unique yak product. The institute is closely working with the *Brokpas* rearing *Arunachali* yaks and is helping them through research and extension support. The services rendered by the institute assume greater significance in the light of fact that yak population throughout the country has been declining at a fast pace due to enormous hardships and dwindling gains associated with pastoral yak rearing. The registration of yak Churpi of Arunachal Pradesh as a GI is going to serve the cause of yak conservation and yak pastoralists' socio-economic upliftment. The application was greatly facilitated by National GI Technical Facilitator and expert Padamshri Dr Rajani Kant, Mr Partho Saha, the then CGM, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Arunachal Pradesh and Department of Animal Husbandry, Veterinary and Dairy Development, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.



Arunachal Pradesh Yak Churpi