## Press Release

## Kerala woos global investors in food tech sector at meet in Dubai

## - State marks strong presence at Gulfood 2024 in Dubai

Thiruvananthapuram, February 22: Kerala presented its potential in the food, ready-to-eat and food tech sector before investors, entrepreneurs and well-wishers who attended the 'Investor Conclave' organised by the Kerala State Industrial Corporation (KSIDC) in Dubai on Wednesday, coinciding with the Gulfood 2024.

The Kerala Pavilion at the Gulfood 2024, one of the world's largest food and beverages events, is also attracting global policymakers and industry leaders at the five-day expo that opened at the World Trade Centre on Monday.

The 'Invest Kerala" event at the Ritz Carlton Dubai showcased the strengths and opportunities in the state's food and food technology sector, identified as a priority sectors by the Kerala government for further inward investments and development.

Shri Suman Billa IAS, Principal Secretary (Industries and NORKA), presented a detailed overview of the state's food ecosystem.
"Today, Kerala has an impressive infrastructure dedicated to food processing, including five state-of-the-art food processing parks, two mega food parks \& upcoming mini food parks. The state is also home to a spices park, underscoring its rich heritage in spice cultivation," he said.
"These facilities serve as hubs of innovation and efficiency, facilitating seamless transformation of raw materials into value-added products. With its fertile land and conducive climate, the state is a powerhouse of agricultural production. We are encouraged by the response to the Investor Conclave and will support investors in their entrepreneurial journey in Kerala's food and food tech sector."

Welcoming the investors, Shri S Harikishore, Managing Director, KSIDC and Director, Department of Industries \& Commerce, said the Investor Conclave aims to attract foreign investment in Kerala's high-growth food sector as well as inspire entrepreneurs from the Gulf region to build flourishing businesses in the state.
"The Kerala state government is committed to creating an enabling environment for both domestic and foreign investors to engage in the food-based ecosystem," he said.
"From easy access to raw materials to a well-established network of manufacturing facilities, the state offers an ecosystem ripe for investment. Further, the state's cosmopolitan outlook and extensive international market provide ample opportunities for growth and expansion," he added.

Shri Sunjay Sudhir, Ambassador of India to the UAE and Mr Saleh Abdullah Lootah, Chairman, Food \& Beverage Manufacturing Business Group, UAE, also addressed the guests.

The Kerala co-exhibitors at the Kerala pavilion at Gulfood 2024, that included Beecraft Honey, Cremberie Yoghurt, Foo Foods, Glenview Tea, Global Natural Food Processing Company, Harrisons Malayalam, Malabar Natural Foods, Manjilas Food Tech, Nasfood Exim, Pavizham Rice, Protech Organo and Veliyath Food Products were also provided with an opportunity to interact with the potential investors who participated at the Investors Conclave.

Kerala's food ecosystem has benefited from a series of reforms that build on the Kerala State Industrial Policy 2023, providing a much-needed impetus to the sunrise sectors.Today, Kerala contributes significantly to India's agricultural output, accounting for $97 \%$ of India's pepper, $70 \%$ of cocoa, and substantial shares in coffee, cashew, coconut, and seafood processing.

Kerala also has a robust ecosystem of research and development institutions dedicated to the food sector. Institutions such as the Central Institute of Fisheries Technology, Central Tuber Crops Research Institute, and Kerala Agricultural University foster innovation and excellence.

With these systems in place, the State is poised to be the next big name in the food processing sector, both nationally \& internationally.

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Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation Limited
Keston Road, Kowdiar, Thiruvananthapuram 695 003, Kerala, India Tel : +91-471-2318922 | Fax : +91-471-2315893
Email : enquiry@ksidcmail.org | www.ksidc.org
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