

(November 18 – 19, 2025)

**Dr R S Paroda delivered address on “Non-Affordability and Promoting Native Fruit Conservation for Sustainable Food and Nutritional Security” during the National Conference on Strengthening Food Systems through Increased Fruit Cultivation.**

Dr RS Paroda, Founder Chairman of the Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS) delivered the inaugural address at the **National Conference on Strengthening Food Systems through Increased Fruit Cultivation (CFI-2025)** on November 18-19, 2025, jointly organized by ICAR, Alliance Bioversity & CIAT, Jain Irrigation Systems Ltd., and CHAI, aligns with the objective of "Advancing scientific research and funding initiatives to increase fruit accessibility for low-income families". Dr Paroda's remarks highlighted the commendable progress in horticultural production while stressing the critical need to translate this success into tangible nutritional and economic benefits for all citizens, particularly vulnerable communities.

Dr Paroda acknowledged the significant strides made in horticultural production in recent years, which have ensured the widespread availability of fruits and vegetables across the country. However, he voiced a serious concern: non-affordability. Despite increased production, the price of nutritious fruits remains out of reach for many low-income families, negating the nutritional benefits of the production boom.

Dr Paroda emphasized on the conservation and evaluation of local and lesser-known fruit trees. He stressed the importance of reviving these species for both nutritional security and community empowerment. The conference agenda, which includes sessions on "Enhancing and Conserving Fruit Tree Diversity to Strengthen Nutritional Security" and presentations on indigenous and underutilized wild fruits, reflects this critical focus.

A key takeaway from his address was the need to develop a robust value chain for fruits to ensure better nutrition and increased income of farmers. Dr Paroda underscored that sustained productivity must be linked to efficient post-harvest management and value addition. By creating an effective value chain, the economic viability of fruit cultivation can be enhanced, offering a sustainable livelihood and improving nutritional outcomes for small and marginal farmers.

Dr Paroda concluded by urging all stakeholders—scientists, policymakers, and industry leaders—to commit to collaborative action to make the vision of "Fruitful India" a reality for every citizen.



A Book “Fruitful Insights” was also released at this occasion.

