

# Rice with zinc, wheat having protein to fight malnutrition

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**New Delhi:** Rice having excess zinc and wheat, enriched with protein and iron, are among 17 new biofortified varieties of crops that have been developed and released for cultivation.

The new varieties of 16 different crops seek to reduce malnutrition as they are a source of staple diet rich in micronutrients, agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar said on Sunday. Developed by various institutions under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), these are 1.5 to 3 times more nutritious than the traditional varieties.

Similarly, the hybrid maize varieties are enriched with lysine and tryptophan, the finger varieties of millet (CFMV1 and 2) are rich in calcium, iron and zinc and small millet (CCLMV1) variety is rich in iron and zinc. The list also includes new varieties of



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mustard and peanuts.

The addition of the 17 new varieties has taken the list of such biofortified types to 71. It includes 22 varieties of wheat, followed by 11 of maize, eight of pearl millet, seven of rice and three each of finger millet, mustard and soybean.

Addressing the G20 agriculture ministers' meet, Tomar spoke about making India as a destination of healthy food and appealed to the participating nations to support the celebration of 2023 as 'In-

ternational Millet Year' to promote nutrition and sustainable agriculture even as India has been taking multiple efforts to promote cultivation of such crops.

In order to promote use of these biofortified varieties, the government plans to link them with several programmes — Mid-Day Meal and Anganwadi — to make India free from malnutrition at a time when the country is estimated to have 15.2% of its population which is undernourished.