

THE RICE DIVERSITY CENTER

Karnataka, Mandya District



*Founder of the Rice Diversity Center
Photo: Syed Ghani Khan*

The Rice Diversity Centre at Kirugavalu is an initiative led by Syed Ghani Khan, located in Kirugavalu, a village in the Mandya district of Karnataka, India. The center aims to conserve and promote the diversity of rice varieties, as well as support sustainable agriculture practices.

The center has a collection of over 1350 traditional and heirloom rice varieties, which are preserved and cultivated using organic farming methods. The main aim of the diversity center is to protect these diverse rice varieties from extinction and promote their use among farmers, thus conserving biodiversity and cultural heritage.

Additionally, the rice center conserves around 100 varieties of millet, 120 varieties of mangoes, 50 varieties of apples, and 30 varieties of vegetables, including tomatoes and lady fingers.

The founder of the seed bank won the Plant Genome Savior Community Award in 2010.

The Rice Diversity Centre also serves as a knowledge hub, providing training and education to farmers, researchers, and students on sustainable agriculture practices, rice cultivation, and biodiversity conservation.

Around 100 farmers from across India annually access seeds from the seed bank. Seeds are distributed to farmers free of charge, as 'seeds are a gift from nature'.

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