**Press Release**

**Minister Rajeeve pitches for partnership in food sector, presents Kerala's growth story to investors in Chennai**

**Thiruvananthapuram, Aug 09**: Minister for Industries, Law and Coir Shri P Rajeeve has called for greater cooperation and collaboration in adopting emerging technologies for the growing food processing industry.

The minister was delivering the guest of honour address at Foodpro 2024, the 15th edition of the International Conference and Exhibition on Emerging Technologies in the Food Processing Sector, which opened in Chennai on Friday.

“The growth of the food processing sector hinges on effective collaboration between industry, academia, and government. We must work together to drive innovation and growth,” Shri Rajeeve said.

Kerala has embraced emerging technologies, such as blockchain and automation to advance the food processing sector, which significantly improve efficiency, reduce waste, and ensure food safety.

“In Kerala, we have witnessed several successful projects where technology has been leveraged to enhance food processing. For instance, our initiatives in cold chain logistics and smart packaging have set new benchmarks in the industry.”

He presented the state’s vision for the food processing sector as one of growth, innovation, and sustainability. He proposed creating a robust ecosystem that supports the development of new technologies and practices.

He invited investors and industry leaders to explore Kerala's vast opportunities and join the state's journey towards a prosperous and sustainable future.

Urging stakeholders to explore opportunities for collaboration and contribute to the development of this sector, he said Kerala had fostered several successful partnerships that have yielded remarkable results.

Organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), stakeholders showcase the latest trends and technologies and deliberate on the challenges and opportunities for the sector's development at the three-day event.

This edition's theme is "Accelerating Growth Scale for Food Industries." The minister hailed it as “timely and relevant as we strive to harness the full potential of this vital sector.”

The minister described the food processing sector as a cornerstone of the Kerala economy and said it plays a pivotal role in ensuring food security and enhancing the agricultural value chain.

“In Kerala, we have been proactive in promoting the food processing sector through various policy initiatives and support mechanisms,” Shri Rajeeve said.

The Kerala government has introduced several schemes and subsidies to encourage innovation and investment in food processing.

The state’s food parks and incubation centres support startups and MSMEs, fostering growth while ensuring the food industry remains competitive and sustainable.

“As we strive for growth, it is imperative that we do so sustainably. The food processing industry must adopt eco-friendly practices to minimise its environmental impact,” the minister said.

“Our focus on renewable energy, waste management, and water conservation in the food processing sector is a testament to our dedication to environmental responsibility.”

Shri APM Mohammed Hanish IAS, Principal Secretary (Industries & Commerce) Kerala, Dr R Nandini, Chairperson, CII Southern Region, Shri B Thiagarajan, Chairman – CII Foodpro Expo 2024, and others also spoke.

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