Training on "Scientific Meat Processing and Value Addition: A Skill Development Initiative for Rural Women" Organized at ERS, ICAR-IVRI, Kolkata

The Eastern Regional Station of ICAR-Indian Veterinary Research Institute (ICAR-IVRI), Kolkata, organized a hands-on training programme on **"Scientific Meat Processing and Value Addition: A Skill Development Initiative for Rural Women"** under its Development Action Plan for Scheduled Castes (DAPSC) scheme. The programme was attended by twenty-four women beneficiaries (n=24) from Canning-I Block of South 24 Parganas district and Bongaon block of North 24 Parganas district, West Bengal. These beneficiaries had previously received poultry-rearing inputs, including chicks, feed, supplements, and medicines under the DAPSC scheme, and were actively engaged in poultry farming. The training was designed to empower rural women through skill development by equipping them with knowledge and practical expertise in converting raw poultry meat into value-added products. The programme emphasized the efficient utilization of low-value meat cuts to produce attractive, convenient, and marketable products capable of generating higher returns and improved profit margins. Apart from serving as an effective strategy to mitigate market fluctuations during periods of excess meat supply and low market prices, value-added meat products offer consumers greater convenience, variety, and

ready-to-eat options that align with changing lifestyles while providing enhanced quality, palatability, and nutritional value.

The programme commenced with a welcome address by Dr. G. K. Das, Principal Scientist and Nodal Officer (DAPSC), who outlined the objectives of the skill development initiative and elaborated on the role of meat value addition in women's empowerment through enhanced income generation and improved household nutrition. Addressing the participants, Dr. Arnab Sen, Head of Regional Centre (HoRC), ERS, ICAR-IVRI, Kolkata, emphasized the immense potential of meat value addition as a viable entrepreneurial venture and encouraged the trainees to explore it as a source of sustainable livelihood.

Following the inaugural session, participants attended theoretical lectures, practical demonstrations, and hands-on training sessions on the preparation of value-added meat products. To familiarize the trainees with meat-processing technologies, Dr. Arun K. Das, Principal Scientist, ERS, ICAR-IVRI, Kolkata, provided detailed explanations on the operation and applications of various processing equipment, including meat slicers, sausage fillers, meat mincers, bowl choppers, steam cookers, deep-fat fryers, and hot-air ovens. He also underscored the critical importance of

maintaining stringent hygiene and sanitation standards during meat processing and encouraged the participants to adhere to good personal hygiene practices while handling meat and meat products. The theoretical sessions were subsequently reinforced through practical demonstrations and participatory training exercises.

During the practical sessions, the trainees were introduced to the preparation of emulsion-based meat products. Demonstrations covered key processing steps such as deboning, size reduction, seasoning with spices and condiments, emulsion preparation, and batter formulation. Under expert supervision, the participants prepared meat emulsions by incorporating ingredients in appropriate proportions and sequences. Using the prepared batter, they successfully developed a range of value-added products, including patties, sausages, nuggets, and meatballs. Among the products demonstrated, chicken croquettes prepared using chicken meat, breadcrumbs, whole egg liquid, flour, and other ingredients emerged as the most popular owing to their crispy texture, superior palatability, and attractive appearance.

All participants were provided with training and awareness kits comprising folders, notepads, pens, masks, aprons, and headgear. In addition, they received scientific literature and technical bulletins detailing standard

procedures for the preparation and processing of value-added meat products such as patties, meatballs, and nuggets.

The programme is expected to significantly enhance the confidence, technical competence, and entrepreneurial abilities of the women beneficiaries. By promoting skill-based value addition in poultry meat processing, the initiative has the potential to create sustainable opportunities for supplementary income generation, strengthen household food and nutritional security, and contribute to the socio-economic empowerment of rural women under the DAPSC scheme.