



New wheat type for peninsular region

Our Delhi Bureau

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EVER heard of quality wheat from the southern peninsula? Well, the times are changing and those soft chappatis and premium breads and biscuits you drool over could, at least in the coming crop seasons, be fashioned out of wheat from Karnataka, Maharashtra, AP, Goa and the plains of Tamil Nadu. If the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR), country's premier agricultural research organisation, manages to come up with a good marketing pitch to farmers, not only would you be getting good quality staples from non-traditional regions but you could find commodities like quality wheat

coming into the market much earlier and much later in the season than usual.

The NIAW 917 and PBW 533 varieties of wheat, specially tailored for the peninsular zone, are among the seven new varieties of wheat identified for release in separate agro climatic conditions today by the ICAR, ahead of the Rabi season. According to the organisation, while the NIAW 917 is superior in yield (average yield 43 q/ha), disease resistant and high quality, the PBW 533 variety is resistant to both stem and leaf rust although the average yield of 37 q/ha is lower. PBW 533, developed by Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, has "excellent chapatti quality and very good bread and biscuit quality," ICAR contends.