

Food processing biz needs a tech upgrade: Study

Encourage Startups: Assocham

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Indore: Inadequate food processing facilities in the state is leading to massive wastage of food and huge loss to farmers every year.

A study released by Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) on Wednesday shows that lack of skilled manpower, technology knowhow and unfriendly food processing policy is hampering the growth of the food processing industry in the state.

'GOVT SHOULD CHANGE POLICY'

The study was jointly conducted by Assocham and Thought Arbitrage Research Institute (TARI) on "Food Processing Industry: Contributing to Make in India". "Madhya Pradesh is largely an agrarian economy despite that the state has failed to develop the processing industry because of lack of government incentives and poor per capita income of farmers," said Assocham's secretary general D S Rawat.

Rawat said that the farmers of the state are largely dependent on agriculture and not able to avail the be-



TARI director Kaushik and Assocham secretary general

nefits of food processing units. Madhya Pradesh has a lot of potential to develop the food processing industry as it is the largest producer of soybean, pulses and third largest grower of wheat in the country, according to Assocham.

"The government should promote local entrepreneurship and startups should be encouraged in the field of food processing," Rawat said. He added that the major challenge the food processing industry faces in the state is lack of skilled manpower and technology upgradation.

"The state is suffering lot of loss due to lack of food processing units. The capacity should be grown," said TARI director Kshama Kaushik. The study on food processing suggest that the Centre should evolve a 'comprehensive food safety policy,' with integration of international concepts and guidelines to increase farm produce supply for the sector to 30 per cent in medium term from current level of about 10 per cent.