

CFTRI brews a new source of income through coffee leaves for growers

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Here is a chance for coffee growers to get additional income from their plants throughout the year. The Mysuru-based CFTRI (Central Food Technological Research Institute) has developed a technology to prepare a value-added product from coffee leaves that packs in health benefits, too.

Pushpa S Murthy, Principal Scientist (Spice and Flavour Science Department) of CFTRI, told *BusinessLine* that with this coffee leaf brew mix, growers could look at an additional income from their plants beyond the usual three-month harvest period.

This technology follows a CFTRI project on the development of value-added products from coffee leaves taken up in 2019. The project was funded by the Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries.

If farmers can use the leaves which can be harves-



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ted during the off-season or during pruning, without interfering with coffee bean growth, it will have a great impact on the social elevation of coffee farmers, she said.

Easy process

She said the coffee leaves are usually discarded as a by-product. The preparation of beverage from coffee leaf is native to Ethiopia and is known as “kuti tea”, and as “Kahwa daun” in West Sumatra and Indonesia. However, Murthy said the preparation in these regions is different from the one that CFTRI has de-

veloped. The brew can be prepared with water, allowed for a few minutes to steep, filtered and consumed. The institute has initiated the transfer of this technology to the coffee industry, and a few industry participants have already extended their consent, she said.

The leaf brew does not really taste like coffee, according to Murthy. “The brew is subtle with less caffeine compared to coffee or tea,” she said.

On the nutritional value of the beverage, she said coffee leaves are rich in phenolic acids with potential health benefits. A coffee leaf contains around 17 per cent more antioxidants than green tea. The beverage should be consumed plain. The beverage accords health-promoting polyphenols like chlorogenic acid and mangiferin which help in reducing blood glucose levels, inflammation and blood pressure, she said.