



AGRICULTURE HISTORY

50 Years of IR8: A Tribute to the 'Miracle Rice' that Helped India Fight One Of Its Worst Famines

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November 24, 2016, 5:41 pm

In 1967, when a 29-year-old Nekkanti Subba Rao sowed a semidwarf variety of rice in over 2,000 hectares in Atchanta, West Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh, he had no idea that the grain he was sowing would start the first Green Revolution. The grain was IR8, a rice variety that could produce as much as seven tonnes of rice per hectare, while the traditional seeds could produce only two tonnes per hectare.

This November, International Rice Research Institute is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the official release of the IR8 rice variety to Asia and the world. It was developed by rice scientists working at IRRI in the early 60s that is believed to have saved many regions in India from famine after it was released in November 1966.