

Inspired by the success of IR8, Indian scientists began experimenting with IR8. In 1967, IRRI recruited Dr. Gurdev Khush to develop high-yielding rice varieties with short growth duration, resistance to diseases and insects, and superior grain quality. In less than five years, he became head of IRRI's plant breeding department and was well on his way to developing his own new varieties of "miracle rice" such as IR 20, IR 36 and IR 50

The resulting 300-plus improved varieties were distributed to rice-growing countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In Vietnam, IR8 was fondly called "Honda rice", as one good harvest of this rice assured farmers enough money to fund a Honda motorcycle! World rice production increased from 257 million tons in 1966 to 686 million tons by 2010, a Green Revolution that feeds more than a billion people every year. One of these varieties, IR36, is the most widely planted food crop ever grown.

Dr. Gurdev Khush shared the 1996 World Food Prize with his mentor, Dr. Henry Beachell, for their unparalleled achievements in enlarging and improving the supply of rice, one of the world's largest food crops.