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## Parboiled Rice

### Context:

Recently, Telangana Chief Minister and members of his Cabinet staged a dharna at Telangana House, demanding a uniform paddy procurement policy. The protest came after the Centre said it was stopping the purchase of excess parboiled rice, of which Telangana is a major producer. The Centre has said demand is low and it cannot waste money on buying the excess quantity of parboiled rice.

### Relevance:

GS II- Health

### Dimensions of the Article:

1. What is parboiled rice?
2. Are all rice varieties suitable for parboiling?
3. Advantages
4. Disadvantages
5. How high is the demand?

### What is parboiled rice?

- The dictionary meaning of 'parboil' is 'partly cooked by boiling'.
- Thus, the expression parboiled rice refers to rice that has been partially boiled at the paddy stage, before milling.
- Parboiling of rice is not a new practice, and has been followed in India since ancient times.
- However, there is no specific definition of parboiled rice of the Food Corporation of India or the Food Ministry.



### There are several processes for parboiling rice:

- The Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI), Mysuru, uses a method in which the paddy is soaked in hot water for three hours, in contrast to the more common method in which paddy is soaked for 8 hours.
  - The water is then drained and the paddy steamed for 20 minutes. Also, the paddy is dried in the shade in the method used by the CFTRI, but is sun-dried in the common method.
- The Paddy Processing Research Centre (PPRC), Thanjavur follows a method known as the chromate soaking process.
  - It uses chromate, a family of salt in which the anion contains both chromium and oxygen, which removes the odour from the wet rice.
- All processes generally involve three stages—soaking, steaming and drying. After passing through these stages, the paddy goes for milling.

### PARBOILED RICE STOCK WITH FCI (LAKH TONNES)

STATE	STOCKS
Andhra Pradesh	0.66
Telangana	16.52
Chhattisgarh	1.49
Odisha	2.07
Jharkhand	2.98
Kerala	3.00
Tamil Nadu	12.09
West Bengal	0.43
Karnataka	0.1
Bihar	1.09
Haryana	0.11
Punjab	0.04
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40.58</b>

*As on April 1. Source: Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution*



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## Are all rice varieties suitable for parboiling?

- Generally, all varieties can be processed into parboiled rice, but it is ideal to use long slender varieties to prevent breakage during milling.
- However, aromatic varieties should not be parboiled because the process can make it can lose its aroma.

### Advantages:

- Parboiling makes rice tougher.
- This reduces the chances of the rice kernel breaking during milling.
- Parboiling also increases the nutrient value of the rice.
- Parboiled rice has a higher resistance to insects and fungi.

### Disadvantages:

- The rice becomes darker and may smell unpleasant due to prolonged soaking.
- Besides, setting up a parboiling rice milling unit requires a higher investment than a raw rice milling unit.

## How high is the demand?

- The Food Ministry pegs the parboiled rice demand at 20 LMT per annum for distribution under the National Food Security Act, 2013.
- According to the Ministry, the demand for parboiled rice has come down in recent years.
- In the last few years, production in parboiled rice-consuming states such as Jharkhand, Kerala and Tamil Nadu has increased, resulting in less movement to the deficit states.
- Earlier, the Food Corporation of India (FCI) used to procure parboiled rice from states such as Telangana to supply to these states.
- But in recent years, parboiled rice production has increased in these states. So, the Ministry says, the current stock of parboiled rice is sufficient to meet the demand for the next two years.



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