

ISS

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Message

Spices are one of the oldest traded commodities in the world, still in great demand. India is considered as the 'Spice Bowl' of the world and we stand first in the production and consumption of spices. Indian Society for Spices (ISS) a dedicated professional organization located at the ICAR- Indian Institute of Spices Research (IISR), Kozhikode was established in 1991 under Societies Registration Act 1860 (Reg. No. 179/1993) to harmonize spice farmers, researchers, policymakers, and spice enthusiasts. We aim to promote research, development, and promotion activities in the spice sector by conducting seminars, symposiums, and workshops, in addition to publishing a research journal. ISS organizing seminars since its inception it was named SYMSAC (Symposium on Spices and Aromatic Crops) in 2004 and the first SYMSAC was organized in the same year and the 10th edition was conducted in the year 2021. Journal of Spices and Aromatic Plants (JOSAC-ISSN:0971-3328) is an internationally peer-reviewed open-access multidisciplinary journal published by ISS that focuses on the advancements in crop production, improvement, post-harvest, and extension reaserch in spices and aromatic sector that has reached 32 volumes this year. JOSAC has a rating of 5.11 by NAAS. Here, ISS is presenting the first e-Newsletter that will serve as an open platform to share, innovations, new initiatives, events, and achievements of the members of ISS, other researchers, students, and farmers. We hope that this new venture will be highly useful to readers and well-wishers across the globe. I thank the Editorial team for their efforts to bringing out this first e-Newsletter of ISS.

Dr. K. Kandiannan
(President, ISS)

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Indian Society for Spices (ISS)...

History

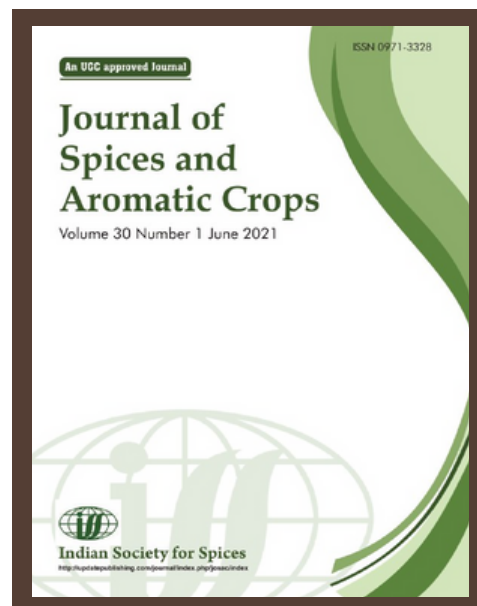
The Indian Society for Spices was established in 1991 for the advancement of research and development in spices, aromatic and related crops. It was registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860, with the registration number 179/1993. The Pioneers of the society were Dr. A. Ramadasan (President), Dr. R. Naidu & Mr. M.S.P. Rajesh (Vice Presidents), Dr. P.N. Ravindran (Secretary), Dr. A.K. Sadanandan (Joint Secretary) and Dr. K.V. Ramana (Treasurer).

Aims

The society aims at providing a forum for research workers to exchange ideas and as a catalytic link between research and development organizations and the industry. The society organizes symposia, conferences and seminars in collaboration with other organizations on aspects relevant to spices and aromatic crops.

Milestones

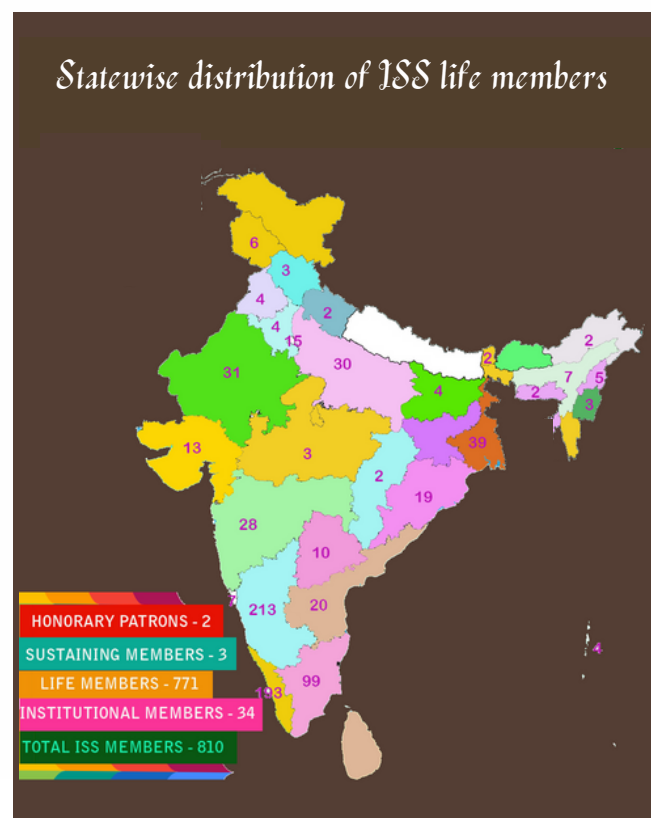
- 1991: Established
- 1992: JOSAC publication initiated
- 1993: Registration under Societies Registration Act 1860 (Reg. No. 179/1993)
- 1998: Sugandha Bharathi Award started
- 2004: SYMSAC-I: 01-02 November 2004 at ICAR-IISR, Kozhikode
- 2005: SYMSAC-II during 25-27 November 2005 at NRC for Onion and Garlic, Rajgurunagar, Pune
- 2006: SYMSAC-III during 08-10 November 2006 at Lalbagh, Bengaluru
- 2007: SYMSC- IV during 25-26 November 2007 at OUAT, Bhubaneswar
- 2009: SYMSAC-V during 30-31 October 2009 at CIH, Medziphema, Nagaland
- 2010: Dr. JS Pruthi Award started
- 2009: SYMSAC- VI during 08-10 December 2011 at UAS, Dharward
- 2011: ISS Fellowship started
- 2013: SYMSAC-VII during 27-29 November 2013 at Hotel Crystal Court, Madikeri, Karnataka
- 2013: Dr. VS Korikanthimath best Ph.D. thesis award started
- 2013: Smt. Vijaya V. Korikanthimath best M.Sc. thesis award started
- 2015: SYMSAC - VIII during 16-18 December 2015 at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu
- 2018: SYMSAC- IX during 15-17 March 2018 at SASRD, Nagaland University, Medziphema Campus, Nagaland
- 2021: SYMSAC X- during 09-12 February 2021 on virtual mode



Journal of Spices and Aromatic Crops (JOSAC)

JOSAC, [ISSN 0971-3328] is the official publication of Indian Society for Spices that was started in December 1992. It has volume in an year and now it reached 32nd volumes. JOSAC is an international, peer-reviewed, open-access journal devoted to the advancement of spices, aromatic and related crops with the NAAS rating of 5.11.

ISS Members Corner



ISS Events

ISS Annual General Body Meeting- 2023

The annual general body meeting of the Indian Society for Spices was held on 5 January 2023 at ICAR-Indian Institute of Spices Research, Kozhikode on hybrid mode. Dr. S. J. Ankegowda, Vice President, ISS presided over the meeting and also welcomed the members. Dr. C.N. Biju, Secretary, ISS presented proceedings of the previous General Body Meeting held on 27 May 2020 and Secretary's report for the period, June 2020 to December 2022. The General Body approved the proceedings and the Secretary's report pertaining to previous years. Ms. R. Sivaranjani, Treasurer, ISS presented the audited accounts of the Society for the period April 2021 to March 2022, which was approved by the general body.



Annual General Body Meeting of ISS

Dr. A. Ishwara Bhat, Editor-in-Chief, the Journal of Spices and Aromatic Crops (JOSAC), presented the Editor's report. Mr. John George, Chief Technical Officer, ICAR-IISR, Kozhikode and the returning officer of the election of ISS office bearers for the period 2022-2024 declared the results. The following members were declared elected unopposed: President: Dr. K. Kandianan, Principal Scientist, ICAR- IISR; Vice President: Dr. S. J. Ankegowda, Principal Scientist and Head (i/c), ICAR- IISR, Regional Station, Appangala; Secretary: Dr. Sharon Aravind, Scientist, ICAR- IISR, Kozhikode; Executive Council members- Dr. M. Tamil Selvan, Additional Commissioner (Horticulture), Rtd, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Govt. of India, Dr. V.V. Radhakrishnan, Professor, Department of Botany & Dean, University of Calicut, Dr. K. Abhirami, Senior Scientist, Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI), Port Blair; E. Jayashree, Principal Scientist, ICAR- IISR, Kozhikode and Dr. Anees K., Senior Scientist, ICAR- IISR, Kozhikode. The General Body unanimously elected Dr. Gobu R, Scientist, ICAR-IISR, Kozhikode as Joint Secretary and Dr. Maneesha S. R. Scientist, ICAR-IISR, Kozhikode as Treasurer. The GB appointed Mr. P. A. Thankachan as the Auditor for the period 2023-24. The new Executive Council assumed charge immediately after the declaration and approval of results by the General Body. New EC thanked the outgoing team for their best efforts to conduct the International Symposium, many online meetings, webinars, and upgrading JOSAC, etc., and assured to do the best possible services to ISS. The GB members approved the proposal of a separate Editorial platform for JOSAC which will additionally cost Rs. 46000/-annum. It was also decided to continue the publication ISS Newsletter. The new EC will nominate the Editorial Team for the ISS Newsletter and decide the periodicity of publication and other relevant issues. The meeting was concluded with a vote of thanks proposed by Dr. C.N. Biju, Secretary, ISS.

ISS Executive Council Meeting

On January 30, 2023, the ICAR-Indian Institute of Spices Research in Kozhikode hosted the Executive Council meeting of the Indian Society for Spices (ISS) in hybrid mode. The Secretary delivered the minutes of the previous General Body meeting, which took place at ICAR-IISR in Kozhikode on January 5, 2023, and the EC accepted it. One vice president and five members of the Executive Council were proposed by the Executive Council. Council has decided to include one more member in each zone and also to ensure membership from the spice industry. The new Editorial Board for the Journal of Spices and Aromatic Crops (JOSAC) was also unanimously approved by the EC. An editorial board for the ISS e-Newsletter was proposed and it was also decided to publish ISS's accomplishments throughout the previous 30 years. The members of the EC suggested holding SYMSAC XI in September-October 2024. In the years that SYMSAC is not held, it was also agreed to organize State level farmer's meets in various states. The ISS President gave an update on the status of the life members.

One-day brainstorming session on label claim expansion for spices

In partnership with the Spices Board, IISR held a one-day brainstorming session of 'label claim expansion for spices' on April 18, 2023, to examine how to expand the label claims of pesticides that have been shown to be effective against insect pests and illnesses of spice crops. This event featured participation from a number of parties, including research groups, state agricultural universities, pesticide producers, and export organizations. It was beneficial for data curing and subsequent submission to CIB & RC for registration of efficient compounds.



Innovative Technologies

Microbial Encapsulation Technology

The technology involves encapsulation of microorganisms of interest in a gelatin capsule for smart delivery to agricultural crops, to enhance growth, soil nutrient solubilization, disease management and to increase yield. Each gelatin cover filled with the encapsulated formulation weighs about one gram and under ideal conditions, a single capsule will have up to 10¹² colony forming units (CFU) of the micro-organism. This technique can be used for delivering all kinds of agriculturally important micro-organisms, viz., N fixers, nutrient solubilizers/mobilizers, Plant Growth Promoting Rhizobacteria (PGPR), Trichoderma, etc.



Advantages of the technology include low production cost, easy to handle and store, enhanced shelf life, production and storage at normal temperature, smart and precise microbial delivery to crops and eco-friendly. Presently the technology is licensed to seven firms including the international firm M/S Lysterra LLC, Russia and the bio capsules produced under the license by Indian firms are currently available in the market. ICAR-Indian Institute of Spices Research, Kozhikode has received patent (Patent No. 361021) for microbial encapsulation technology, a novel method of storing and delivering microbes.

IISR VAJRA – A New Ginger variety

The ICAR-Indian Institute of Spices Research, Kozhikode has developed an extra bold and high yielding ginger variety, IISR Vajra. The variety is characterized with bold and plumpy rhizomes suitable for vegetable ginger and for processing industry.



Rhizomes of IISR Vajra

Characteristic features

- High yield potential (26.38 t/ha)
- The rhizome has yellow core, bold and plumpy with medium fibre (5.67%)
- Essential oil (2.15%), oleoresin (7.26%) and dry recovery (20.7%)
- Desirable flavour with high zingiberene (29.83%)
- Suitable for Kerala, Karnataka, Odisha and West Bengal



Field view of IISR Vajra

In News

International Year of Millet Celebration - 2023 by ICAR-IISR, Kozhikode

As a part of the International Year of Millets Celebration-2023, a two days Entrepreneurship Development Programme on 'Value Addition in Millets' was organized at ICAR-Indian Institute of Spices Research, Kozhikode on 3rd and 4th May, 2023. The programme was inaugurated by Dr. R. Dinesh, Director, ICAR-IISR, Kozhikode on 3rd May 2023. Dr. B. Dayakar Rao, Principal Scientist, ICAR-IIMR, Hyderabad delivered the keynote address on the topic 'Landscape of Millet Nutrition, Production, Processing and its Commercialization'. Ms. Bindu Gowri, Coordinator, Agri Business School, KVK, Coimbatore delivered a special address on 'Perspective of Millets in Kerala'. She demonstrated and provided hands on training on millet based value added products like the preparation of ragi soup powder mix, biriyani mix, nutrient health mix, millet mixture and millet based murukku to the trainees. About 64 participants were benefitted by the training and the valedictory programme was held on 4th May 2023.



Dr. R. Dinesh, Director, ICAR-IISR felicitating the resource person



Trainees with team ICAR-IISR

MIDH Annual Review meeting by DASD, kozhikode

The 17th Annual Review Meeting of MIDH programmes implemented by the Directorate of Arecanut and Spices (DASD) was hosted by ARS Mandor, Agri University, Jodhpur on 8-9th June 2023. Seventy delegates from 45 implementing centres across the country participated in the meeting. Dr B R Chaudhary, Vice Chancellor, Agricultural University (AU) Jodhpur inaugurated the review meeting. He highlighted the achievements made by the university in spices sector under the MIDH scheme in western Rajasthan.



17th Annual Review Meeting of MIDH programmes implemented by DASD

Dr Ratnoo, Director of Research, AU Jodhpur welcomed the guests and delegates to the inaugural session. Dr Homey Cheriyan, Director, DASD delivered a brief introductory remark on the role of spices in Indian economy and contribution of development programmes implemented by Govt of India to the economy.

Success story of a turmeric licensee

Mrs. Geetha Saleesh, a woman entrepreneur from Thrissur, Kerala, being disabled never stopped her from achieving her goals. During the pandemic time, she ventured into a startup named “Geetha’s home to Home” and marketed food supplements. Through the journey, she understood the value of high curcumin turmeric varieties developed by ICAR-IISR and entered into an MoU with the institute for large scale cultivation of turmeric variety IISR Prathibha.

This has opened a new door to the turmeric value chain in front of Geetha’s Home to Home and the firm started cultivation of high curcumin variety IISR Prathibha in 10 acres comprising of 47 farmer fields in Thrissur and Pathanamthitta. Her product “Curcumeal” prepared by blending turmeric with other ingredients was successful. Geetha later launched the product ‘First Drink’ using turmeric and other spices such as black pepper and cinnamon. When Geetha thought of expanding the turmeric cultivation in farmer’s fields, the major problem was the price instability of turmeric seeds. This was resolved by executing the MoU with the farmers by assuring a 100% buy back at a higher price than the market, benefiting both the farmers and the business. In 2023-24, the firm expanded the cultivation of IISR Prathibha into 54 acres including 315 farmers of 6 districts in Kerala viz., Thrissur, Palakkad, Kollam, Idukki, Ernakulam and Pathanamthitta, with the support of ICAR-IISR. Currently the firm is associated with 305 farmers including FPOs & 150 women farmers in 6 districts. She won nine national and international awards also.



Curcumeal



Turmeric powder



First Drink



Mrs. Geetha Saleesh in IISR Prathibha fields at Thrissur



Mrs. Geetha Saleesh with Hon'ble DG, ICAR during ICAR Foundation cum Technology day

Farmers Corner

K.T. Francis, Kaithakualath House, Maruthomkara, of Kozhikode district is an award-winning progressive farmer of Kerala state. He initiated farming after retiring from his profession as a physical education teacher. He owns three acres of land and mainly coconut-based mixed farming is practiced in the entire farm. The main crops included in his mixed farming system are coconut, areca nut, spices, cocoa, coffee, tuber crops, medicinal plants, fruit plants, forest trees, fodder grass, and upland rice. Black pepper is the main spice crop of the garden. A total of 500 vines in different growth stages are grown on the farm. He cultivates high-yielding varieties like Sreekara, Subhakara, IISR Thevam, Panchami, Pournami and Panniyur 6. Local cultivars like Narayakkodi, Arakkulam Munda, Karimunda are also available. He also has bush pepper plants that yield throughout the year. The main standards of pepper are coconut and areca nut. A regular prophylactic spray of Bordeaux mixture is given to the vines to protect them from deadly Phytophthora foot rot disease. Other spices include turmeric variety Prathibha, ginger (IISR Varada), Kasturi turmeric, nutmeg (IISR Vishwashree and elite local types), clove etc. Cardamom is grown on an experimental basis to evaluate its performance in low-land areas. He is also trying dairying, goatry, duck rearing, fish culture, poultry farming, and vermicomposting. etc. He cultivates vegetables for his own requirements on this farm. Mr. Francis has initiated a vertical farming system of vegetables with ornamental birds and ornamental fishes is an attraction of his farm. He produces honey through apiculture on this farm and assures better pollination of his crops through this. The entire farm is maintained as an organic farm with the recycling of farm waste and crop residues. He was awarded with a number of State and district-level awards.



Mr. K.T. Francis in his black pepper field

Industry Corner



Wayalnad Food Products Pvt. Ltd., Wayanad Kerala India

Wayalnad Food Products Pvt. Ltd. is located at Wayanad in India, Kerala. They are Spice Distributors, Spice Producers, Spice Suppliers, Spice Wholesalers of Black Pepper, Cardamom, Cinnamon, Clove, Ginger, Green Cardamom, Honey, Turmeric, Vanilla etc. in Ground Spice, Whole Spice forms. They also supply/manufacture seasonings like Garam Masala.

Their main business regions are Asia, Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Denmark, Europe, GCC, Germany, India, Kuwait, Middle East, UAE, UK United Kingdom etc. The company achieved FSSAI certificate. Wayalnad Food Products Pvt. Ltd. is established in the year 2021.

Location Address:

Wayalnad Food Products Pvt. Ltd.
Door No. Mp13/557a, Aysha Complex
Wayanad, Kerala



Legacy of Spices

Asafoetida

Asafoetida, a dried resinous-gum exudate collected from the taproot of *Ferula assafoetida* is known for its umami punch in the aroma segment. Even though it is cultivated in arid regions of countries like Iran, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Afghanistan, etc., it finds an important place in the Indian culinary basket. What is so intriguing about this spice is that it is extremely pungent when raw, but as soon as it is cooked in fat, it becomes subtle and aromatic. The intrusion of this spicy punch in the subcontinent is historically linked to many dimensions. According to historical records, asafoetida gained popularity as a substitute for Silphium, an herb that was a favoured ingredient among ancient Greeks and Roman cuisines, who also used it for its medicinal and contraceptive properties. Asafoetida popularly known as Hing in India, was introduced from Afghanistan in 600 BC and also find a place in Hindu and Buddhist texts of that time. It weaved its way into Indian cuisines, as a substitute of onions and garlic. Asafoetida's popularity in India was hastened by the spread of Jainism which favoured for the prohibited alliums. For the Kashmiri Pandits, who selectively ate meat but avoided onions and garlic, Hing became an inevitable spice. Onions, garlic and select vegetables were avoided by upper caste communities as they were believed to be aphrodisiacs, and therefore unsuitable to spiritual countenance. Asafoetida, having flavour within the bounds of these ritualistic norms of eating, rose its importance. The tyrannical stratification imposed by the caste system in India, lead to the differences in food custom, in which asafoetida unwittingly became a signifier of deeper culinary and social divisions. But the osmotic pull of influences such as migration and travel, helped Hing to make inroads in to the kitchen of all castes and communities. Even though people have started appreciating spice for the elementary pleasure of what it brings to a dish, the role of Hing as a signature of 'privileged cuisine' cannot be undermined.



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Visit
www.spisry.in
ICAR-Indian Institute Spices Research
Kozhikode, Kerala



Asafoetida plant



Asafoetida resin

Contributor: Dr. K. Anees, ICAR- IISR



Snippets from History

Cake, cinnamon, and the namesake: A curious connection

Cake as a confectionary has a long history starting with the ancient Egyptians. However, the origins of the modern cake can be traced to mid 17th century Europe. But what about its origin in Indian sub continent ? Like many other things, the British introduced cakes to India. Cakes were already a popular food in England during the mid 19th century. It was also an established tradition by then, to eat a plum cake on the day of Christmas. May be, this tradition might have been in his mind when Murdoch Brown, an English plantation manager, approached Mambally Bapu for making a cake for him, a few days before the Christmas of 1883. Mambally Bapu had learned the art of baking from his stint in Burma and had his own "Borma", a baking oven made of bricks. Bapu was stumped ! He had never baked a cake before. But "Brown sayip", as he was known, had a solution. He had a sample of rich plum cake he had brought from England. He wanted Bapu to taste the cake and make a similar one for him. Bapu consented, marking the beginnings of the professional cake baking in India. But then, it was not an easy task. Neither did Bapu lack in ingenuity and enterprise.

The making of a special cake

Mr. Brown gave the cake sample to Bapu and told him all he knew about its making, which was not much! After tasting the cake, Bapu might have thought; "Wait, I can do better than this !". And he set about on this business. He decided to give the original cake a 'local twist', adding a mix of choicest spices including cinnamon, clove and nutmeg. He also replaced the French brandy required in the original recipe with a local brew. It was a confluence of culinary traditions, the basic cake from England and the best of spices from Kerala. The English cake got a refreshing makeover. Now, Bapu was ready for his customer. On December 20, 1883, Bapu presented his cake to Mr. Murdoch Brown. The remark from Mr Brown was "excellent" and he immediately placed an order for 12 more. The cake had ticked all the right boxes. The Kerala version of plum cake was born.

The namesake and a confusion

The name Murdoch Brown is familiar to connoisseurs of spice history as the representative of the English East India Company who managed the Randathara plantation (Anjarakandy estate) from 1798 onwards. This was the largest cinnamon estate in the world at that time. But did he meet Mambally Bapu and commissioned the first cake ? Not really! Murdoch Brown (1750-1828), had played his part and departed this world, long before the first cake was baked in 1883. Then who is 'this' Murdoch Brown? It seems that the Murdoch Brown had a grandson who was his namesake. It was this Murdoch Brown, named after his more famous grandfather, who tasted the first Kerala plum cake. The confusion arises from the same names and the fact that both the Browns (Murdoch Brown and his grandson), managed the Anjarakandy estate during their time. After all, the estate was on a 99year lease from the East India Company in favour of the Browns from 1799 onwards.

The cinnamon popularized by Murdoch Brown (senior) played a key role in flavouring the first cake baked in India, commissioned by Murdoch Brown (junior) and grandson of the former. The cakes were a huge commercial success too. Mambally Bapu, and others in his footsteps slowly made the Kerala style plum cakes, a quintessential part of the Christmas celebrations in the state. Kerala's plum cake has a place of its own in these modern times. Cinnamon has weaved its magical threads of alluring flavour through the history and social canvas of Kerala. Who knows what flavour captivated Murdoch Brown ? Maybe it was cinnamon !! Bapu could not have added the distinct cinnamon flavour to the cake, had it not been for Murdoch Brown (senior) and he would not have attempted the cake had it not been for Murdoch Brown (junior). Oh! The warp and woofs of history !!



Plum cake



Cinnamon quills

Contributor: Dr Lijo Thomas, ICAR- IISR



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ISS Membership details



ISS Membership form

Account Details

Account Name: Indian Society for Spices
Account No: 1855208908
IFSC: CBIN0282689, Bank: Central Bank of India
Branch: Chelavoor, Kozhikode (2689)

Classes of Membership	Membership Fee		
	India	SAARC Countries	Other Overseas Countries
Annual Member	₹ 1000	US \$ 50	US \$ 75
Life Member	₹ 5000	US \$ 500	US \$ 500
Institutional Member	₹ 10000	US \$ 2500	US \$ 2500
Sustaining Member	₹ 25000	US \$ 5000	US \$ 5000
Distinguished Patron	₹ 50000	US \$ 20000	US \$ 20000

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Indian Society for Spices
Research & Development in Spices, Aromatic & Related Crops