



Transforming health with Millet based recipes

A passionate cook at heart with a first-hand experience of customer's woes about cooking healthy food in today's time, Ms. Bharathi Suresh started M/s B and R foods at Alkapoor Township, Hyderabad to offer respite in the form of millet based tasty nutritious food.

Ms. Bharathi hails from Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu, where she completed her Bachelors in Computer Sciences from Hindustan College of Engineering. Her parents worked as government servant. Ms. Bharathi is now settled in Hyderabad with her nuclear family of three, with her husband, an agribusiness consultant & her daughter.

She has always been passionate about experimenting with cuisines in the kitchen. And what started out as a single apartment kitchen serving Chennai based breakfast to few localities soon grew & metamorphosed into a restaurant serving millet based ready to cook and ready to eat products.

Her Chennai roots played a pivotal role in the genesis of B R Foods. In her own words, "Coming to Hyderabad I realized the lack of options for Tamilian style breakfast. And that's when I started to make & serve Tamilian style breakfast in my local area. It was very well received and turned out to be an instant hit. But over time the customers started asking if they can have millet based healthy breakfast options. In a matter of three-four months our business scaled up requiring a proper kitchen setup and human power. We started experimenting, developed our own recipes & took scientific help to enter the market with millet beverage mix. That is how millet aspect of B R Foods came into existence."

Ms Bharathi learned from her early day customers that they don't have the proper knowledge for cooking the millet based foods. And that cooking millet comes as an additional burden as families are still reluctant to go for a millet based food & rather prefer regular food, thus requiring two types of cooking. This also pointed to lack of acceptability to millet as food. She channelized all these learnings to successfully operate the Millet house.



Start-up Product Details

B and R foods - The Millet House offers healthy and tasty millet based ready to cook products and ready to eat prepared meals. The restaurant serves pure vegetarian food, cooked in less oil & strictly refrains from using white sugar, refined flour and ajinomoto.

The food joint is quite a success with health conscious customers asking for tasty, healthy Millet based food.

They included a wide range of options for Breakfast starting from millet Idli, millet Dosa, millet Upama to millet pongal & millet pesarattu. For lunch they serve millet based thali with ragi roti, ragi phulka, an effective replacement to the Maida based roti. Once in a while they also make millet based delight like millet payasam, millet biryani etc.

Services were initially offline. But due to consumer's demands they went online. They partnered with delivery partners Swiggy and Zomato for delivery food at customer's doorstep and now they are in talk with Dunzo, a delivery service application in Hyderabad.

B R Foods has also come up with an innovative fruit based millet beverage mix in pineapple, strawberry & Belgian Chocolate flavour. The product is yet to be launched in the market. "We are looking to launch the product. It's not a mass product. It's one of our premium products catering specifically to the upper middle class," adds in Ms. Bharathi.

With an aim to expand the millet based food services & introduce millet in every household Ms. Bharathi wants to launch 100 percent millet based noodles. The ragi noodles presently available in the market are again a mix of Ragi and Maida in a 60:40 ratio. But there are no brands serving 100 percent ragi based

noodles. They plan to acquire a patented technology from US for 100 percent ragi based noodles and roll it out.

One of the defining moment in their journey was their association with Akshaya Patra Foundation to provide healthy snacks to school going children as a part of the ongoing Mid-Day meal programme.

"We came to know about the opportunity from one of our friends. We send them out some of our samples. And the next thing we know they want us to fulfil a

500 Kg order for millet based murukku. Within a span of month the quantity ordered went from 500 Kg to 2500 Kg. It was the exceptional quality & standards of our products that we were approached by Akshaya Patra twice in two months when our start-up was at such a nascent stage.

They have approached us again this March," recounts Mrs Suresh.



Areas of Operation

B R Foods is operational in Alkapoor Township, Puppalaguda area of Hyderabad.

Expanding on the marketing strategies Ms Bharathi says, “Our marketing strategies include online social media promotion. We are also targeting community based groups & gated communities. We approach the shops of these gated communities to sell our products, shops which are in the vicinity of customers. We have also tied up with community based apps like TRY, where most of the cities members are there to reach our customers.

We want to move forward by establishing our products in corporates where there is already a good number of health conscious youth population who are looking for healthier options. We simply have to place our products in their cafeteria, canteen areas etc.”

To date, the Company has built an association & partnered with FPOs, farmer’s association group & NGOs like Millet Basket for sourcing of millets round the year to ensure sustainability and low cost. Over the period of time they also started securing millet from traders.

Challenges

“COVID-19 was a turning point that made us explore and prepare for the launch of ready to cook and ready to eat food products much ahead of time. At least 10 new products line up has been developed and are ready to launch “adds Ms Bharathi. Human power has always been a challenge. And standardization of the product/Process is another issue. They want to come up with standardized product prescribing how much portion needs to mixed with what quantity of water.

Association & Key take aways from MANAGE



We had very good mentors from MANAGE, Hyderabad, Sarvanan Sir, Sagar Sir & Augastyan Sir. The training program brings out the competitive edge in us. There is always this thought that what can be added to standout in the market as a unique player.

Learning from some of the best industry experts put me on an exploration & experimentation track, from there only millet based beverage idea came.

Before incubating at MANAGE, we were simply operating restaurant and wanted to proceed with hub & spoke model. But post trainings we realized that we can venture into corporates and scale our business. How quickly we bounced back from pandemic induced effects can also be attributed to MANAGE’s learning. I treasure my relationship with MANAGE, a leading agribusiness supporting Institute for the start-ups in the country.

- Ms Bharathi Suresh.

Vision as an Entrepreneur

Ms Bharathi puts her thoughts as, “I just want to see millets as a brand gaining prominence in the consumer’s eye as something that can be consumed on a daily basis, requires less time to cook and keeps one full for longer duration. I want parents to understand the value of millets in replacing regular snacks. I want to see millet as a daily need in a working women’s life, where time paucity makes it difficult to keep a check on health.”



Company Name
B and R Foods



Date of Incorporation
16 June 2018



Age of Company
2 year 2 months



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Citation

Saravanan Raj, Sagar Deshmukh and Zeenat Shana (2022). B and R Foods: Transforming health with Millet based recipes, MANAGE-Centre for Innovation and Agripreneurship (CIA), National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad, India.



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National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE)

(An autonomous organisation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India)

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