

# Kiwi fruit cuts fair price at fair

**A STAFF REPORTER**

## Market hunt for Arunachal produce

**Dec. 21:** Is it a potato or chikoo, asked a customer looking at the brown fruit.

To his amazement, he found it was the kiwi known to the world as a fruit belonging to New Zealand. "We have brought the fruit for the first time in Guwahati. It costs quite a lot in places like New Delhi. You can try it," was the response of an official at the North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation stall at the Agmark fair, which began today.

The wonder fruit, which was earlier imported from New Zealand, is now available locally.

A senior official of the corporation said the fruit has

been sourced from Dirang valley in Arunachal Pradesh and is being marketed to support the kiwi farmers. "We are trying to create a market for the fruit," he said, adding that Guwahati is a perfect market for it.

It has a fibrous, dull brown skin, soft texture and a unique flavour. The fruit contains several vitamins and minerals, including lipid, proteins, fibres, carbohydrates and acts as a preventive agent for many ailments. Kiwi fruit can be eaten whole, like an apple (and rarely including the skin, which increases the tartness), cut in half and eaten like a passion fruit or peeled

and sliced, like a pineapple. For people who prefer not to eat the skin, the fruit can be cut in half and then the flesh scooped out with a spoon. The official said the corporation has tied up with a few groups in the city for retail marketing as well as beyond the region. "It is also being kept in a few departmental stores and we are awaiting the response. We are hoping it is good," the official said.

He said it would be a hit among those people who look for imported fruits and do not hesitate to dish out astronomical sums in top departmental stores. The official said kiwi sells for Rs 200-300 a kg in

Delhi markets but is being made available at less than half the price. The fruit was out of reach of the people for lack of awareness about its nutritional value. Arunachal Pradesh has started producing kiwi a few years back and farmers have taken up cultivation under the "technology mission of the government of India".

"There is a need to establish a sustainable market for the fruit for the benefit of the farmers," the official added. The fair will conclude on December 24 and organisations such as Nabard and Assam State Agricultural Marketing Board are participating in it.



**A visitor checks out a plant at the fair on Friday.** Picture by Eastern Projections.



**FRUITY DELIGHT**