Duru Bulgur Preserves a Local Genetic Heritage in Wheat

Duru Bulgur has successfully completed the “Ahmet Wheat” heirloom seed project, conducted in collaboration with Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University. The project stands out as a strong example of university–industry cooperation, demonstrating how Türkiye’s local genetic heritage can be preserved through scientific methods and reintegrated into agricultural production.

Launched in 2018, the R&D and breeding initiative aimed to reintroduce Ahmet Wheat—an heirloom variety carrying Anatolia’s 2,000-year-old agricultural legacy—into sustainable farming systems. The project contributed significantly to the protection, improvement, and long-term viability of local wheat varieties, offering a model approach for integrating them into modern production practices.

Building on Duru Bulgur’s 91 years of expertise, authentic Ahmet Wheat seeds—known for their suitability in high-quality bulgur production—were sourced directly from farmers’ grain storages. By applying a rapid breeding method implemented for the first time in Türkiye, the seed development process, which typically takes many years through conventional methods, was completed in approximately two years. Following comprehensive field trials and quality assessments, the newly developed seed varieties were officially registered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

As part of the project, the improved seeds were introduced to farmers across Central Anatolia, with a particular focus on Karaman. Large-scale trial cultivation delivered yields of 800–850 kilograms per decare, confirming both the strong agronomic performance and economic feasibility of the variety. Based on these results, partnerships were established with professional seed companies to support certified seed production, and further regional adaptation studies are planned.

The Ahmet Wheat project was designed not solely as a yield-driven breeding effort, but as a holistic model aligned with the quality requirements of the bulgur industry. Industrial-scale, high-volume bulgur production was carried out at Duru Bulgur’s facilities using the newly developed seeds. Laboratory analyses and consumer evaluations confirmed high performance in terms of taste, texture, and processing characteristics.

With its drought-tolerant structure and ability to thrive in low-water, arid conditions, Ahmet Wheat also offers significant potential in addressing the challenges of climate change in agriculture. Its lower water requirement supports cost efficiency while contributing to the expansion of sustainable farming practices.

Supporting Regional Development through Local Value

By bringing high-quality, locally sourced wheat varieties back into production, the project aims to increase farmers’ incomes, strengthen regional development, and enhance the added value of bulgur in both domestic and international markets. With broader adoption—particularly across Central Anatolia—Ahmet Wheat is expected to deliver meaningful contributions to Türkiye’s agricultural economy.