

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.846
TO BE ANSWERED ON 30TH JULY, 2024

DISTRIBUTION OF MILLETS THROUGH PDS

846 SHRI R. DHARMAR:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) the features of the Public Distribution Scheme;
- (b) whether Government is distributing millets through public distribution scheme to ensure nutritional security in the country including Tamil Nadu;
- (c) if so, the details thereof along with its response within the country;
- (d) whether Government has taken initiatives to raise awareness about benefit of millets among consumers;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the steps being taken by Government to increase the production & productivity of millets across the country?

A N S W E R

MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS,
FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRIMATI NIMUBEN JAYANTIBHAI BAMBHANIYA)

(a) The Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is implemented under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 in all States/UTs. The Act provides coverage upto 75% of the rural population and upto 50% of the urban population for receiving foodgrains (rice, wheat & coarsegrains) under Priority Households (PHH) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY). The Priority Households are entitled to receive 5 kg of foodgrains per person per month and the households covered under the AAY receive 35 kg of foodgrains per month per household. Under the TPDS, foodgrains were provided at subsidized prices upto December, 2022. However, w.e.f. 1st January, 2023, foodgrains under the Act are being distributed to eligible beneficiaries free of cost under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana.

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NFSA is operated under the joint responsibilities of the Central and State/UT Governments. Central Government is responsible for procurement, allocation and transportation of foodgrains upto the designated depots of the Food Corporation of India (FCI). The operational responsibilities for identification of eligible beneficiaries/families, issuance of ration cards to them, distribution of foodgrains to eligible beneficiaries and supervision and monitoring of functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPSs), etc. rests with the concerned State/UT Government.

(b) to (c): Government of India is allocating Coarse grains (Millets) named as Nutri-Cereals under the Public Distribution System to States/UTs including Tamil Nadu as per request made by them. Nutri-Cereals are allocated in terms of National Food Security Act, 2013. The allocation of approved quantity of Nutri-Cereals for distribution under PDS is made by Department of Food & Public Distribution in lieu of equal quantity of wheat/rice while ensuring that the overall quantity of rice, wheat and Nutri-Cereals has to be within the upper ceiling fixed in respect of each State/UT under NFSA.

As per the guidelines for procurement, allocation, distribution and disposal of coarse grains, States are allowed to procure Jowar, Bajra, Maize, Barley, Ragi, Foxtail Millet (Kangani/Kakun), Proso Millet(Cheena), Kodo Millet (Kodo), Little Millet (Kutki), two Pseudo Millets (Black-wheat) (Kuttu) and Amerathus(Chaulai) from farmers at MSP for central pool subject to the prior approval of Government of India, in consultation with FCI. The whole quantity shall be distributed under TPDS (Targeted Public Distribution System)/OWS (Other welfare Schemes) in the State/UTs. The details of Coarse grains allocated to Tamil Nadu, during the last two years as well as current year are as under:

Year	Type of grain	Quantity (In thousand tons)
2022-23	Ragi	1.371
2023-24	Ragi	5.181
2024-25 (*)	Ragi	6.090

Note(*) : Figures are provisional.

(d) to (e): The following initiatives were undertaken to raise awareness about benefit of millets among consumers.

- I. United Nations General Assembly declared 2023 as International Year of Millets (IYM) during March, 2021 on the proposal of India. The Government of India took a proactive multi-stakeholder engagement approach (engaging various central government Ministries/Departments, States/UTs, farmers, start-ups, exporters, retail businesses, hotels, Indian Embassies etc.) to achieve the objectives of IYM 2023 and taking Indian millets globally.
- II. Millets were promoted during the G20 presidency in India through Millet Culinary carnival, International Trade Events, Chef's Conference, exhibition of Farmers Producer Organizations (FPOs), road shows, kisan melas, Chef's training for paramilitary forces, ASEAN India Millet Festival at Indonesia and Delhi etc.
- III. Global Millets (Shree Anna) Conference was held from 18th – 19th March 2023 at IARI, Pusa Campus, New Delhi which was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister.
- IV. To make India a global hub for 'Shree Anna', the Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR), Hyderabad was declared as the Global Centre of Excellence for sharing best practices, research and technologies at the national and international level. IIMR, Hyderabad is also providing training to the farmers, women farmers, home makers, students and young entrepreneurs on manufacturing of value-added millet food products, daily recipes etc., and supporting them to establish self-enterprise.
- V. A new Regional Research Centre for Bajra was inaugurated on 27th September, 2023 at Gudamalani, near Barmer, Rajasthan.
- VI. To strengthen the research collaboration and public awareness of millets globally, a new initiative viz., "Millets AndOtHer Ancient GRains International ReSearch Initiative (MAHARISHI)" was adopted during the G20 Presidency.

VII. Government of India also provides flexibility to the states for state specific needs/priorities under Rashtirya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY). The states can promote Millets (Shree Anna) under RKVY with the approval of State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC) headed by Chief Secretary of the State.

(f): In order to increase the production & productivity of millets (Shree Anna), the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) is implementing a Sub-Mission on Nutri-Cereals (Millets) under National Food Security Mission (NFSM) in all districts of 28 States & 2 Union Territories viz. Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. Under NFSM–Nutri Cereals, the incentives are provided to the farmers, through the States/UTs, on crop production and protection technologies, cropping system based demonstrations, production & distribution of certified seeds of newly released varieties/hybrids, Integrated Nutrient and Pest Management techniques, improved farm implements/tools/resource conservation machineries, water saving devices, capacity building of farmers through trainings during cropping season, organizing events/workshops, distribution of seed minikits, publicity through print and electronic media etc.
