

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3060
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 22ND MARCH, 2022

MILLETS AS SUPERFOOD

3060. SHRI LAVU SRI KRISHNA DEVARAYALU:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is true that Millets are considered as super foods world over and if so, is it also true that our country is the land of Millets including organic Millets;

(b) whether it is also true that there is lack of incentives on Millet exports and if so, whether we can be a world leader in organic products if handholding is given to organic producers;

(c) whether it is true that production of millets has dropped drastically from 2020 to 2021 and if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government is helping farmers with post harvest management of millets and despite the high nutritional and health value of millets it's primary usage is being diverted from consumption to other aspects; and

(e) if so, whether the Government is doing anything to prevent this and is there any proposal for adding millets to the midday meal programme?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) & (b): Millets are food grains having high nutritional features and health benefits and are cultivated with minimal water & inputs. They are cultivated across the country in various agro-ecological regions, having less infestation of pest and diseases and thus can be grown easily as organic crops. Consequent to the initiative of the Government of India, the United Nations has declared the year 2023 as the International Year of Millets (IYOM). This will create both domestic and global demand and enhance exports from India. To give impetus to the export of potential products as well as to remove the bottlenecks in the supply chain of nutri cereals, the Government, through Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has created Nutri Cereals Export Promotion Forum.

(c) to (e): The production of millets has increased from 17.26 million tonne during 2019-20 to 18.02 million tonne in 2020-21. Under National Food Security Mission (NFSM) programme, the NFSM-Nutri Cereals is being implemented in 212 districts of 14 states. Under NFSM, assistance is given through state governments to farmers for interventions like cluster demonstrations on improved package of practices, demonstrations on cropping system, distribution of seeds of High Yielding Varieties (HYVs)/hybrids, improved farm machineries/resource conservation machineries/tools, efficient water application tools, plant protection measures, nutrient management/soil ameliorants, processing & post-harvest equipments, cropping system based trainings to the farmers etc.

The mission also provides support to Indian Council of Agricultural research (ICAR) & State Agricultural Universities (SAUs)/Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) for technology back stopping and transfer of technology to the farmer under supervision of Subject Matter Specialists/Scientists. The research organizations are supported for undertaking research projects that can help enhancing production and productivity of food crops. The State Governments can also promote cultivation of millets under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana – Remunerative Approaches for Agriculture & Allied sector Rejuvenation (RKVY- RAFTAAR) with the approval of the State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC) constituted under the chairmanship of the chief secretary of the State.

To improve acreage, production and productivity of millets across the country, the ICAR through its nodal research institute on millets, Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR), Hyderabad is giving emphasis on development of high yielding climate resilient new varieties/hybrids which are tolerant to biotic and abiotic stresses with enhanced quality. The Government is popularizing nutri-cereals through Research & Development support and has established 3 Centres of Excellence (CoE). Support is also given to start-ups and entrepreneurs for developing recipes & value added products that promotes consumption of millets.

In order to facilitate the movement of the millets, Government has revised the guidelines for movement of the surplus production of millets to other States. The provision of inter-state transportation of surplus millets through Food Corporation of India (FCI) is incorporated to cater for advance demand placed by consuming state before the start of procurement.

The Government is implementing Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN), earlier known as 'National Programme on Mid-Day Meal in Schools' for providing one hot cooked meal in Government and Government-aided schools from 2021-22 to 2025-26, wherein millets can be used by States/UTs under the scheme.
