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Millet Service Centres to get a makeover

Bhubaneswar, 10/11/2023:

A technical session on the financing and scaling up operations of the Millet Service Centres (MSCs) and other schemes for Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) was organised by the Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment, Government of Odisha, at Janta Maidan, Bhubaneswar commemorating the International Year of Millets. A detailed discussion on how to transform FPOs into MSCs under the able guidance of OMM was held.

The session commenced with a ceremony where the esteemed participants, including Mrs. Kalpana Pradhan, Scheme Officer-OMM, watered the plants. Er. Raghunath Behera, Executive Engineer (Agriculture), APICOL, delivered a talk on the promotion of the Agro Service Centre and elaborated on the SLTC-approved machinery available for FPOs and WSHGs. The session was graced by the presence of Dr. K. Srinivash Babu, Principal Scientist at ICAR- IIMR, Hyderabad; Dr. Kalpana Rayguru, Professor and Head of the Agricultural Processing & Food Engineering Department at CAET, OUAT; Dr. Debabandya Mohapatra, Principal Scientist at ICAR – CIAE, Bhopal; Dr. Saswat Kumar Pani, Associate Scientist at the Agribusiness and Innovation Platform ICRISAT; Mr. Biswajit Behera, Team Lead of the Technical Support Unit at PSFPO Project. Additionally, representative FPO Taptapani FPCL from Gajapati and Jaivikshri FPCL from Koraput shared their experiences with the Odisha Millets Mission and expressed how they have benefitted from the program. The session was chaired by Sri Rohit Kumar Lenka, Director, Horticulture. The Joint Director of Agriculture, representing the Odisha Millets Mission, delivered a vote of thanks. The session concluded with closing remarks from the Managing Director of APICOL.

The establishment of the MSC is aimed at fulfilling the growing requirements and demands of Millet product users, both within and outside our state. OMM has identified several compelling reasons that advocate for the establishment of this service centre through the FPOs and the WSHG Federation. One of the key objectives of OMM is to promote FPOs/WSHGs in providing millet-centric equipment, processing machines, aggregation services, marketing, and value addition. In this context, the vision is to transform FPOs under OMM into "Millet Service Centres," offering end-to-end support services to millet farmers to enhance their income and improve their livelihoods.

The establishment of the Millet Service Centre will be financially supported by APICOL, contributing 40% through the MKUY Scheme, 40% through OMM, with the remaining amount to be borne by the relevant FPOs/WSHGs Federation.

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