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Consumer Behaviour and Dietary Shifts: Millets in the Modern Dietary Landscape

Bhubaneswar, 10/11/2023:

With an aim to establish a link between consumer behaviour and dietary shifts and how consumption of millets as a potential nutritious food source can have a profound impact, a session on “Consumer Behaviour and Dietary Shifts” was held as a part of the International Convention on Millets hosted by the Department of Agriculture and Farmers’ Empowerment, Government of Odisha, at Janta Maidan, Bhubaneswar. The theme was “Millets – Ancient Grains for Modern Challenges”. The convention marks the celebration of International Year of Millets 2023.

The session highlighted the integral role of millets in consumer dietary habits. The event emphasised on the nexus between consumer behaviour and dietary patterns and recognised the importance of millets to maintain a healthy and balanced lifestyle. Dr. C. Tara Satyavathi, Director of ICAR-IIMR, Hyderabad chaired the session and Dr. Roopa Banerjee, Consultant in Biochemistry and Grain/Food Quality at AIP, ICRISAT served as Co-Chair. The panellists, including Miss Sonali Sinha of UNICEF, Dr. Raj Bhandari from the National Technical Board of Nutrition, Mr. Bala Subramaniyan of Sresta Organic, Dr. M.S Meera, Chief Scientist at CFTRI, Mr. Nilamadhab Prusty, Board Vice Chair at CFNS, the Secretary of the Hotel & Restaurant Association of Odisha, and Mr. Udit Shankar Panigrahi of Rajpur GPLF, Koraput, facilitated a dynamic discussion about the status of millets in India. Participants encompassed a diverse spectrum: WSHG-led enterprises, Millet Shakti Outlets, tiffin centers, students of Agricultural Science and Public Health, representatives from hospitals, fitness enthusiasts, housing societies, and delegates from the Assam Millets Mission. The session acted as a forum to explore the nutritional richness and multifaceted benefits of millets, fostering an open dialogue for the resurgence of these ancient grains in the modern dietary landscape.

Priyanka Priyadarshini, ADA, Soil Chemist from the Government of Odisha, initiated the session, inviting esteemed guests to the panel. Dr. Tara and Dr. Roopa, as Chair and Co-Chair, respectively, provided compelling keynotes emphasising significance of millets in food security and their role in promoting physical well-being. The session further delved into scientific evidence on consumer behaviour and transactional footfall, highlighting retail/FMCG strategies and urban-rural consumption patterns. Noteworthy observations emerged from experiences in experimenting with millet cuisine, revealing responses and sustainability within millet-based enterprises, exemplified by community institutions, experienced farmers, and GPLF members.

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