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Need to overhaul PDS stressed

Staff Reporter

It should be done before implementing UPDS: ex-bureaucrat

K.R. Venugopal, former Secretary to the Prime Minister and Rapporteur, National Commission on Farmers, on Sunday called for overhauling the public distribution system (PDS) before implementation of the Universal Public Distribution System (UPDS) promised by the National Advisory Council on Food Security.

Participating in a roundtable on 'Millets in Public Food System' at Sangareddy Society (DDS) and Millets Network of India (MINI), Mr. Venugopal said the UPDS cannot be practically implemented unless production levels were increased substantially. He said that the UPDS food even to the rich under (UPDS) was nothing but violation of human rights to purchase it from the open market.

Dry land agriculture

Calling for focus on dry land agriculture, Mr. Venugopal said there needs to be a shift to millet and cereal based 'autonomous food security' can address the problems in dry land areas.

Birja Patnaik, Principal Advisor to the Supreme Court Commissioners on Right to Food, said the PDS system should begin with mid-day meal and Integrated Child Development Scheme. He said the PDS for millets in PDS and said it should begin in Medak district.

Collector S. Suresh Kumar said they were supplying millets to children at selected schools. He said a scientific study on how millets would benefit the growth of children. "We are already implementing it through mid-day meal is a difficult task as there are so many people who used to consume millet-based food had discontinued it due to variety and taste preparation. He also stressed for the nutritional and health education.

DDS director P.V. Satheesh Kumar, Dr. A. Prasada Rao and others participated in the roundtable.

Promising millets through PDS to all is impractical, says K.R. Venugopal
'It cannot be done unless production levels increase substantially'

