

India's First
National Convention
of *Millet Farmers*

October 16-17, 2011
University of Agricultural Sciences
Dharwad, Karnataka



organised by
Millet Network of India



co-organised by
SIRIKRISI, Dharwad
University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad

The First National Convention of Millet Farmers is respectfully dedicated to Mr Basavaraj Tambake whom we had the privilege to honour at the Convention.

A few weeks after the Convention Mr Tambake passed away creating a huge vacuum in the farmers movement in India.



MILLET NETWORK OF INDIA

We deem it a great privilege to honour

Shri Basavaraj Tambake, Karnataka

MILLET MITRA - 2011

at the

NATIONAL CONVENTION

OF

MILLET FARMERS 2011

*in recognition of your extraordinary contribution to
India's agriculture and ecology through
cultivating and promoting
millet crops in your region.*

*Indian food and farming will be safe as long as
visionary farmers such as yourself nourish its
soils and sustain its agriculture and ecology*

We wish you a great future in your agriculture

(p v satheesh)

National convenor

Millet Network of India

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Millet Network of India

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Preface

Since the First National Convention of Millet Network of India [MINI] held in 2008, we ourselves are amazed to find that within a span of three years MINI has been able to organise 12 events at the national and regional levels. It is not just the numbers but the locations where the events have been held that makes them very significant to us. From Gujarat to Meghalaya, from Chandigarh to Dharwad, the events have dotted all parts of India, discussing, debating and analysing the millet situation in different parts of India.



This is also an effort on our part to prove the obvious. Millets, in spite of their marginalisation, humiliation and policy neglect, echo a strong voice from all parts of this large country. And everywhere, the Millet Voice has been vibrant and resurgent. People, from farmers to scientists, nutritionists to homemakers, are rediscovering and recapturing millets.

Right from its inception, MINI has been very clear that it will be led by the farmers, and that it would help amplify their voices through multiple platforms so that they reach the appropriate authorities. Already the efficacy of this effort is visible as evidenced by the fact that the new Food Security Act of India, presented to the National Parliament, has stamped its approval on the introduction of millets in India's Public Distribution System. The Government of India has also suddenly thought of promoting millets aggressively, through their INSIMP [Initiative for Nutritional Security through Intense Millet Promotion]. However, flawed this initiative might be, it still is an indication that millets are on their way back into the national food system.

These are the tangible evidences of re-milleting India, and the stories that farmers tell whenever they are heard, and the perspectives they bring to the issue, make the entire millet landscape brighten up glow up with hope. This is exactly what happened at Dharwad, the cultural capital of Karnataka, where over 100 farmers from eight Indian states assembled at the First National Convention of Millet Farmers, and grouped themselves into various listening sessions and told their stories, analysed their issues and pointed to possible solutions to help millets regain their past glory.



The very structure of the Dharwad National Convention of Millet Farmers was a testimony to the farmer-led MINI philosophy. So, the sessions had farmers as the major actors, experts and heroes of the event. Their words formed the Dharwad Declaration. They were honoured and celebrated. It was out and out a Farmers' Show.

For us in MINI, this Convention was also an exposure to the logistical needs of such an event. Multiple languages, multiple translations, non-use of written words to communicate as dictated by a large majority of non literate farmers in the event - everything held a lesson. How do you reach out to such a large group with diverse languages, food cultures, tastes and requirements? And maintain farmer-primacy? It was a rich encounter.

The Dharwad Declaration is a testimony to the multiple outcomes of this Convention. I am sure that all of you who read this report share our enthusiasm and excitement.

The people who made this possible were many. I must specially thank the University of Agricultural Sciences [UAS], Dharwad who hosted the event and gave us all their facilities free of cost. In particular, I must thank Dr Rama Naik, Head of NAIP, UAS Dharwad, Vice Chancellor of the UAS Dr Hanchinal and Dr Naik, Dean of Extension. SIRIKRISI-Dharwad, a great Dharwad-based group of millet enthusiasts was the key to the success of the event.

My colleagues Sandip Kandicuppa who wrote this report and Dr Raghavendra Manvi who read through the copy and cleaned it up, deserve my thanks. I am also grateful to Mr Suresh Kumar, Joint Director, DDS and his team, which managed the entire logistics. Ms Jayasri, Deputy Director, DDS is the backbone behind the event as well as this publication. Her strong and silent pursuance of this publication from editing to designing and printing deserves my special gratitude. Ms Supriya Bhalerao who designed and printed this report deserves my grateful thanks for her creative vision and eye for detail.

I hope this report will make available a distinct dimension on millet realities to all of you who will go through this publication.



PV Satheesh
National Convenor
Millet Network of India

January 31, 2012
Village Pastapur
Medak District, AP



Programme Schedule

Day I: Sunday, October 16, 2011

	Inaugural Session
	Anchored by : <i>Ms Vani Purohit, SIRIKRISI, Dharwad</i>
09:30 to 10:00	Seed Exchange & Oath Taking ceremony A woman and a man farmer from each state will come on to the stage, together and will exchange seeds from each other to the tune of seed/farming related song from many regions. A group of drummers will beat drums and dance at the back of the stage. Children bear millet flags and administer an oath of millets
10:00 to 11:00	Inaugural Ceremony
10:00 to 10:10	Welcome and introduction to the Convention <i>P V Satheesh, National Convenor, Millet Network of India</i>
10:10 to 10:15	UAS, Dharwad and its role in recapturing millets <i>Dr Rama Naik, Dean, College of Home Science, UAS, Dharwad</i>
10:15 to 10:25	SIRIKRISI and its role in making Dharwad a millet region o <i>Dr Prakash Bhat, Convenor, SIRIKRISI, CEO, SCOPE</i> o <i>Dr Sanjeev Kulkarni, President, Atmadeepa for Health & Environment</i> o <i>Ms Vani Purohit, Director, RAPID</i>
10:25 to 10:40	Honouring Millet Mitras from different regions of India 1. <i>Mr Basavraj Tambake, Working President, KRRS, Karnataka</i> 2. <i>Mr DD Bharamagowdra, Dharitri, Karnataka</i> 3. <i>Ms Basantpur Narsamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh</i> 4. <i>Mr Ayasamy, Farmer, Tamil Nadu</i> 5. <i>Ms Sankamma & Mookappa Pujar, Farmer, Karnataka</i> 6. <i>Mr. Easwarappa Banakar, Farmer, Karnataka</i> 7. <i>Ms Wete-u Rhakho, Farmer, Chizami, Nagaland</i> 8. <i>Ms Rinarani Nayak, Farmer, Rohivanka Village, Orissa</i> 9. <i>Ms Indira Mishram, Farmer, Maharastra</i> 10. <i>Mr Badri Gujjar, Farmer, Rajasthan</i> 11. <i>Mr Nek Ram, Farmer, Himachal Pradesh</i> 12. <i>Mr Natwar Bhai, Farmer, Gujarat</i> 13. <i>Ms Fatima Osman Jeda, Farmer, Gujarat</i> 14. <i>Ms Peddalaxmi, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh</i> 15. <i>Ms Ponnutai, Farmer, Tamil Nadu</i> 16. <i>Mr Jayappa, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh</i>
10:40 to 10:50	Inaugural Address <i>Mr Basavraj Tambake, Working President, KRRS, Karnataka</i>
10:50 to 11:00	Presidential Remarks <i>Dr RR Hanchinal, Vice Chancellor, UAS, Dharwad</i>
11:00 to 11:05	Vote of Thanks <i>Dr Krishna Naik, Director of Extension, UAS, Dharwad</i>
11:05 to 11:30	Break For Millet Snacks & Drinks
11:30 to 13:30	Listening Session I : Report from North East <i>Facilitator : Wekowe-u Tsuhah (Akole), North East Network, Nagaland</i>
13:30 to 14:30	Millet Lunch
14:30 to 15:30	Listening Session II : Report from West <i>Facilitator : Shri Tushar Pancholi, Paryavaran Vikas Kendra, Gujarat</i>
15:30 to 16:30	Listening Session III: Report from East <i>Facilitator : Mr Ramesh Chandra Naik, Nirman, Orissa</i>



16:30 to 16:45 **Millet Drinks**
 16:45 to 17:45 **Listening Session IV: Report from North**
Facilitator : Mr Naresh Biswas, Nirman, Mandhya Pradesh
 17:45 to 18:15 **Summing up of the issues of the day**
Mr Sandeep K, Coordinator, Millet Network of India
 18:15 to 19:00 **Informal Exchanges among groups**
 19:00 to 20:00 **Cultural Evening**
 20:00 **Dinner and rest**

Day II: Monday, October 17, 2011

09:00 to 09:15 **Recapping previous day & mapping of 2nd day**
Dr Sanjeev Kulkarni, Member, SIRIKRISI
 09:15 to 10:45 **Listening Session V : Report from the South**
Groups from Tamil Nadu & Karnataka
Groups from Andhra Pradesh
 10:45 to 11:15 **Millet Drinks**
 11:15 to 13:00 **Focussing on Minor Millets**
UAS Dharwad's NAIP Programme
A session lead by Dr Rama Naik, Head, Small Millets Programme,
University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad
 13:00 to 14:00 **Millet Lunch**
 14:00 to 14:15 **Summing up main issues emerging from presentations**
PV Satheesh, National Convenor, Millet Network of India
 14:00 to 16:00 **RESPONSE SESSION & preparation of Dharwad Declaration**
Facilitated by PV Satheesh, National Convenor, MINI

- o **Dr Nirmala Yengi, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad**
- o **Ms Akole, Nagaland**
- o **Mr Tushar Panchal, Gujarat**
- o **Dr Prakash Bhat, Karnataka**
- o **Mr Naresh Biswas, Madhya Pradesh**
- o **Mr Ramesh Chandra Nayak, Orissa**
- o **Mr Vishwanath Patil, Karnataka**
- o **Mr Eraiah Killedar, Karnataka**
- o **Mr Easwarappa Banakar, Karnataka**

 16:00 to 16:30 **Millet Drinks**
 16:30 to 17:30 **Adoption of Dharwad Declaration and Closing Ceremony**
 16:30 to 16:45 **Welcome and Description**
Mr PV Satheesh, National Convenor, MINI
 16:45 to 16:55 **Presentation of the Dharwad Declaration**
Dr Sanjeev Kulkarni, Member, SIRIKRISI
 16:55 to 17:10 **Reactions to the Declaration**

- o **Ms Ponnuthai & Mr Ayasamy from South,**
- o **Ms Venulu Vadeo from North East**
- o **Mr Nek Ram from North**
- o **Mr Ramesh Chandra Naik from East**
- o **Mr Tushar Pancholi from West**

 17:10 to 17:25 **Response from the Chief Guest**
Mr D D Bharmagowdru,
a leading farmer from Dharwad Region and formerly President, Organic Farming Association of India
 17:25 to 17:30 **Vote of Thanks**
Dr Prakash Bhat, SIRIKRISI, Dharwad





India is on the threshold of discussing the Food Security Bill which will have far reaching implications for the poor and the marginalised, in their struggle to access food and nutrition to lead a dignified and healthy life. Millet Network of India has for long, taken the stand that we, as a nation, should not just be settling for food security; we should be striving for food sovereignty. This implies that we focus on giving the control over the production, distribution and consumption of food back to the people. One of the steps in doing this would be to bring millets back into the food security debate; for millions of households in the dryland and hilly regions of the country depend on these crops to meet their food needs. We have for long been arguing that the introduction of millets into the public distribution system and into government food programmes like the mid-day meal scheme, is important to achieve the aim of food sovereignty. The recent Global Hunger Index ranks India 64 out of 81 nations. Further, India ranks second in the incidences of malnutrition



*Woman Millet
Farmer ;
Foxtail millet;
& Millet Seed*



among children. This is happening despite the universal public distribution system that we have been following for decades. The PDS is laudable in its intention, and no one can dispute the great service that it has been rendering in helping the poor and the marginalised households in meeting their food and nutrition needs. However, the focus that it has laid over these decades, on rice and wheat at the expense of millets has been a telling factor behind these statistics. In the four decades since 1961, the area under millets declined by nearly 50% from about 18 million hectares to about 9 million hectares. During this time, production of millets declined from about 8.8 million tons to about 7.2 million tons; a decline of 18%. These statistics indicate that millions of households are unable to access affordable nutritious food anymore.



Pearl Millet

The National Convention of Millet Farmers was held at Dharwad, Karnataka, on October 16 and 17, 2011 on the campus of University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad. The convention coincided with the World Food Day and was organised with an intention to bring together farmers from different parts of the country - especially women farmers - who are practicing biodiversity based millet farming, to discuss the challenges they face in cultivating millets. Through 'listening sessions' the farmers were provided with a platform where they could present their analysis of their agricultural scenario and what according to them could be the solutions.



Women Millet Farmers at the convention

The city of Dharwad, has for long, been a cultural hub of the country. The work initiated by Millet Network of India and Sirikrisi (MINI Member from Dharwad) met with enthusiastic response from the district; with people from all walks of life coming together to push the agenda of millets and agricultural biodiversity. Individuals and institutions across the spectrum including the district administration and the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad have lent their voices to the issue on hand, thus making Dharwad the ideal venue for the National Convention of Millet farmers.

The event was graced by the presence of more than 120 farmers from across ten states and by the presence of functionaries from various member organisations of



MINI. It was indeed a humbling experience to see farmers from far corners of the country make the effort to get to Dharwad, despite the travails involved in making that journey. The event was also blessed by the presence of Mr. Basavaraj Tambake, Working President, Karnataka Rajya Raita Sangha, a veteran of the farmers' movements with and without Karnataka; who came in as the chief guest and by the presence of various dignitaries from the University of Agricultural Sciences-Dharwad. These included Dr. RR Hanchnal, Vice-Chancellor UAS-Dharwad; also the Guest of Honor, Dr. Krishna Naik, Director of Extension and Dr. Rama Naik, Dean College of Home Sciences.

The programme was kick-started with an exchange of seeds by farmers belonging to different parts of the country to drumbeats provided by a group called *Dholu Kudita*. This was followed by the 'millet pledge' administered by a group of young children; and then, based on the recommendations by the various participating organisations, farmers from different regions were honoured for their immense contributions to millet farming. The delegates were given a brief welcome by Mr. PV Sathesh, National Convener, Millet Network of India; which was followed by the Chief Guest's Address, address of the Guest of Honour, Dr. Hanchnal and those by Dr. Krishna Naik and by Dr. Rama Naik.



Exchange of seed at the convencion

The backbone of the National Convention was the listening sessions that were experimented with. During these sessions, farmers from each region - south, north, north-east, west and east, came to the fore and made presentations along the lines that were suggested well in advance, and shared their experiences of carrying out millet farming. In doing so, they identified various challenges they faced in their pursuits and the solutions that they thought could help them overcome those challenges. At the end of each presentation, the floor was opened for questions during which farmers from other regions shared their insights.

There were, in all, six listening sessions; and one session where the floor was opened to general discussion. At the end of these sessions, based on the many points that had been made by the farmers, the Dharwad Declaration was evolved. The Declaration is a set of demands of the policymakers, by the farmers, to give millets a prominent place while designing the food policies of the country, and thereby secure the food and nutritional needs of millions of poor and marginalised households.





Inagural Session

The Inaugural Session reflected the spirit of millets. It was not the VIPs who inaugurated the Convention. It was the millet farmers, mainly, women belonging to various regions of India, who shared their traditional seeds with each other to the beat of traditional drums from the Dharwad region. The sight and sounds of tradition echoed the MINI ethos that millets are a metaphor for the communities that uphold a rich heritage of food sovereignty.

Two to three farmers from each of the ten participating states went up to the stage, and to the vibrant beat of the *Dholu Kudita* drummers ceremonially exchanged seeds with those from the other states. Along with seeds, this ceremony also symbolised the sharing of knowledge and culture across state boundaries.

This seed ceremony was followed by an Oath for Food and

Farmers from different regions taking part in the Inaugural ceremony



Members of the Dholu Kudita performing for the seed exchange ceremony





Seed Exchange Ceremony
at the National convention
of Millet Farmers





*Children administering
the Oath for Millets*



Farming Future administered by children from a sensitive school of Dharwad called Bala Balaga. The sight of seven young children, each representing a millet (one child was sorghum, the second Foxtail millet, the third Pearl millet etc.) and carrying a photo placard of her/his identity sent the farmer-audience into raptures. The oath administered by the children to the audience was a profound statement reminding their elders that the future must be saved for them through the cultivation and consumption of millets.

An Oath for Millets

We, the children of India and its future, urge all of you to please take the following oath along with us, so that we inherit from you a safe earth and a safe climate, safe and nutritious food and, above all, an agricultural future that will keep our planet cooler, poison-free and full of happiness for all of us.

We, the people of India, take the following pledge on behalf of our children and future citizens of India. We promise to grow more and more millets on our farms because we firmly believe that they are the future of food and farming for our country.

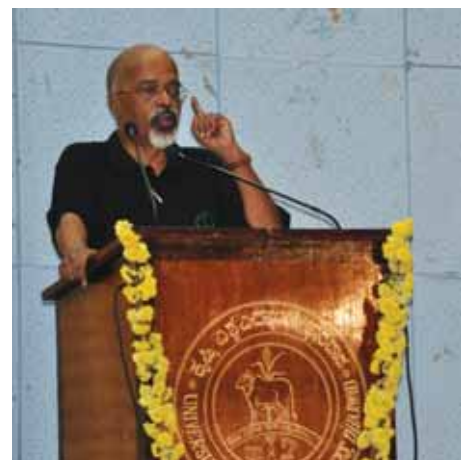
We know that as our earth warms up, it is only millets that can keep the planet cool. We also know that as our climate changes for the worse, the millets on our farms will make it possible to continue agriculture on our earth. We know that if the population in India faces severe malnutrition, it is the millets that will help us to face the crisis.

Millets, grown by the poorest farmers of India, braving the worst set of odds, are the best bet to win the future... In the knowledge of all the great advantages offered to us by millets, we pledge as farmers to grow millets on our farm; as consumers to put millets on our plates; and as citizens of this country to bring more and more people into the millet family.

The Concept Called Millets

Following this soul-lifting ceremony, Mr. PV Satheesh, National Convenor of Millet Network of India outlined the Indian millet landscape in his welcome speech, while drawing attention to the recent trends, politics and challenges faced by it. He welcomed all the participants of the first-ever National Convention of Millet Farmers by highlighting the theme that millets are not just grains but a unique concept. They are not merely individual crops such as Sorghum, Pearl or Foxtail millet but a special culture in food and farming. Millets are grown on marginal lands by some of the poorest and marginalised communities - the dalits, the adivasis and the women in the dry land and hilly regions. They do not demand any external inputs; Seeds, manure - all are farmers' own inputs. And most importantly, the know-how of their cultivation rests within the realm of farmers' knowledge, the most cherished input of all. Thus, millets symbolise the food and knowledge sovereignty of Indian farmers and ensure a life of dignity and self-reliance for them.

He pointed out that most millet fields are inherently bio-diverse and that no real farmer grows millets as a mono crop. They grow them in combination with a host of pulses, legumes, vegetables and oil seeds. A millet farm is a mirror of life in all its diversity and represents an assertion of life in all its robustness. It is this concept that underpins the work of MINI, whose singular focus is on recapturing the traditional biodiversity-based farming systems of which millets are a cornerstone.



*PV Satheesh, Director, DDS
delivering the Inaugural Address*



The members of MINI have been working for a long time to revive these traditional systems of agriculture. Now MINI is engaged in awakening the government to this message while trying to ensure that millets figure prominently in the Food Security Bill. Discussing the recent government Initiative for Nutritional Security through Intensive Millet Promotion (INSIMP) Mr Satheesh said that the move deserves appreciation. However, he alerted the farmers to the dangers riddling the scheme, and said that it was also necessary to critique the dangerous focus on monocropping of millets. INSIMP has wrongly put a stress on the use of chemical inputs and millet hybrids. This, he said, was completely antithetical to the very concept of millet farming because it compromises the independence of millet farmers by snatching away their control over their farming. 'INSIMP is a false boon for the dry land farmers'.

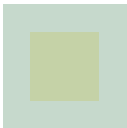
Mr Satheesh pointed to another major threat that millets face in the country in the form of an unnatural promotion of maize, which is resulting in maize invasion in various parts of the country. States like Rajasthan, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, AP and Karnataka are witnessing large tracts of agricultural lands being occupied by maize, owing to the corporate-induced demand for bio-fuels and poultry feed. Mr Satheesh further said that millets are the last true 'agricultural' crops and all steps must be taken by the state to conserve and promote them. Such an action will acknowledge and honour the great service rendered by millet farmers to the food and nutritional security of the nation. The best way for the State to do this is to offer support to farmers in the form of multiple bonuses and also offer other forms of institutional financial support.

The most urgent and the strong context for giving such a priority to millets, is provided by the coming decades of 'Climate Change' which confront us with three challenging



Display of Millet seed & Posters at the convention





scenarios. The first is rising global warming; the second, water scarcity that will acquire frightening proportions; and the third, the projected malnutrition that promises to engulf 70% of the Indian population, particularly the poor and the vulnerable sections. Being hardy and robust crops,

millets can withstand and survive harsh climatic conditions. This makes them an ideal solution to the challenge of climate change. It is forecast that with the onset of climate change, wheat which is a thermal-sensitive crop would be hard-pressed to survive. At the same time, rice fields with 2" of standing water and heavy inputs of chemical fertilisers as required under the 'Green Revolution' model of cultivation will release methane, a greenhouse gas into the atmosphere, thus rendering rice an utterly unviable crop! Therefore, during the Climate Change regime, it is only millets that can ensure India's food and nutrition needs in future. The acute malnutrition staring at India is largely a result of the rice and wheat based PDS system. Many recent studies have pointed out that 20% of diabetes suffered by the poor in India is caused by the rice distributed and consumed through PDS. So, if we are serious in confronting this problem, we should look at millets for a solution. They must not be seen just as a diabetic food or health food.

Chief Guest, Guest of Honour & other dignitaries





Dr. Rama Naik, Dean, College of Home Sciences, UAS-Dharwad addressing the gathering

They do not merely heal our wounds and illnesses, but have the ability to heal our planet. This is what makes them great food crops.

Millet's mean Health

-Dr. Rama Naik, Dean, College of Home Sciences, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad

Dr. Rama Naik further emphasised the point that millets are among the most nutritious food grains available in India and that the people who consume millets on a regular basis are decidedly more healthy than those who do not. Those who consume millets are found to be fit even in their old age. However, when she started interacting with millet farmers, she found to her dismay that

those who grew millets consumed very little of it. They sold millets to the urban centers to be consumed as health foods or “fast” foods. She pointed out that millets are not just good for curing diseases, but are good for the management and prevention of various lifestyle diseases like diabetes, obesity and so on. One of the major constraints, according to Dr. Naik was that processing facilities were not available at the community-level. In order to address this units. She found that millets were very expensive compared to rice and wheat. One of the reasons for this, according to her, was that processing facilities were not available locally in villages. This was a gap she said, that needed to be filled. She exhorted all the farmers to grow and consume millets, in keeping with the oath that they had taken earlier in the day, because doing so would ensure the mental and physical health of one and all.



Dr. Prakash Bhat, Convener, SIRIKRISI, addressing the Convention

Moving to margins

-Dr. Prakash Bhat, Convener, SIRIKRISI, Dharwad

Dr. Prakash Bhat paid tributes to millet farmers who are making telling contributions to the process of climate change mitigation by growing millets even in the face of the unfriendly and unsupportive attitude of the State. He pointed out that over the years, a number of households, even in places where millets were a staple, have moved away from them, as they no longer know how to cook them. This has led to a situation where millets are not demanded by the consumers, thus compelling farmers to give up their cultivation. He gave a brief introduction

to SIRIKRISI, a millet-support organisation based in Dharwad, Karnataka, and described the various activities that they would be undertaking over the coming months and years. He said that the organisation aims to develop many other districts in north Karnataka into 'millet districts' alongside Dharwad. In doing so, he said, the perspectives of the millet farmers would be at the centre stage.

Honoring Millet Farmers

A key part of the programme was the ceremony to honor millet farmers from various regions, who have persisted with millet farming despite the callousness and apathy of the state. The objective behind the ceremony was to convey to these veteran farmers the message, that they have been rendering yeoman service to the cause of food sovereignty in the country, and that their services are not entirely unrecognised. It was also an attempt to underline the fact that there are still a number of farmers across the length and breadth of the nation who are practicing biodiversity-based millet farming, without calculating the monetary gains, and that MINI stands firmly with such farmers.



Farmers who were honored at the National Convention of Millet Farmers with Shri Satheesh

Roll of Honour

1. Basavaraj Tambake, Karnataka: Shri Tambake is the President of Karnataka Rajya Raitu Sangha, one of the largest and most vibrant farmers' unions in the country. He is a veteran of several farmers' movements in the state, and also a vocal advocate of millet farming and consumption.

2. Barhmegowdaru, Karnataka: He is one of the pioneers of organic farming in north Karnataka; and has been a longstanding advocate of biodiversity based milled farming in that state.

3. Basantapur Narsamma, Andhra Pradesh: A farmer from Andhra Pradesh, she has been practicing agriculture from childhood. She is a veteran of conserving biodiversity in her village. She is a single woman who has been growing more than 30 varieties of crops on her land.

4. Ayaswamy, Tamilnadu : Coming from the densely forested Satyamangala Taluka of Erode District, Tamil Nadu, Mr. Ayaswamy has been practicing mixed cropping comprising 8 to 10 varieties on his 10 acres of land; and has been doing so, using traditional and sustainable methods. He is also the seed-keeper of his village, thus contributing to the revival and preservation of traditional seed varieties.

5. Sankamma and Mookappa Pujar, Karnataka: The Pujar couple of Sankamma and Mookappa hail from Chinnikatti Village, Haveri District, Karnataka. They own about 2 acres of land where they are carrying out mixed cropping. They cultivate nearly 10 varieties of crops that include traditional varieties of rice, jowar, bajra, various pulses, etc. Over the years, they have set an example of practicing agriculture in a bio-diverse and sustainable way, without the use of chemical inputs.

6. Wete-u Rhakho, Nagaland: Ms. Rhakho is a veteran farmer from Chizami village in Phek District of Nagaland. She belongs to the Chakhesang Naga tribe; and hails from a long line of farmers who have tended to both terrace and Jhum fields. She has been practicing bio-diverse farming on her field, and grows as many as 40 different crops including millets, pulses, traditional paddy, oilseeds, tuber and so on, without using pesticides; making her a prolific practitioner of bio-diverse and sustainable farming and She wears many other hats— she is also a textile weaver, a member of the Women's Society of Chizami, and a leader in her Church.

7. Rinarani Nayak, Orissa: Rinarani Nayak comes from Narasinghprasad Village of Nayagarh District. She is one of the first woman farmers to take to millet-based mixed farming in her village; and has motivated a number of women since. She has diligently stayed away from chemical inputs; and has instead relied on farm-yard manure, bio-pesticides and other such inputs; making her agriculture sustainable.

8. Indira Mesharam, Maharashtra : Indira ji is from Pakhni Village of Yavatmal District, Maharashtra. A small farmer with about 3 acres of land, she grows a





Farmers honoured at
National Convention of
Millet Farmers



Farmers honoured at
National Convention
of Millet Farmers



variety of crops including jowar, a variety of pulses, oil seeds and vegetables. She has been practicing traditional system.

9. Badri Gujar, Rajasthan: Badri ji, hails from Bakhatpura Village of Alwar District in Rajasthan. He has, for long been pursuing mixed farming in his village; with bajra being the main crop, and another 6 to 7 crops sowed alongside. He has been practicing bio-diverse farming, without resorting to the use of chemical inputs.

10. Nek Ram, Himachal Pradesh : Nek Ram ji, a veteran farmer from Nanj Village, Karasog Tehsil, Mandi District of Himachal Pradesh was one of the first farmers to question the sustainability of 'modern' agricultural practices. He has since been working for the revival and sustenance of traditional agricultural practices that use traditional seeds and do not rely on chemical inputs. He and his associates are striving to revive traditional varieties of millets, potatoes, red rice and other crops that were endemic to the region.

11. Natwar Bhai Padiyar, Gujarat : he is from Chokhari Village in Baroda District, Gujarat. He is a member of the Zila Parishad, a school teacher and a farmer. While Jowar and Bajra are the main crops that are cultivated by him, he also grows a variety of other pulses and oil seeds; in a sustainable manner without resorting to the use of chemical inputs and without succumbing to the temptation of using high-yielding seeds.

12. Fatima Osman Jeda, Gujarat: Ms.Fatima Jeda is from Maliya village of Rajkot District. Although she is from the fishing community, she has been practicing mixed cropping for many years. Although she hails from an arid part of Gujarat, she has been cultivating up to seven crops on her land. Ms.Jeda is deeply passionate about spreading education in her village; and towards this end she has donated one bhiga of her land to the government for the purpose of constructing a school. Today, more than 130 children study in this school.

13. Peddalakshmi, Andhra Pradesh: Peddalakshmi is from Pata Sundarapalem village, Vizianagaram district. On the one acre of land that they possess, they cultivate nearly 10 varieties of crops that include millets, pulses, oilseeds and so on. They have been shunning the use of chemical inputs, instead relying on vermicompost, and farmyard manure to fertilize the soil; and on neem extracts and such to tackle the pesticides.

14. Ponnutai, Tamilnadu: Ms.Ponnutai is from Vasudecanallur village of tirunalveli District, Tamil Nadu. She is a vocal leader of her community who has been practicing millet cultivation for several years, using mixed farming methods. She cultivates anywhere between 10 to 15 crops at a time on her land. In addition, she has also been organizing women in her village into various SHGs.

15. Jayappa, Andhra Pradesh: Jayappa started as a bonded laborer in Andhra Pradesh; but with some assistance from DDS grew to become a landowner who has been practicing millet farming for many decades now. ■



Millet Road for KRRS

- The Chief Guest, Shri.Basavaraj Tambake, President, KRRS



Shri.Basavaraj Tambake delivering the Chief Guest's Address at the National Convention of Millet Farmers.

Mr. Basavaraj Tambake opened his speech by raising the issue of the excessive use of chemical inputs in agriculture today. The consequence is that the youngsters of the present day are prone to a number of lifestyle diseases. KRRS [Karnataka Rajya Raita Sangha], the largest farmers' union in India has been involved in a number of farmers' agitations, not just for their rights, but also for systemic changes that would benefit the farmers. After getting acquainted with the work of DDS and MINI, KRRS also started taking up the issues of millet farmers. The easy availability of rice and wheat and the ease with which they can be cooked has led to the demise of a number of millet recipes, and to the gradual decline in the cultivation of millets. However, the great qualities of

millets—their ability to grow without pesticides, added to their ability to grow with less water and so on—make them a wonderful boon for the health and welfare of the people, rural and urban alike. KRRS has lobbied with members of the Planning Commission to include millets in some of the important policies of the states that pertain to dry land regions of the country. He observed that in order to ensure the health of the nation, millets ought to be a part of the various government food programmes like the PDS. He went on to promise that millets would become an integral part of the agenda of KRRS and that they would try and raise the issue at every given opportunity.



The rice eater is weightless like a bird; the one who eats Jowar is strong like a wolf: one who eats Raagi remains 'nirogi' [illness free] throughout his life

An old Kannada saying



Sick Soil, Sick People

- Guest of Honor, Dr. Hanchanal, Vice-Chancellor, UAS-Dharwad

Dr. Hanchanal began his address by acknowledging the role played by advancements in agricultural sciences, and by the innovations and technological inventions in augmenting the food production of India in general and Karnataka in particular, in the wake of the Green Revolution. However, he pointed out that in the process of pushing forward these innovations, we forgot our traditional crops, methods of agriculture and the associated food culture. The excessive focus on the use of fertilisers and pesticides had resulted in a “sick soil and sick people”. He alluded to the impending threat of climate change, and pointed out that millets are a sound solution to this threat. Illustrating the hardy nature of millets, he pointed out that ragi and other millets were the only crops that survived the droughts that frequently visited the north Karnataka region. He exhorted all members in the gathering to resolve to eat millets on a regular basis, so as to enjoy better health. He ended his address by underlining the importance of research in the field of millets and undertook to make higher budgetary allocations for millet research in the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, which he heads.



Dr. Hanchanal, Vice-Chancellor, UAS-Dharwad addressing the gathering

Dr. Krishna Naik, Registrar, UAS-Dharwad rounded off the inaugural ceremony by welcoming all the participants to the premises of University of Agricultural Sciences and by extending a range of facilities including hostels, vehicles and so on to the organisers of the Convention. Following this, the Convention entered into the crucial phase of conducting ‘listening sessions’.





Listening Sessions

The Listening Sessions were designed to break away from the usual norm at conventions where the ‘experts’ speak and farmers listen. In contrast, the National Convention of Millet Farmers had panels of farmers from different regions coming up the stage and sharing their concerns and analyses regarding millet farming; their understanding of the present status of millet farming in their region and the factors responsible for the same; and the steps that state and non-state actors need to initiate in order to revive and strengthen millet-based mixed farming systems. As there were representatives on behalf of 15 organisations belonging to ten states from different regions of India, the listening sessions were organised region-wise.

Organisation of The Listening Sessions

The listening sessions were organized in the following way...

Region	Name of the State	Representing Organizations
East	Odisha	Living Farms, Nirman-Odisha
South	Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu	Deccan Development Society, Keystone Foundation, SIRIKRISI, Women’s Collective
West	Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan	Paryavaran Vikas Kendra, Paryavaran Mitra, KRAPAVIS, Shetkari Sanghathan
North	Himachal Pradesh	Lokkalyan Vikas Kendra
Central	Madhya Pradesh	Madhya Pradesh Nirman
North-East	Nagaland	North-East Network



The listening sessions kicked off with the team from North-East Network, Nagaland. The team from North-East Network, Nagaland initiated the presentations.

Listening Session-I **North-East**

The team from Nagaland consisted of Mr. Amop Nokland, Ms. H Alem, Ms. Ketshe-u Losou, Ms. Venulu Vedeo, Ms. Wete-u-Rakho and Ms. Akole. Opening the presentation, Mr. Amop Nokland, said that millets are an important part of the diet in their part of Nagaland, and that they are usually grown along with a range of crops that include traditional paddy, vegetables, and so on. Among the points highlighted by the group from Nagaland were—

- Migration of people to urban areas in search of jobs and education has meant that there are fewer working hands in the villages. This has had an adverse impact on farming in general, and millet-farming in particular.
- Millets, which were accorded high importance, have fallen from that exalted position. Where once millet harvest festivals were celebrated, over the years, such festivals have gone out of vogue. Now, these festivals are celebrated only in a few remote villages.
- The introduction of a host of new crops like ginger, etc has led to the displacement of millets from the farming scenario in the state.
- Lack of support from the government for the cultivation of millets has dissuaded many farmers from continuing with millet cultivation.

Members of the team from Nagaland speaking during their listening session



● Millets are popularly perceived as the poor man's crop, while consuming rice is seen as a status symbol. This perception, combined with the various measures taken by the government to promote rice, have resulted in the declining popularity of millets.

● In Nagaland, agriculture on the slopes is carried out through the slash and burn method. Small patches of forest are cleared and brought under cultivation; and it is on these lands that millets were mostly grown. The job of slashing and burning the forest patch was usually carried out by men. However, in recent decades, it has been seen that men are more interested in seeking wage labour and earning some money, rather than working on the slopes. This is one of the primary reasons for the decline in the cultivation of millets in Nagaland.

● The absence of facilities for processing millets discourages the cultivation and consumption of millets.

● One important point was that of value addition for millets. The group from Nagaland felt that it was important, in order to generate demand for millets in the urban markets, to come up with newer and more palatable products made out of millets. This would ensure acceptability of millets by the new generation of consumers.

● Support from the government in the shape of bonuses, awards for millet farmers, research by agricultural universities and other such moves would go a long way in spotlighting the benefits of the cultivation and consumption of millets, and would encourage farmers to cultivate these crops.

Replying to some of the queries, the team from Nagaland said that in their state, every woman was a seed keeper, and that they smoked the seeds in order to preserve them for a longer period of time. They also said that there was a long-standing culture of sharing seeds within the communities in Nagaland. Further, explaining about the land use in their state, they said that there were four different categories of agricultural lands—individual lands, family lands, clan lands and community lands; and that each of these categories of land had different ownership patterns and that different crops were cultivated on the same. While women do not have clearly demarcated land rights, since community and clan lands are present, women too can cultivate some of it, and retain the produce that so results. However, some of these customary arrangements of land use are slowly disappearing.



Listening Session-II WEST

The team from Gujarat consisted of Ms. Fatima Jeda, Ms. Puriben Kalabhai Muchhadiya, Mr. Ramesh Katesiya, Mr. Murad Bhatti, Ms. Tushar Pancholi, Mr. Shailesh Patel, Mr. Mahesh Parmar, Mr. Arjanbhai Wagh, Mr. Patabhai Wagh, Mr. Pratapbhai Wagh, Mr. Natwarbhai Padiyar and Mr. Arvinbhai Padiyar; and two



Farmers from Gujarat taking part in the listening session

organisations - Paryavaran Mitra and Paryavaran Vikas Kendra were represented at the convention. While the former worked in Ahmedabad region of the state, the latter is based in Rajkot. The key points that emerged from their presentation are as under:

- Gujarat has a history of growing a variety of millets, mainly Bajra. However, over the past few decades, there has been a decline in the production of millets in the state. The first reason that has been cited is that soil salinity is increasing in the state. Reviving millet cultivation in areas that are affected by salinity is a challenge in front of the farmers in the coastal areas of Gujarat.
- The rapid urbanisation and industrialisation of the state of Gujarat is resulting in a decline in the availability of agricultural lands, which in turn is resulting in a decline in the production of crops like millets.



● One of the challenges, they cited, faced by agriculture in Gujarat is the high wage rates that are being offered under MGNREGA. They contend that MGNREGA has pushed the wage rates upwards, much to the detriment of small farmers, who are unable to match these rates.

● The tribal communities of Gujarat have been growing millets for many generations now. However, over the past few years, even these groups have taken to the cultivation and consumption of rice and wheat.

● The group from Gujarat demanded that the Central Government and the Government of Gujarat should consider introducing millets into the public distribution system and into other government food programs like ICDS, Mid-day Meal Scheme, etc.

● The group opined that without some support to millets from the government, these crops would slowly vanish from the agricultural scenario of the state.

● In recent years, the effects of climate change have become sharply visible. Where once Gujarat enjoyed more than 50 inches of rainfall, today the state is witnessing only about 20 inches of rainfall. This has had a detrimental impact on agriculture in the state.

During the discussion following the presentation, it came to light that a number of households in Gujarat—rural and urban—consumed millets in significant quantities. It was pointed out by a member of the audience that the millets cultivated in Karnataka were first sent to Mumbai and thence to various parts of Gujarat. Despite this, the area under and the production of millets has been declining in the state. In addition to the various factors that have been listed above, a major factor behind this trend is the shift to cash crops like cotton and tobacco which has switched the focus of the farmers away from food crops. The discussion was embellished with a song on Bajra that was sung by the women members of the team.



Listening Session-III EAST

Orissa was represented by two groups - Living Farms and Nirman-Orissa; and consisted of Mr. Mitralabh Naik, Mr. Ramachandra Behra, Mr. Sudama Pradhan, Mr. Sadananda Sethi, Mr. Mochiram Naik, Mr. Ramesh Chandra Naik, Ms. Sarojini Behra, Ms. Rinarani Naik, Mr. Loknath Minjaka, Mr. Kodraka Kama, Mr. Rajendra Pidikaka and Mr. Susant Dalai. The two regions from Orissa that were represented at the Convention—Rayagada and Nayagadh—have a rich tradition of growing millets. In both these regions, farmers have been documented as growing more 15-20 varieties of millets and other crops, thus preserving an amazing biodiversity. However, in recent

decades, the aggressive promotion of cashew nut plantations and hybrid paddy has been detrimental to millets. The state government gave these crops a push through a slew of incentives, which resulted in the gradual decline in the area under millets.

In parts of Rayagada, to which some of the farmers in the contingent from Orissa belong, there was a time when more than 30 varieties of crops were



Farmers from Gujarat taking part in the listening session





grown, including more than 10 varieties of millets. However, in recent years, the government has been pushing hybrid rice, maize and cotton (including Bt Cotton). As a result, today only about 4 to 5 varieties of millets are grown.

The government's initiative to promote maize in Orissa came in for heavy criticism from the farmers at the convention. For some years now, the government has been encouraging multi-national companies like Monsanto in order to push maize on a large scale in all regions of the state, including the hilly regions in KBK districts. This is undermining the food and farming cultures of the scores of tribal communities that inhabit this region in significant numbers.



This group also demanded that millets be made a part of the public distribution system and of the various government food programs like MDM and ICDS, in order to revive millet consumption in rural areas, especially among the youth. Another aspect in which the group from Orissa sought help from the government is that of support price. The farmers pointed out that while for crops like rice and cotton, they were getting a minimum support price from the government, in the case of millets, no such support existed. This discouraged them from cultivating these crops.

The state of Orissa - especially South Orissa that is dominated by a host of tribal communities - has a rich tradition of cultivating and consuming millets. However, as the farmers from that region pointed out, crops like maize, hybrid rice and cotton are making rapid inroads and displacing millets. As in the case of the rest of the country, there has been a marked decline in the area under the production of millets in the state of Orissa. This poses a threat to the food and nutritional security of the communities, and to their cultural sovereignty.



Listening Session-IV

NORTH-WEST & CENTRAL

This listening session encompassed three regions - north, west and central; and comprised of the states of Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. The session started with a thumping presentation by Mr. Nek Ram of Himachal Pradesh who shared the experiences of his organisation - Lokkalyan Vikas Kendra - in preserving and strengthening traditional mixed-cropping based agriculture. This was followed by a presentation by farmer friends from Rajasthan and then by the women from Shetkari Sanghathana, Maharashtra. This listening session was rounded off with a highly informative presentation of the cultural significance of millets in the lives of the tribal communities in Mandla district of Madhya Pradesh, by Mr. Naresh Biswas of Nirman.

While making his opening remarks, Mr. Nek Ram pointed out that the advent of the Green Revolution marked the beginning of the decline of traditional agriculture. Himachal Pradesh had a wealth of traditional varieties of millets, pulses, wheat and rice. As many as 18 varieties of crops would grow in a given piece of land, thereby ensuring that the household in question could meet all their food and nutritional needs. Furthermore, such diversity ensured that even if there was a crop failure that resulted in widespread damage to crops, there would be something left for the household to keep the wolf away from the door. However, the introduction of hybrid and HYV varieties of seeds, chemical fertilisers and pesticides and other such external inputs have played havoc with these traditional systems, leading to a decline in the cultivation

Farmers from Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan share their experiences of millet farming at the Convention



of the traditional varieties. Gradually, even the knowledge of these traditional systems, now largely confined to the farmers of the yester-generation, is vanishing. The customary practice of exchanging seeds, which stood farmers in good stead, especially during hard times, has collapsed, forcing farmers to depend on the markets to meet their requirement of seeds.

An important point that Mr. Nek Ram flagged was the health impact of this shift in agriculture. While the current generation, fed on hybrid wheat and rice and on exotic vegetables found itself susceptible to various ailments, the generations of yore were far healthier and enjoyed a robust constitution. Illustrating this point, he said that while the present generation was brought up on vegetables like spinach, the previous generations

consumed sarson which grew naturally with the traditional varieties of wheat. This was not only cheap but also decidedly more nutritious, so it kept communities free of diseases.

Now, efforts are on by various groups in the state to revive some of these systems and practices so that the food and nutritional security of the farming groups are ensured. As part of these efforts, interactions are being arranged between the older generation of farmers and the newer ones. Such efforts are providing a platform where inter-



generational transfer of knowledge takes place. The overall attempt is to put pressure on the government, through a range of small initiatives throughout the state, to extend support to farmers who are growing millets and other traditional varieties of crops.

The group from Rajasthan comprised of Mr. Mukesh, Mr. Badri Gujjar, Mr. Rupram Gujjar and Mr. Ramji Lal. They hail from Alwar district. The team from Rajasthan pointed out that the increased use of pesticides and fertilizers has improved production and productivity of food grains, but has compromised the quality of these food grains. Therefore, while we are able to produce more food in relation to the past, we are unable to produce food of a comparable quality; and this has had a detrimental effect on the health and well-being of the people today.



The team from Maharashtra, comprised Ms. Indira Meshram, Ms. Jyotsana Vaidya, Ms. Kanta Hange, Mr. Sharad Halge, Mr. S.S. Ambatakar and Mr. A Ambatakar; and they came representing their brethren from the Vidarbha region of the state. An important point that this group brought up was the importance of low-cost agriculture. They emphasized the need for keeping the cost of inputs to the minimum and for making sure that most of the inputs required are met from their own means. The use of manure for fertilizing the soil or the use of cow urine and other such materials as pesticides were pointed out as examples of such agriculture. They pointed out that because such traditional practices were forgotten and there was a growing clamor for external inputs, the farming community in the region is under extreme duress; the most tragic manifestation of which is farmers' suicides.

Talking about millets, the group mentioned that in the past, nearly 50% of the area under cultivation comprised of various millets, led by sorghum. In this region, millets were not only important to meet the food needs of the people, they were also important to meet the fodder requirements of the livestock.

The last few decades saw the farmers in the region move to various cash crops like cotton and soy bean. While this improved cash income for the farmers over the short run, it also meant a greater dependence on the market for inputs like seeds and fertilizers. This pushed the cost of production upwards, and was one of the reasons for the growing indebtedness in the region.

This session was rounded off with a presentation by Mr. Naresh Biswas of Nirman,



Madhya Pradesh. Mr. Biswas works in Mandla district, which is predominantly inhabited by tribal communities—Gonds and Baigaas (these are classified as Primitive Tribal Groups). The practice of biodiversity based agriculture, wherein 30 to 40 varieties of crops were grown on a given piece of land, was the norm in the region; and in this practice, millets had a pivotal role. They were important to meet the food and fodder requirements of these communities. While, as in the rest of the country, this region too has been witnessing a decline in the practice of such agriculture, there are several pockets within the district wherein these practices are still alive and flourishing. Mr. Biswas's presentation focused on the cultural significance of millets. Through a number of anecdotes, Mr. Biswas illustrated the significant role that millets played in the social and cultural lives of the Baigas. For the Baigas, Little Millet and Kodo Millet are very important.

For instance, when a child is born, the newborn is fed kodo millet, which is cooked along with the husk, into a khichdi. Similarly, a new mother is fed finger millet in the days immediately following a delivery. This enables her to overcome the strain of delivering a baby, and to go up and about with her work. Similarly, at the time of marriage, kodo millet is given as dowry; and when a person in the baiga community is on his/her death bed, he/she is fed with gruel of kodo millet. There are a number of such instances where millets have an important role in the journey from the cradle to the grave, of the Baiga community.

A number of programs and schemes introduced by the government have been detrimental to these traditional practices of agriculture. Citing the example of INSIMP, Mr. Biswas pointed that this scheme was no different from those that were introduced as part of the Green Revolution. By espousing the use of chemical inputs and hybrid seeds, the scheme was completely antithetical to the very ethos of millet cultivation; and such schemes needed to be opposed in no uncertain terms.



Listening Session-V

TAMILNADU

Groups from two diverse regions in Tamil Nadu - Kotagiri in the Nilgiris and Tirunelveli district - participated in the National Convention. The groups comprised of Ms. Rani, Ms. Neelima, Ms. Ponnutai, Ms. Kalamani, Ms. Murugan, Ms. Ayaswamy, Ms. Raghupati, Ms. Veeramma, Ms. Kalaimmal, Ms. Kalyani and Ms. Saral.

Both the regions from Tamil Nadu, have a history of cultivating millets. In the past, agriculture demanded very little in the shape of expenditure. As millet based agriculture required very little external inputs, agricultural expenses were minimal. However, according to the farmer-delegates from Tamil Nadu, the agricultural scenario has undergone drastic changes in the recent decades. Farmers have moved to hybrid rice, cotton and other crops that fetch higher cash returns. While this might have contributed to the income of the households, it has also led to an increase in their expenses.

Another major challenge faced by farmers in Tamil Nadu was land grabbing. Corporate farms and large multi-national companies are taking over hundreds of acres of agricultural lands, leading to the displacement of thousands of farmers. This is hurting the farming communities in general.

A major challenge confronting millet farming in Tamil Nadu is the changing tastes of the

Farmers from Kotagiri and Tirunelveli regions of Tamil Nadu sharing their experiences at the National Convention.





younger generation there. The youth of today are looking for ready-to-cook and easy-to-eat foods such as rice. Since one needs to put in some efforts in order to consume millets, they are not finding favor with them. Yet another challenge to millet cultivation is the free availability of rice in the PDS outlets, which is being supplied free of cost by the government. This has made rice the preferred food grain for many households even in the rural areas, much to the detriment of millets. A unique factor that came to the fore was the negative role played by the police in undermining agriculture. During the hunt for Veerappan in the Satyamangalam forests of Tamil Nadu, the police forces would seize the cattle of the villagers, with the hope of extracting information about the brigand. This deprived the farmers of the much-needed farmyard manure, and this undermined agriculture in certain pockets of the state. Nevertheless, this factor is something that is unique to certain specific regions of the state. Another phenomenon that has been seen in the state is that children who are enrolled in the tribal hostels and who are fed on the rice-based diet therein are not able to adjust to the millet-based diet when they get back home. Consequently, they start pressurizing their parents to serve them rice, thus leading them away from the traditional millet based diet.



Listening Session-VI

ANDHRA PRADESH

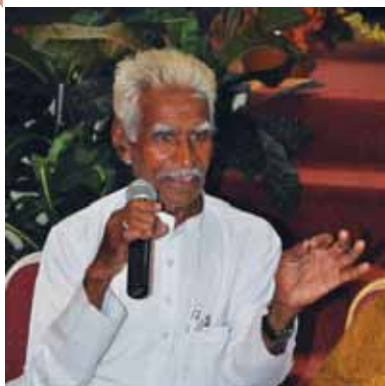
A very strong group represented Andhra Pradesh at the National Convention; with representation from the coastal districts of Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam, and from the semi-arid district of Medak in the Telengana region. Lakshamma from Anakapalle began her presentation by referring to the constant attacks from wild animals which compelled them to move away from millet cultivation. However, thanks to the interventions by SVDS, which is the local partner of MINI in that region, millet-based mixed farming practices have been revived. Further, they have stayed away from chemical inputs and fertilizers, and have instead relied upon herbal decoctions and extracts in lieu of fertilizers and pesticides. While such practices may not yield enough for us to sell, they help us meet our own needs for food and fodder.

A team from Medak, consisting of Ms. Chandramma, Mr. Saddiramappa and Mr. Jayappa shared their experiences of reviving traditional millet-based mixed farming systems in their region. Through their efforts, they have succeeded in reviving more than 80 landraces of traditional crops. These efforts have helped them in pulling themselves out of the rut of bonded labor and move towards tilling their own lands. These traditional practices helped the communities achieve self-sufficiency with respect to seeds, food and



Farmers from Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Zaheerabad regions of Andhra Pradesh presenting their case for millet farming at the Convention.





farming. The use of vermicompost, various decoctions and other such organic inputs helped these communities practice agriculture on a sustainable and low-cost basis.

Today, the farmers in Medak and Anakapalle have fully functioning seed banks through which they are not only meeting their seed requirements, but also those of other households in their respective villages and regions. So much so, that today even the large and medium landholders regularly approach these

women for seeds.

Today, the farmers of Medak have shown to the government that even the traditional mixed farming techniques can lead to production and productivity comparable to the more conventional methods that are followed today. As has been seen during the implementation of INSIMP in Medak district wherein the government sanctioned one unit comprising of 1000 hectares, in those areas where biodiversity based farming was carried out, it was possible for farmers to completely avoid using chemical inputs, keep costs under check and still produce yields that were on par with those seen on farms where more conventional methods have been practiced.



Listening Session-VII

KARNATAKA

The state of Karnataka was represented by a strong contingent of more than 25 farmers, mostly from the northern districts of the state. The reason behind the strong presence of farmers from that particular region is that it has a rich tradition of millet-based mixed farming, and even today lakhs of farmers are practicing such agriculture, producing a wide variety of millets, pulses, oilseeds and so on.

The team of farmers highlighted the fact that in the past, when the diet of the farmers comprised predominantly of millets, and other produce from their own fields, they seldom had the need for a hospital. However, during the last few decades since the farmers shifted towards cash crops and wherever there has been an increase in dependence on rice and wheat available in PDS outlets and in the open market, a number of ailments and diseases are rearing their head.



One of the reasons cited by the farmers from Karnataka for the decline of millet cultivation was the total absence of government support. Whether it is institutional credit or insurance or some form of subsidy or other financial benefit, these are extended to all crops except millets. This has proven to be a discouragement to farmers who have been cultivating these crops.

Farmers from Karnataka making a strong case for millets at the National Convention.





Another important factor behind the decline in millet cultivation is the absence of millet processing facilities. It has been seen that while rice and wheat can be easily processed even in the rural areas, the same cannot be said about millets. This has been responsible, in no small measure, for the decline in the area under and the production of millets.



A significant point that was made by one of the farmers from this region was that in order for human beings to be healthy, it is absolutely imperative that the land be healthy. For that to happen, it is absolutely vital that the farmers refrain from using chemical inputs and try to use organic inputs. This would ensure respect for the land.



The farmers were unanimous in their criticism of the green revolution model of agriculture, and contended that this model destroyed their lands, their agriculture, their health and their overall well-being. It further made them dependent on the markets for most of their inputs, and pushed the cost of cultivation to unbearable levels. They contended that it was essential to understand the systems of yore, find out the benefits of those systems, and then try to revive these systems so that the sovereignty of the farmers over food and farming can be reclaimed.





Panel Discussion

*University of Agricultural Sciences
Dharwad*

Faculty members from UAS-Dharwad anchored a panel discussion. The panelists included Dr. Rama Naik, Dean College of Home Sciences, UAS-Dharwad, Dr. Krishna Naik, Registrar, UAS-Dharwad, Dr. Nirmala, Faculty, UAS-Dharwad and Dr. Shantakumar, Faculty, UAS-Dharwad.

Dr. Shantakumar started the panel discussions by highlighting the diverse range of initiatives that UAS had undertaken in the field of millets. They are conducting extensive research to document the nutritional characteristics of the various millets found in Karnataka and beyond, and are trying to disseminate the information so derived for



Members of the Panel constituted by University of Agricultural Sciences-Dharwad addressing the participants at the Convention. The Panel spoke about the various initiatives that the University had taken in order to promote the cultivation and consumption of millets among urban and rural population alike



the benefit of the general public. At the same time, the university was trying to develop a number of new millet varieties that would survive the vagaries of the climatic conditions of the north Karnataka region, and give the farmers good yields. As the members of the Panel informed the gathering, they have developed and released a number of varieties of millets that are suitable for a variety of agro-climatic conditions ranging from the arid and semi-arid regions of Karnataka, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and others to the humid and sub-humid regions of coastal Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and so on. In the words of the panelists, these varieties of crops have been designed to be resistant to a number of common diseases that tend to strike millets. In addition, they have also researched and identified a number of different techniques of mixed cropping and inter-cropping which would ensure heightened yields for the farmers.



Dr. Krishna Naik shared details about the Integrated Farming System that is being experimented with in over 25000 hectares, under the jurisdiction of UAS-Dharwad. IFS is the flagship program of the Government of Karnataka that aims to give fillip to the food, nutritional and income security of the farmers. Dr. Naik said that farmers should have multiple farming systems—agriculture, dairy farming, a good water management system, fodder cultivation system, and the rearing of small ruminants—all of which are mutually complementary. Only such a range of systems would ensure the food, fodder and nutritional security of the farmers. He lamented the absence of such systems; and spoke about the importance of millets in any system mentioned above. He also spoke about the importance of seed banks and seed exchange initiatives at the community level, especially of traditional landraces. He also alluded to the various training programs that had been initiated by the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad in order to generate awareness about millet cultivation, in Karnataka.

Dr. Nirmala shared with the gathering details of the various initiatives that the university had launched to make millets market-friendly. The university has been promoting millet processing in the rural areas. The University sees the need to promote millets on the same scale as rice and wheat; and in order to do so, they have come out with a



number of ways to package millets. The traditional fried snacks like chakhli and murukus are being tried out with millets, and the same are being marketed. At the same time, keeping in mind the evolving tastes and preferences of the urban markets, new products like pasta, noodles and flakes are being made with millets, and are thus being made more palatable for this clientele.

In order to revive millet cultivation and consumption in the rural areas, the University has experimented with the preparation of a host of traditional Kannada delicacies with millets. One of the issues that the members of the University identified, that precludes people in rural and urban areas from consuming millets on a much larger scale is the absence of processing facilities. It has been seen that processing millets is much harder in relation to rice; thus pushing people towards these other food grains. In the wake of this finding, UAS has been installing processing machinery in rural areas. This not only reduces the drudgery of the women who have to otherwise de-hull the millets manually; but also ensures the supply of clean grains to both the rural and urban markets. Further, the University has taken a number of market-linkage initiatives in order to ensure that the farmers who produce millets get better incomes.

Finally, Dr. Kamatar spoke about the importance of the native landraces of millets, and how they make sound sense not only from the standpoint of health but also from that of economy. He illustrated this point by pointing out that people in the urban areas are increasingly consuming oats, which have to be imported when there are varieties of millets, and numerous landraces in each variety, which are found in each state that are cheaper, more easily available and much more nutritious than oats. The Panel concluded its presentation by acknowledging that the farmers who have been growing millets for several generations know more about millet cultivation and consumption; and that the University had a lot to learn from them. At the same time, they pointed out that the University had the technical know-how and research facilities that could act as force-multipliers in the farmers' efforts to achieve food and nutritional security; the members of the Panel shared their contact details with the gathering, and opened the doors to the various facilities at the University to the farmers and civil society activists present there.





Dharwad Declaration

The listening sessions that were conducted over a period of one-and-a-half days, as part of the National Convention saw the farmers share their concerns and analyses with respect to the various issues confronting millet farming, and what they thought could be viable solutions to address the same. In doing so, the wisdom and experiences of the farmers who had been practicing biodiversity based millet farming was brought to the fore. The Dharwad Declaration which was crafted at the end of the listening sessions is a reflection of the farmers' wisdom and insights which were evident during the listening sessions. Besides, they provided an occasion for the farmers to demand of the state bold measures to revive and strengthen millet farming in India. The discussions to evolve the Declaration were anchored by Mr.P.V.Satheesh, Mr.Sanjeev Kulkarni, Mr.Prakash Bhat, Mr.Ramesh Chandra Naik, Mr.Naresh Biswas and Mr.Nek Ram. Some of the key demands made as part of the Declaration are as given ahead.

Mr. PV Satheesh, of DDS, Andhra Pradesh; Mr.Naresh Biswas of Nirman, Madhya Pradesh; Mr. Ramesh Chandra Naik from Odisha Nirman, Orissa; Ms. Akole from North-East Network, Nagaland; Dr. Nirmala of UAS-Dharwad, Dharwad; and Dr. Prakash Bhat of SIRIKRISI, Dharwad constituted a panel to discuss the issues that were flagged during the various listening sessions; and played a crucial role in crafting the Dharwad Declaration.





● The farmers asserted that millets are climate change compliant crops that resist challenges such as global warming, water scarcity, recurring droughts and malnutrition, which will pose us in the coming era of climate change, through their capacity to withstand these challenges. Therefore, the farmers who cultivate millets must be offered multiple bonuses by the state, since they can save India from the impacts of impending climate crisis.

● The farmers demanded a range of bonuses for the ecological, economic and nutritional services rendered by them as a consequence of cultivating millets. More specifically, they demanded a Water Conservation Bonus, a Climate Change Compliance Bonus and a Nutritional Bonus.

● The farmers at the Convention demanded that millets be made an integral part of the Public Distribution System; and of the other government food programs, including ICDS, MDM, tribal hostels and other government hostels for children and youth. They also demanded that just as rice, wheat and other crops receive a minimum support price from the state, so should millets.

● The farmers demanded that millets be an integral part of the soon-to-be-tabled Food Security Bill. Further, the farmers contended that the dream of food sovereignty would not be realized until and unless a decentralized public distribution system becomes a reality. They demanded that the Food Security Bill make appropriate provisions.

The full text of the Dharwad Declaration is given as under.





Dharwad Declaration on Millets

October 16-17, 2011, Dharwad, Karnataka, India

We the farmers cultivating millets in various parts of India — from the hills of Himachal Pradesh to the plains of Deccan, from the adivasi regions of Madhya Pradesh to the mountains of Nagaland— have met at Dharwad in Karnataka on October 16th and 17th to discuss the various facets, strengths and problems of millet cultivation and consumption in India.

We divided the two days into a number of Listening Sessions in which we heard farmers from Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Nagaland, Orissa, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu who vividly described the millet situation in their states. We also heard presentations of millet scientists, especially from the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, Karnataka.

After detailed discussions of the hopes and fears raised by all the farmers and scientists and a careful analysis of the issues presented, we have drafted the Dharwad Declaration to bring out the current concerns of the millet community for the consideration of policy makers, administrators, scientists, farmers and civil society groups in India and abroad.

● We consider millets as ‘Food Sovereignty’ crops that offer independence and dignity to the small and marginal farmers, adivasis, dalits and women in this country; and this is a recognition that must be accorded to all millet growers by the governments, state and non-state actors across India.



● We assert that millets are climate change- compliant crops that resist the challenges such as global warming, water scarcity, recurring droughts and malnutrition, posed to us in the coming era of climate change, through their capacity to withstand these challenges. Therefore the farmers who cultivate millets must be offered multiple bonuses by the state, since they can save India from the impacts of impending climate crisis.

● Some of the bonuses we demand are :

1. Climate Change bonus for being low carbon sequestration crops that help us fight the carbon crisis
2. Water Conservation bonus because millet farmers grow their crop without irrigation. Thus every acre of millet farm saves the country upto six million litres. This is the “root print” of millets that needs state recognition and acknowledgement
3. Nutrition bonus since millets crops are storehouses of nutrition For the impoverished populations residing in the dryland areas of India, millets offer a huge nutrition solution during the climate change years when India will face a nutritional emergency.

● We strongly oppose some state initiatives such as INSIMP, which while overtly seeming to be supporting millets, actually destroy the millet cultivation environment by insisting on hybridisation, monocropping and chemicalisation of millet cultivation. All of these are alien to millets; therefore if the Government and ICAR are serious about millet promotion, they should withdraw INSIMP and initiate a completely new policy which promotes the cultivation of millets in the traditional biodiverse, ecological fashion and declare a support bonus of up to Rs.10,000 per hectare to farmers who are engaging in this form of millet cultivation.

● We demand an immediate and urgent pursuit of education on millets in our schools. If the young minds of children can be opened up to the phenomenal advantages of millets as the future of food and farming in India, it will create a new generation of fully informed, food literate millet consumers of the future.

● We acknowledge that processing of millets poses a major problem for its marketing and consumption. As ‘milleteers’, we are aware of the paucity of small machines that can process millets, so we demand that the government take steps to rapidly



introduce such machines. We feel that they should preferably be manual and not require electrical power so that the remote communities of the country can easily use them in their “powerless” situations. The other areas in the country need very small machines that can be easily operated without heavy demand on power and can be maintained at the community level. The government through its technology missions must concentrate on production and supply of these types of small machines and stop making millet processing technology heavy and entrap farmers into another cycle of dependence.

● We call upon the universities and ICAR system to initiate research on millets that truly reflect farmer perspectives on the way such research is designed and conducted. We demand that such research be farmer-led and tailored to enhance biodiversity, traditional knowledge and input independence among other sterling qualities of millets.

● We demand the urgent introduction of millets in all forms of Public Food Systems. We wholeheartedly welcome the current initiative to recommend inclusion of millets in the PDS as spelt out in the draft National Food Security Bill. But such an introduction must be accompanied by the principles of local production, local storage and local distribution. Only this approach can nurture the pristine quality of millet cultivation and consumption. Any other form of millets in PDS can make it vulnerable to the capture of millet production by large industrial houses and corporations. In recognition of the fiercely independent nature of millet farmers such predatory industrial production must be banned and all procurement of millets must be done at the local panchayat/ community level. Such procurement must be based on rightful remunerative minimum support prices for millet farmers.

● We insist that the Government must not just stop at the introduction of millets in PDS but move towards use of millets in all the public food systems, especially in ICDS, school meal programmes, welfare hostels, government canteens, state celebrations etc. This will not only ensure a large market for millets but also recapture for millets their just position in the food culture of the country. This will also enhance the nutrition status of the population of the country



● We observe a lot of competitive politics to make PDS rice cheaper and cheaper [currently free of cost in some states of the South]. While we do not want to comment on the politics of this attempt, we demand that the policies followed in case of rice should be extended to millets as soon as they are put on the PDS.

● We express great concern at the current promotion of industrial maize. The extraordinary haste with which this promotion is being carried out in states such as Orissa, MP, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and other Indian states is frightening to say the least. Such an usurpation of millet fields, we assert, will never promote food and other securities offered by millets. Even now more than 70% of all maize produced in India is for industrial consumption and not for people's plates. Any further promotion of maize will only convert all millet farmers into biofuel producers and take away their last stand as producers and controllers of food security of their community. We strongly demand that millet farmers are extended the same support so that there is more level playing millet fields that will help us to make informed decision on what we must cultivate and consume.

● We are deeply concerned that in various policies that are being announced on land acquisition, there is an emphasis on non-acquisition only on fertile lands that are capable of growing crops in three seasons. But millet farms should not be treated as lands of low fertility and their acquisition should not be the first target of any land acquisition. Millets are the lifeline for many million farmers of dry land India who are bravely fighting challenged agricultural environments and also producing food and nutrition security for India's billions. This should be kept in serious consideration and millet lands should be treated as the most precious farm lands of India and no effort be made to acquire these lands for any purpose, public or private. They must be respected as heritage lands and protected at all costs.

● We demand that alongside the rightful emphasis of millets' role in safeguarding human health and their recognition as health foods, millets are recognized as capable of healing not only humans but also our soils and our environment. Millets are healers of our planet. This must be clearly understood, recognized and made the foundation of any millet policy. ■





An important purpose of the National Convention was to bring to the attention of the policymakers, the concerns of the millet farmers, and to urge them to take some action so that these concerns are adequately addressed. Towards this end, a delegation of farmers from different parts of the country, along with Mr.P.V.Satheesh, Mr.Sanjeev Kulkarni and Mr.Prakash Bhat went to meet Shri.Anant Kumar Hegde, Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture at Dharwad on October 16, 2011. During the meeting, all the farmers urged Shri.Hegde to initiate steps to give fillip to millet cultivation in India. He was informed about the initiatives taken by MINI and SIRIKRISI in North-Karnataka and elsewhere; and the crucial role that millets played in ensuring food security of the rural populace was brought to his notice.

Responding to the presentation by the farmers, Shri.Hegde said that just as different crop-specific regions were being developed across the country (he cited the example of Cocoa regions that were being developed in Uttarakhand) he would be willing to initiate the development of millet regions in various pockets of the country. He went on to promise that such an initiative could be kicked off on a pilot basis in Karnataka. He asked MINI to submit a concept note along with other background material so that he could gain a clear understanding of the concept that is being espoused by us, so that any action he initiates may be informed by the same.





He even promised us that if such material was furnished to him, he would take up the issue with other members of the opposition, and also use his position in the Parliamentary Standing Committee to build consensus among them so that they can be scaled up on a national scale. He even agreed that single-cropping systems were detrimental to the very concept of millet cultivation and that mixed cropping systems held the key to food and farming security. He asked us to craft the concept note accordingly.

He was also extremely supportive of the idea of holding brainstorming sessions on millet farming; and promised that he would try and mobilize the participation of as many MP's from North Karnataka as he could, for any such programme.

The delegation presented a range of documents and films to Shri.Hegde and urged him to use his august offices to initiate measures that would go a long way in addressing the concerns of the millet farmers.

A delegation of farmers from different parts of the country, led by Shri.P V Satheesh, Dr.Prakash Bhat and Dr.Sanjeev Kulkarni meet Mr.Anant Kumar Hegde, Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture, and urge him to support biodiversity-based millet farming practices. Mr.Hegde assured that if given appropriate material shedding more light on millet farming, he would do the needful at the policy-level.



Concluding Remarks

The first ever National Convention of Millet Farmers was unique for many reasons. While crops like rice, wheat and cotton have powerful lobbies fighting their case, the humble millets that render invaluable services to the food and farming security of the dry land and hilly regions of India go unmentioned. The National Convention was probably the first time where millet farmers from diverse states and agro-ecological regions came together and voiced their concerns regarding millet farming. In doing so, a range of issues came to light; these included apathy of the state towards millet farming and millet farmers, the acute want of millet-processing facilities at the community-level, the increasingly rapid inroads being made by exotic crops like maize, hybrid wheat and rice, Bt Cotton and even hybrid varieties of millets and how these crops were decimating the traditional landraces of food grains, thereby jeopardizing the food and farming security of the poor and the marginalized communities and how schemes like INSIMP were designed to prepare the ground for corporate farming to take off in India.

They then went on to identify solutions—some of which were quite innovative—for these issues. The farmers pointed out that the traditional landraces of millets and other food grains that had evolved under specific agro-climatic conditions were to be preserved at all costs, and should not be sacrificed at the altar of ‘modernity’ which is represented by the use of hybrids/HYVs, and GM varieties. These are plagued by excessive use of chemical inputs, which have raised the cost of agriculture for the farmers and made it an unviable occupation. Giving a riposte to the contention that millet-processing was difficult, they pointed out that while machines could be installed, one could also consider using a programme like MGNREGA innovatively and consider paying for the manual pounding of the millets. This would give fillip for the millets even while generating employment and income for the households—especially women—who are involved in the said activity. Further, the farmers present at the Convention suggested that millets be included in the public distribution system and in the other government food programs like ICDS, MDM, and so on; and that farmers cultivating millets be extended the MSP. This, they felt would be of immense help in boosting millet cultivation.

The Convention was a major departure from the norm for such events wherein usually the farmers are mere spectators and the ‘experts’ from different walks of life talk. Instead, the various ‘listening sessions’ formed the soul of the event, with the farmers taking center-stage and talking about their triumphs and travails in the process of cultivating millets.



The Convention is not intended to be a monolithic event, but a step towards larger policy-level advocacy that MINI would be initiating in the months ahead. The discussions, the debates and the Declaration provided MINI and all its members with a foundation on which future initiatives can be based. As has emerged during the discussions with Mr. Hegde, Chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee of Agriculture, we would be approaching the various policymaking bodies at the central and the state levels, in order to push the agenda of biodiversity and millet cultivation. The Convention is also intended to be a precursor for many such local-level forums and discussions which would bring out the specificities of the region in question, with relation to millet cultivation.



Food at the Convention was a major attraction. A variety of millet snacks and dishes were prepared, which highlighted the vast range of millet cuisine. Exhibition saw groups from different parts of the country display products, ready-to-eat snacks, traditional seeds and literature from their respective organisations and regions.



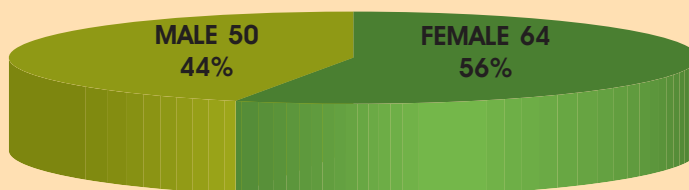


Annexure 1

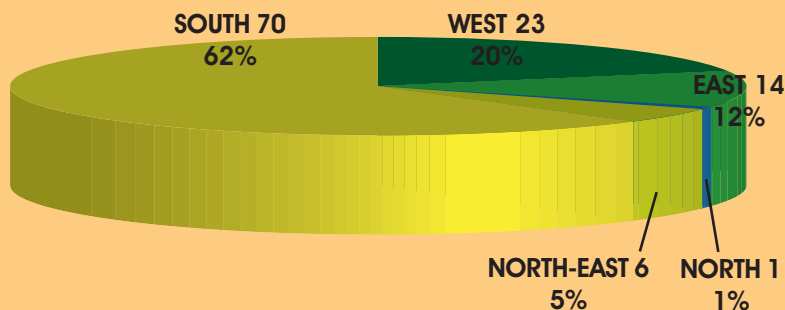
Who Participated at the Convention?

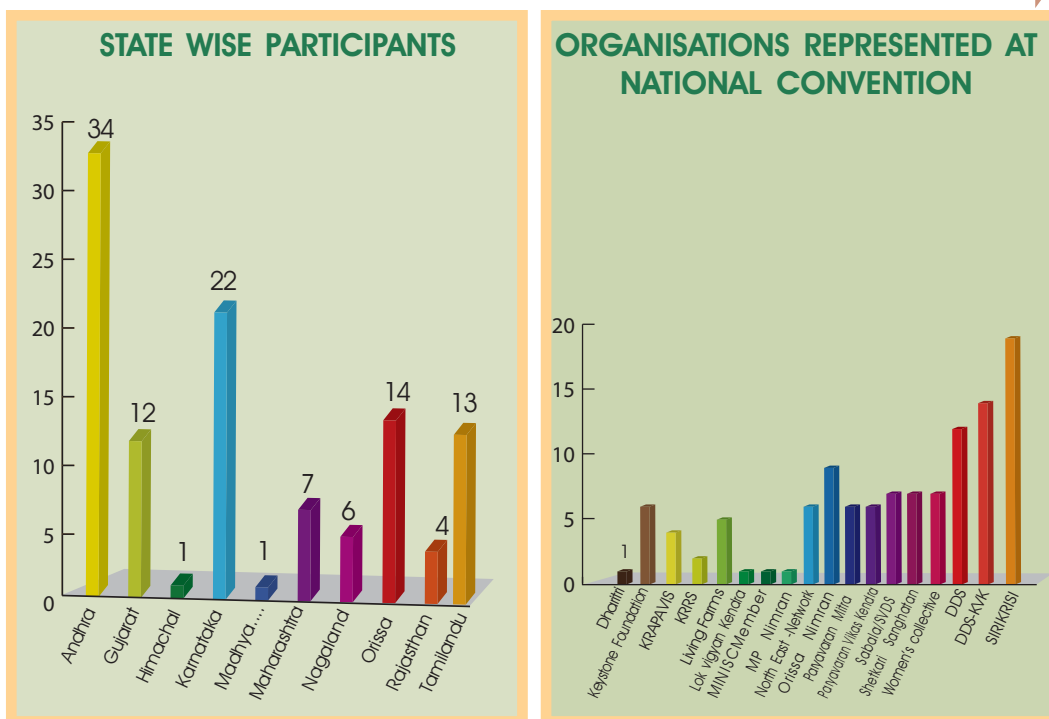
At Millet Network of India, it is our constant endeavor to ensure that farmers from the marginalized groups—especially women—are able to articulate their concerns on our forums. In keeping with this ethos, we tried to ensure that women comprised the bulk of the participants at the National Convention. At the same time, we also tried to ensure that as many states as possible where MINI is presently working find

SEX WISE DIVISION OF PARTICIPANTS



STATE WISE PARTICIPANTS





representation at the Convention. On both these counts, MINI has succeeded to a significant extent. As the tables charts given below will indicate, we ensured that 6% of the participants were women; and while it is evident that the state-wise participation is slanted towards the south, there was fair representation from other states and regions as well.

As can be seen from the charts given above, delegates from TEN states participated at the National Convention; and close to TWENTY organisations made the effort to mobilize and send participants to the Convention. Participating organisations included far-off ones like North-East Network from Nagaland and Lekkalyan Vikas Kendra from Himachal Pradesh. Deccan Development Society from Andhra Pradesh and SIRIKRISI Karnataka sent the strongest contingents, considering that they were a part of the organizing team. Most of the other organizations sent contingents that were six to seven strong. It has to be pointed out that these participants made an enormous effort and traveled great distances through varied means to be present for the event. A closer look at the region-wise breakup suggests that more than 60% of the participants hailed from the south; at the same time, there was a fair representation from eastern and western regions as well.





List of Delegates who participated in the convention

1. Mr DD Bharamagowdra, a leading farmer from Dharwad Region and formerly President, Organic Farming Association of India, Karnataka
2. Ms Basantpur Narsamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
3. Mr Ayasamy, Farmer, Tamil Nadu
4. Mr Basavraj Tambake, Working President, KRRS, Karnataka
5. Ms Sankamma Pujar, Farmer, Karnataka
6. Mr Mookappa Pujar, Farmer, Karnataka
7. Mr Easwarappa Banakar, Farmer, Karnataka
8. Ms Wete-u Rhakho, Farmer, Chizami, Nagaland
9. Ms Rinarani Nayak, Farmer, Rohivanka Village, Orissa
10. Ms Indira Mishram, Farmer, Maharastra,
11. Mr Badri Gujjar, Farmer, Rajasthan
12. Mr Nek Ram, Farmer, Himachal Pradesh
13. Mr Natwar Bhai, Farmer, Gujarat
14. Ms Fatima Osman Jeda, Farmer, Gujarat
15. Ms Peddalaxmi, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
16. Ms Ponnutai, Farmer, Tamil Nadu
17. Mr Jayappa, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
18. Mr Vishwanath Patil, Farmer Leader, KRRS, Karnataka
19. Mr Eraiah Killedar, Karnataka
20. Ms Ponnuthai, Farmer, Tamil Nadu
21. Ms Venulu Vadeo, Farmer, Nagaland
22. Ms Puriben Kalabhai, Farmer, Gujarat
23. Mr Ramesh Katesiya, Farmer, Gujarat
24. Mr Rurad Bhatti, Farmer, Gujarat



25. Mr Shailesh Patil, Farmer, Gujarat
26. Mr Banwari, Farmer, Rajasthan
27. Mr Ramji Lal, Farmer, Rajasthan
28. Mr Rupram Gujjar, Farmer, Rajasthan
29. Mr Mitralabh Nai, Farmer, Orissa
30. Mr Ramachandra Behera, Farmer, Orissa
31. Mr Sudama Pradhan, Farmer, Orissa
32. Mr Sadananda Sethi, Farmer, Orissa
33. Mr Mochiram Naik, Farmer, Orissa
34. Ms Sarojini Behera, Farmer, Orissa
35. Ms Anita Kumari Jena, Farmer, Orissa
36. Ms Rani, Farmer, Tamil Nadu
37. Ms Neelima, Farmer, Tamil Nadu
38. Ms Kalamani, Farmer, Tamil Nadu
39. Mr Arjanbhai, Farmer, Gujarat
40. Mr Patabhai Wagh, Farmer, Gujarat
41. Mr Pratapbhai Wagh, Farmer, Gujarat
42. Mr Arvindbhai Padiyar, Farmer, Gujarat
43. Ms Raghupati, Farmer, Tamil Nadu
44. Ms Veeramma, Farmer, Tamil Nadu
45. Ms Pachiammal, Farmer, Tamil Nadu
46. Ms Kaliammal, Farmer, Tamil Nadu
47. Ms Kalyani, Farmer, Tamil Nadu
48. Ms Saral, Farmer, Tamil Nadu
49. Ms Peddalakshmi, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
50. Ms Achiyamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
51. Ms Manikyam, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
52. Mr Mutyamamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
53. Mr Satiamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
54. Mr Sharad Halage, Farmer, Maharashtra



55. Mr S S Ambatakar, Farmer, Maharashtra
56. Ms Jyotsana Vaidya, Farmer, Maharashtra
57. Ms Kanta Hande, Farmer, Maharashtra
58. Ms Mandal Halge, Farmer, Maharashtra
59. Ms A Ambatajar, Farmer, Maharashtra
60. Mr Loknath Miniaka, Farmer, Orissa
61. Mr Kadraka Kama, Farmer, Orissa
62. Mr Kadraka Krushna, Farmer, Orissa
63. Mr Rajendra Pidikaka, Farmer, Orissa
64. Mr Rev C Amop, Farmer, Nagaland
65. Ms Kethse-u Losou, Farmer, Nagaland
66. Ms H Alem, Farmer, Nagaland
67. Ms Susheela, Farmer, Karnataka
68. Ms Siddanna, Farmer, Karnataka
69. Ms Mahadevi Benni, Farmer, Karnataka
70. Ms Bharmavva Hosamani, Farmer, Karnataka
71. Ms Neelavva S Patil, Farmer, Karnataka
72. Ms Mahadevi Koti, Farmer, Karnataka
73. Ms Anasuya Hiremath, Farmer, Karnataka
74. Ms Basamma Hiremath, Farmer, Karnataka
75. Ms Mallavva Kalbhavi, Farmer, Karnataka
76. Mr Chandrashekhar Handagi, Farmer, Karnataka
77. Mr Pandurang Biradar, Farmer, Karnataka
78. Mr Nagappa Nimbegondi, Farmer, Karnataka
79. Mr Channappa Budihal, Farmer, Karnataka
80. Mr Somu Honnalli, Farmer, Karnataka
81. Mr B K Hiremath, Farmer, Karnataka
82. Mr Shankarc Langati, Farmer, Karnataka
83. Mr Diwakar Gowda, Farmer, Karnataka
84. Mr Ganganna Bilur, Farmer, Karnataka Farmer, Andhra Pradesh



85. Mr Basavaraj Iragouder, Farmer, Karnataka
86. Ms Laxmamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
87. Ms Chandramma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
88. Ms Raipally, Suseelamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
89. Ms Swaroopamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
90. Ms Alogle Bujjamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
91. Ms Gunjota Narsamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
92. Ms Ippapalle Shyamamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
93. Ms Kambalapalle Narsamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
94. Mr Sidramappa, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
95. Ms Antaram Suseelamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
96. Ms Prameela, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
97. Ms Manemma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
98. Ms Pedda Manemma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
99. Ms Kamamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
100. Ms Bamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
101. Ms Tuljamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
102. Ms Anjamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
103. Ms M. Manemma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
104. Ms M. Bamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
105. Ms M. Manemma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
106. Ms Susheelamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
107. Ms Premamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
108. Ms Kamamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
109. Ms Anishamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
110. Ms Bharatamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
111. Ms Bujjamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
112. Ms Kamamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
113. Ms Tuljamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh
114. Ms Shyamamma, Farmer, Andhra Pradesh



From Civil Society & Individuals:

1. Dr Prakash Bhat, Convenor, SIRIKRISI, CEO, SCOPE
2. Dr Sanjeev Kulkarni, President, Atmadeepa for Health & Environment
3. Ms Vani Purohit, Director, RAPID, Karnataka
4. Mr Basavraj Tambake, Working President, KRRS, Karnataka
5. Mr PV Satheesh, National Convenor, Millet Network of India
6. Mr Ramesh Chandra Naik, Nirman, Orissa
7. Mr Naresh Biswas, Nirman, Mandhya Pradesh
8. Mr Sandeep K, Coordinator, Millet Network of India
9. Mr Tushar Panchal, Gujarat
10. Mr Mallikarjuna Moorthy, Keystone Foundation, Tamil Nadu
11. Mr Susant Dalai Living Farms, Orissa
12. Mr Mahesh Parmar, Gujarat
13. Ms Chellayamma, Sarada Valley Development Samithi, Andhra Pradesh
14. Ms Anitha, SWALLOWS-India, Banladesh,
15. Mr Naresh Biswas, NIRMAN, Karnataka
16. Mr Mahaboob Ali, KVK, Andhra Pradesh
17. Mr Jagan, KVK, Andhra Pradesh
18. Ms Dhanalaxmi, KVK, Andhra Pradesh
19. Mr Suresh Kumar, Deccan Development Society, Andhra Pradesh
20. Mr Srinivas Reddy, DDS - KVK, Andhra Pradesh
21. Ms Rojamma, Deccan Development Society, Andhra Pradesh
22. Ms Manjula, Deccan Development Society, Andhra Pradesh
23. Ms Masanagari Narsamma, Community Media Trust, Andhra Pradesh
24. Ms Jayasri, Deccan Development Society, Andhra Pradesh
25. Mr Prasad, Andhra Pradesh
26. Ms Mamata, Deccan Development Society, Andhra Pradesh
27. Ms Poolamma, Deccan Development Society, Andhra Pradesh
28. Ms Poolamma, Deccan Development Society, Andhra Pradesh
29. Ms Adriana Holmberg Milea, Swallows – India
30. Ms Ida Svendsen, Swallows – India
31. Mr Narsimlu, Deccan Development Society, Andhra Pradesh
32. Ms Wekowe-u Tsuhah (Akole), North East Network, Nagaland
33. Mr Tushar Pancholi, Paryavaran Vikas Kendra, Gujarat



Display of Millet Products at the Convention





**Mini Secretariat
c/o Deccan Development Society**

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