

Centre mulls distributing millets via PDS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, November 27

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It is also thinking of branding millets as "nutri-cereals" and promoting them across the country, he said.

"We are trying to ensure millets are brought under the PDS and schemes like Midday Meal. Niti Aayog has suggested this should be part of the PDS (Public Distribu-



tion System)," Pattanayak said at an event here. Millets are highly nutritious when compared to other cereals, he said, adding that ragi has a very high calcium content. There-

fore, the government is thinking of promoting them as "nutri-cereals", he said.

Stating that low yields and storage issues have to be addressed, Pattanayak said, "The yield of millets at present are low. We need to have high-yield varieties in order to scale up the production." The Indian Council of Agricultural Research is working on this and hopes to release some varieties soon, he said, adding that there is a need to pursue research and development seriously in millets.

Storing millets for long is an issue at present. There is a need to increase the shelf life of millets, he said.

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Storing millets for long is an issue at present. There is a need to increase the shelf life of millets, he said. Pattanayak further said that there may be requirement of mechanical harvester for millets. The central government is already working in this direction.

He also suggested that the states should promote the setting up of farmer producers organisations (FPOs) for better production and marketing of millets, ensuring higher income to farmers.

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