Government of Maharashtra to study “Odisha Millets Mission” to initiate similar State Millet Mission

Author - Dinesh Balam, Published on - 14.3.2020

Launching of National Mission on Nutri Cereals in Pune on 28th September 2018

India Millet Mission (NFSM-Nutri Cereal Mission) was launched on 28th September at Pune, Maharashtra. In the launching workshop of NFSM-Nutri Cereal Mission, the design and multi-stakeholder approach of Odisha Millets Mission were appreciated. In the plenary session of the launching workshop, the Government of India recommended all states to adopt the structure, design and monitoring model of Odisha Millets Mission for promotion of millets, pulses, and oilseeds.

Accordingly, the Government of Maharashtra has now formed an expert committee to study the model of Odisha Millets Mission. Commissioner of Agriculture of Maharashtra State has written to the Government of Odisha to provide the necessary support to the members of the expert committee in understanding different aspects of Odisha Millets Mission.

One of the reasons behind the initiative of the Govt of Maharashtra is policy engagement by Pragati Abhiyan. Pragati Abhiyan initiated a revival of millets project in the Nashik District in 2018 in collaboration with the Tribal Development Department of Maharashtra. Mr. Susanta Sekhar Choudhury of Odisha Millets Mission trained the farmers and staff of Pragati Abhiyan on the agronomic practices. Results of the pilot especially SMI in finger millet received a very good response from farmers.

Interaction meeting between Tribal Dept of Maharashtra and Odisha Millets Mission facilitated by Pragati Abhiyan

Doubling of yields without chemical inputs created enormous enthusiasm among farmers, officials of agriculture and tribal departments in the district. 2018 was a drought year in Nashik District. Finger millet survived the dry spells while other crops failed. This led to a visit of a delegation of farmers, ATMA officials, and tribal department officials to Odisha which was further facilitated by the Pragati Abhiyan.

During the visit, Dr. Srijit Mishra shared the design and unique architecture of Odisha Millets Mission.

Ms. Aashima Choudhury, State Coordinator of Odisha Millets Mission shared about the production, consumption and procurement aspects of the OMM. ATMA and tribal department officials also visited different locations and interacted with farmers, entrepreneurs and NGO staff. The feedback of field officials and the success of Pragati Abhiyan further motivated the state government officials to form an expert committee to study the Odisha millets mission.

ATMA Officials Farmers visiting the Barnyard millet seed conservation at Koraput

Ms. Ashwini Kulkarni, Executive Secretary of Pragati Abhiyan said that their constant engagement with the Government of Maharashtra over 2 years, has created space for civil society and acceptance for the RRA framework for the promotion of millets.

As per the letter of Commissioner of Agriculture, Government of Maharashtra expert committee will discuss and study about the formation of Odisha millets mission, modalities of operation, the involvement of different stakeholders, inter-departmental coordination process, processing of millets, field operations, budgeting, etc along with field visit to relevant areas and discussion with stakeholders.

Letter further states that information and experiential learning from Odisha Millets Mission will help in formulating and implementing a similar activity in Maharashtra. Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra has also focused on this issue and are keen to take the concept forward.

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