

PRESS RELEASE

“Broad streaming policy and tolerance for food typography key to ensuring food security”

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“Broad streaming agricultural policy and increasing tolerance for food types is the key to ensuring food security” said Vijoy Prakash, Agriculture Production Commissioner, Government of Bihar. He was speaking at an interactive workshop on **‘Food Security in India: The Interactions of Climate Change, Economics, Politics & Trade’** organized by CUTS International in partnership with BASIX Krishi Samruddhi Limited (BKSL) and funded by Research Council of Norway (RCIN) on 27th September at Hotel Chanakya, Patna.

Vijoy Prakash also stressed on the importance of removing sociological barriers of including millets and other smaller animals, fishes and birds, which are nutritious and climate change resilient in nature, to the daily diets. In addition, he also elaborated on the APMC and cold storage scenario in Bihar for better access and availability of food for the people.

The workshop aimed to discuss definite issues which govern the food security scenario in Bihar in the context of climate change and agricultural trade and to generate the

discussion on the role of various social safety nets in deciding food security at household level.

The event started with an opening address by Shambhu Kumar, Head, Central Potato Research Station, highlighting on considering potato as the fourth staple food crop in India. He also emphasized on the importance of close interaction among agricultural scientists, government officials and NGOs for better cohesion of the state and national level schemes in ensuring food security.

Taking on from where he left, Pawan Kumar, Deputy Director, Directorate of Horticulture, Government of Bihar discussed on the various schemes that the state government is successfully implementing to ensure food security in the state.

Manoj Kumar, State Project Manager, JEEViKA stated that since rice and wheat are C3 plants, a slight change in the temperature can affect their growth and productivity drastically. In this scenario, he suggested that efficient agro-advisory systems and adapting millets in regular diets would be crucial steps for malnutrition alleviation.

Reiterating the CUTS findings from a perception survey in Bihar and Karnataka on food habits among rural and urban households, Rupesh Kumar, State Convener, Right to Food Campaign, Bihar elaborated about the entitlement scenario in Bihar. He also expounded on linking crop production to food sovereignty and the food cycle for people and expressed his concern on the increasing role of food politics in food production and distribution system. He argued that food entitlements should not be replaced with cash transfers which will let market forces to decide food prices.

The event concluded with Veena Vidyadharan, Policy Analyst & Deputy Head (CITEE), CUTS International and Mihir Sahana, Managing Director, BASIX Krishi Samruddhi Limited (BKSL) underlining on the need for stakeholders like scientists, policy makers, NGOs and government bodies to come together and work efficiently to fight against malnutrition and assure food security in the context of climate change.

More details about the relevant project is available here: <http://www.cuts-citee.org/FOODSEC/index.htm>

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