

Pant varsity organizes National Seminar on Nutritional Strategy

Pantnagar. September 14, 2009. National seminar on “Nutritional Strategies for Improving Quality of Life” was organized by the Department of Foods & Nutrition of college of Home Science, G.B. Pant University during 11-12 September, 2009 to develop Nutritional Strategies to solve the problem of malnutrition of high magnitude prevailing in our country. Dr. R.T. Patil, Director, Central Institute of Post Harvest Engineering and Technology, Ludhiana presided over the inaugural function. Food scientists, nutritionists, environmentalists, home scientists, genetic engineers, food technologists public health specialists, sociologists and administrators were at one platform to formulate strategies for improving quality of life.

The Seminar was attended by Dr. B.S. Bisht, Vice-Chancellor, G.B. Pant University Pantnagar, Dr. Umesh Kapil, Prof. & Head Human Nutrition department, AIIMS, New Dehli, Dr. Anil Jauhri, Advisor, Quality Council of India, New Delhi, Dr. Santosh Satya, Prof. IIT Delhi, Dr. G.S. Chauhan, Ex Director, National Research Centre for Soybean, Indore, Mr. Lalit Meisheri, Tech Know Consultants, Mumbai, Mr. Deepak Mittal, Principal Quality Scientist, Mother Dairy, Delhi, Dr. R.S. Raghuvanshi, Dean, College of Home Science, Pantnagar, Dr. G.S. Toteja, Scientist F, ICMR, New Delhi, Dr. Padma Vasudevan, IIT, Delhi, Dr. Neelam Khetarpaul, Dean, College of Home science, Hissar, Dr. A.K. Dikshit, Prof. & Head, Agriculture Chemicals, IARI, New Delih, Dr. Anil Kumar, Prof. & Head MBGE Deptt., Pantnagar.

The problem of malnutrition is of such a high magnitude that it have become a curse specially for the survival, growth and development of children in India. Besides life style changes have led to the problem of degenerative diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, obesity, cancer etc. The problem of malnutrition is very complex and multidimensional. It is the result of number of factors such as economic, environmental, agriculture, cultural, health and political.

In the two days seminar problem of malnutrition and ways of overcoming discussed in depth by the participating scientists an experts. The recommendations that emerged out of the seminar are as given below.

1. Agricultural policies should aim at providing household food and nutrition security .From the point of view of nutritional security balanced food production requires promotion of proper post harvest processing which is also important to prevent wastage, generate employment, and making food available to population. Appropriate technologies to extend shelf life of various foods need to be developed. There is need of more innovative technologies for value added foods for nutritional security. Quality of foods needs to be given due emphasis.
2. Consumption behaviour at the household requires to be modified to meet the nutritional need of the entire household for which awareness generation in health and nutrition is must .Home Science College must take efforts to develop dietary guidelines in local languages and guide women to diversify the diet using local foods.
3. Schools based intervention including health, nutrition, safe water and sanitation is the key for improving quality of life.
4. To reduce the incidences of degenerative diseases and increase the productivity of the population maintaining healthy life style, plant based diet i.e. increased intake of whole grains, fruits, vegetables and limiting the intake of total and saturated fat, sugars and salt and physical activity be promoted.
5. Food parks being established by the Government of India should be fully utilized by entrepreneur.
6. There is a need to establish more R& D institutes dealing with food, nutrition, processing and post harvest preservation of foods.
7. Food based approach to control micronutrient malnutrition is challenge before scientists to investigate how best the vast era of foods that are available at doorstep could be optimally used in judicious combination to combat micronutrient deficiencies.
8. Accreditation of food testing laboratories is required with regard to food regulations as quality of foods find maximum importance to be globally acceptable. Standards are necessary for quality, safety and trade. There is urgent need of establishment of more quality testing laboratories which must be accredited as per India/International standards.
9. In order to be globally competitive there is urgent need for training of personnel for quality analysis of foods. People need to be aware about safety and quality aspects of food.
10. Considering the importance of food processing and value addition for food security in view of limited land resources and rapidly increasing population as pre and post harvest losses can be minimized, thereby increasing availability of food ,the constraints in the development of food processing sector in the country like inadequate supply of quality raw materials, inadequate infrastructure, inadequate investment in organised sector, fragmented research and development, lack of trained human resource and high costs of setup need to be looked upon

11. Simple, feasible, energy saving, eco-friendly technologies like simple dehydration leading to negligible changes in nutritional and sensory attributes of foods could be explored for nutritional security.
12. Considering malnutrition and undernutrition which still persists in the country and has serious developmental implications, there is need of keeping the nutrition security on the official list of government priorities for successful nutrition intervention like food delivery system, nutrient delivery system, nutrition education, nutrition counselling and nutritional care. concerted efforts of professionals and grass root workers from food ,nutrition, dietetics, health and agriculture, environmental sciences and social sciences to provide scientific and technical back up and the politicians bureaucrats private sectors and NGO's is the need at present to ensure that scientific wisdom is turned into policies and programmes.
13. Documentation of traditional plant foods and awareness generation among population for their increased use through involvement of schools and institutions, social groups, mass media is the prime necessity.
14. In addition to awareness generation propagation of traditional plant foods through backyard gardens, home or community gardens as a measure for increased use among the population. Creation of market avenues, government intervention are needed through appropriate policy support.
15. With the knowledge of sequencing of human genome now it is possible to advice tailored food products for promoting optimal health on individual basis in relation to genotype and life style, as interaction of food and its individual constituents with biological system can be defined on molecular basis and personalized dietary recommendation are possible. The paradigm currently used for dietary recommendation is based on deficiency model which is applicable to all human beings. Whereas, on the basis of current knowledge on nutrigenomics it is possible to suggest the diet on individual basis.
16. There is need to include topic related to nutrigenomics in the curricula of the post graduate programmes in the Department of Foods and Nutrition. The new generation scientist should start researches in this direction.
17. In absence of GAP issues like food safety, food hazards, food recall, rejection of export material due to lack of SPS measures are the likely risks. Due to ignorance wrong agro chemicals and non judicious use is practised by the farmers leading to health hazard to the population. Both farmers and consumers need to be aware of the risk and preventive and corrective measures. Safe use of pesticides and agro chemicals should be on priority in IEC Programmes.
18. Biotechnological revolution which led to the production of GM foods requires regulatory frame work for release of GM food to ensure food safety.
19. Biotechnology and nanotechnology made it possible to produce various health foods, nutraceuticals and pharmaceuticals which can meet the major challenges facing global society including food security. Food industries can take initiatives in this direction.
20. Awareness generation among the population on nutrition, small family norms, health, environment and sanitation is the key for the success of all government and non-government programmes on health and nutrition and be on priority of nutrition and health professionals.



Dr. R.T. Patil addressing the scientists at the inaugural session of national seminar.