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Agri meet in Mandya today

TNN, Nov 15, 2010, 09.45pm IST

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MYSORE: The Alliance for Democratisation of Agricultural Research in South Asia (ADARSA) fighting to make agricultural research broadbased is starting roundtable conferences to take the initiative forward.

The first such meet will be held in Mandya on Tuesday wherein farmers from four districts, including Mysore and Mandya, will attend. The aim of the initiative is to make the policy makers know the concern of farmers. "It should be farmer centric," P V Satheesh, South Asia coordinator of the ADARSA, said on Monday. The series of meetings will herald a new era in taking farmers to

the top of the policy pyramid. It is time agricultural research goes back to farmers, who see agriculture as a whole, he stated.

"We will hold regional-level roundtable meets and a state-level meet in March/April so that concerns of farmers from different regions are taken care of," he told reporters.

Speaking about Raitha Teerpu (farmers verdict), a three-day meet where small and marginal farmers questioned the current pattern of agricultural research and came out with a charter of demands, Satheesh said: "The jury comprised of small and marginal and women and dalit farmers who interacted with 12 top agricultural scientists, researchers, social scientists and consumer activists.

ADARSA released the verdict of the jury ahead of its latest roundtable conferences. Farmers' leader Kurbur Shantakumar, who released it, said it is imperative that farmers should be consulted before a research is taken up. The farmers' verdict is a significant step in that direction, he stated.

Santosh Koulagi, a writer who practices organic farming, said Raitha Teerpu is an important effort to achieve the goal since it is focusing on understanding farming issues by small and marginalized farmers. The farmers have profound ecological knowledge, which needs to be recognized, he stated.

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