

# Slow food festival held in Kotagiri

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The “Terra Madre” slow food festival was organised on the Keystone Foundation campus in Kotagiri on Friday.

The festival, which featured hundreds of participants from tribal communities across the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve, was conducted to highlight the importance of local cuisines and locally-sourced produced food and the roles they play in reducing our carbon footprints.

Aritra Bose, head of communications, Last Forest and manager of ‘Place to Bee’ here, said that the slow food movement, which was born in Italy in 1996, was initially a reaction to the growth of fast food and the setting up of restaurants.

## **Clean and organic**

“The Keystone Foundation, in turn, uses the idea of the movement of being ‘clean, good and fair’ by ensuring that the produce is clean and organic, is sourced locally and is fair to producers and consumers,” said Bose.

Tribal communities from nine different villages, including Pilloor, Hasanur and Sathyamangalam participated in the festival.

A seed exchange programme was also organised at the festival to encourage tribal communities to continue to grow food intrinsic to their culture and their traditional way of life.

The communities, which took part in the festival, brought food stuffs, vegetables, tubers, roots, yams, greens, millets and even milk from indigenous cattle that have been used by them for many generations.

### **Milk**

“For instance, the Todas brought around 15 litres of milk which was used to make yogurt, and there are 15 different dishes all made from produce and meat brought by the communities or sourced locally,” added Nandhan H S, head of Marketing of Last Forest.

Celebrations at the festival included a storytelling performance ‘Kira Kuzhambu’ based on the folktales of Ki. Rajanarayan.