

## **Processed Foods for Convenience and Health- By Ms. Shilpa Wadhwa**

Ms. Shilpa Wadhwa highlighted how processed foods can be convenient and healthy at the same time. Here are some of the key points from her presentation-

- According to the global hunger index, hunger levels are highest in Africa, south of the Sahara, and South Asia. Nutritional inadequacies in Indian diets are reflected in young children both in urban and rural areas.
- Both fresh and processed foods make up vital parts of the food supply chain. Processed foods contribute to both food and nutritional security.
- Food processing includes a wide variety of activities and makes food palatable, accessible, and safe. Most of the foods stored in our pantries are processed. Hence, processed foods can be classified into different categories from minimally processed to highly processed foods.
- Processed foods can be a convenient partner for working women as processing increases the shelf life of products, saves time and effort, provides food that is safe, hygienic, healthy, and affordable.
- Processing leads to increased food safety and nutritional value of food products. Fortification and enrichment of foods can enhance the nutritional value of a product and address specific health concerns.
- Food processing plays an important role in ensuring sustainability.

She concluded her presentation by emphasizing that food processing has increased food availability, seasonal fruits are available throughout the year through preservation, canning, and freezing. Also, processing contributes to food safety and nutritional security.