

Millets: - Nutri Cereals For Human Health

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Introduction:

Millet is a cereal grain that belongs to the Poaceae Family, Commonly known as the grass family. It is Widely consumed in developing countries throughout Africa and Asia. While it may look like a seed, millets nutritional profile is similar to that of sorghum and other cereals. The United Nations General Assembly has declared the year 2023 “International Year of Millets.” India is poised to become the global hub for millets with a production of more than 170 lakh tones which makes for more than 80% of the millets produced in Asia. The Government of India has declared to celebrate the International Year of Millets, 2023 to make it a people’s movement so that Indian millet, recipes and value added products are accepted globally. The ‘International Year of Millets’ stands to provide a unique opportunity to increase global production, ensure efficient processing and consumption, promote better utilization of crop rotations and encourage better connectivity throughout food systems to promote millets as a key component of the food basket.

Nutritive Value

Millets contain high nutritional value, cheapest sources of energy, high content of digestive fiber, protein, Vitamin-B complex, essential Amino acids, folic acid & Vitamin-E, high in minerals such as Iron, Magnesium, Copper, Phosphorous, Zinc, Calcium and Potassium.



Major Health Benefits

Several researches have demonstrated though in Vivo and in-vitro studies, that the consumption of millet and millets based value added products have health promoting effects such as anticancer, anti-viral, anti-inflammatory, anti-diabetic, improving respiratory problems, improving digestive system, protect from metabolic syndrome due to presence of nutrient and anti-nutrients

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components such as tannins, phenolic compounds, flavanoids, phytosterols and others. Helps in the reduces the risk of cardiovascular diseases, helping in the management of hypertension, helps for bone health, the dietary fiber from millets possesses prebiotic effects, reduce the growth of certain types of cancers including breast and colon cancer.

Value addition

Indian Institute of Millets Research-Hyderabad, CCS.HAU- Hisar & University of Agriculture Sciences-Bangaluru are working in the direction of value addition through its Centre of Excellence to fetch better income from the value added products and to create more demand of millets to support millet growers. Value added products like Pizza, Ragi biscuits, Jowar Cake, Snacks/Roasted Jowar, snack/roasted mix grains, Posta, Noodles, malt food and even Bakery products besides, used for industrial purpose like Malting, Brewing/Bakery/Jaggery.

Conclusion

Millets have more nutritional potential than popular cereals such as rice & wheat and barley in terms of protein, carbohydrates and energy values. Millets are a rich source of essential amino acid, fatty acid and dietary fiber. The presence of phytochemicals such as polyphenols, tocopherols, phytosterols and dietary fibre accounts for the majority of the health benefits. Millets reduce the risk of heart

disease, millets help with diabetes, improve the digestive system, help in respiratory health, help in the management of hypertension.

