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International Year of Millets 2023

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Abstract

Varieties of millets have been mentioned in olden text and millets have always been an integral part of Indian cuisines and cultures. Millets are sustainable to the environment, to the farmers growing it, and provide affordable and high nutrients option for all. India is the largest producer of *Shree Anna* also known as millet in the world. It is heading towards the world's prosperous agricultural demand. Through it's (millet) production and export, on the initiatives of Government of India under the visionary leadership of our Prime Minister, the United Nation declared **2023 as the International Year of Millets** to promote the production of less water intensive and nutritive crops at international level. Today the whole world is observing International Year of Millets. India is enriched with several kinds of millets, popular with different names. Now millets are reaching each and every household becoming popular across the world, it's ultimate benefits would accrue to small farmers of our country. I strongly believe that International Year of Millets 2023 will open new door for producing farmers, marginal farmers and tribal communities. India is playing an important role by leading the way to address the global food security of the world.

Keywords: Shree Anna, Nutrients, Sustainable, Food Security, Marginal Farmers

Introduction:

➔ On 5 March, 2021, United Nation declared **2023 as International Year of Millet.**

➔ Year **2018** was celebrated as **National Year of Millets** by India.

The millets that are being produced today are not at all new to India. Evidence of tide has also been found in the remains of the Harappan civilization in India. There is evidence of these millets being eaten in our

NEW ERA

country from 3000 to 5000 years ago. It is not

new to us, to our digestive system, to the blood flowing in our veins, to our enzymes and hormones, to our tongue, to put it bluntly, to

our DNA. Our body recognizes them very well. Earlier Millets were called Kadanna i.e.,

the food of the poor. Actually, the consumption of these millets was high only

among the poor and tribals, but now even the rich eat it with great gusto. Before

independence, where the presence of millets in

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the country's plate was 35 to 40 percent, today it has remained close to 6 percent. The Green Revolution, which came in the 60s, emphasized on increasing the production of rice, wheat and maize. Government procurement of these crops had also increased considerably. Farmers started producing more of these crops only. Because of these reasons, the cultivation of millets went on decreasing.

Now, this superfood has been given a new identity as “Shree Anna”.

The aim of International Year of Millets is to increase the consumption, ensure nutrition security and to provide millets the new identity in international market. India is cultivating the number of millets and upgrading the entire landscape. Millets are also called “Superfood” and these are rich sources of minerals like calcium, iron, zinc, phosphorous, magnesium, and potassium. The government of India has declared the Indian Institute of Millet Research – Hyderabad as the Center of Excellence to provide its technology and best method for the cultivation of millets which would be helpful for domestic as well as international stakeholders to celebrate International Year of Millets. The honorable Prime Minister of India inaugurated the FIRST GLOBAL MILLETS (SHREE ANNA) CONFERENCE exhibition and buyer-seller meet. In this global event participation of delegates from 100 countries, various

agriculture ministries of millet producing and importing nations, an international organizations, scientists, national and international nutritionists and chefs were seen.

To declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets, objectives are given below:

At the time of covid we realized that food security is a prime importance for us. Even when we talk about climate change, we always correlate with agriculture, means agriculture must come in promotion in any way.

- We have to promote awareness of the contribution of millets to ensure the food security and nutrition because our country is neither good in hunger index nor in nutrition index.
- Inspire to the stakeholders on improving sustainable production (without harming anything) and millets' quality. Generally, millet is a long-term crop in which urea as a fertilizer can be so dangerous for sowing but still millet can grow on low nutrition soil, infertile soil. Even in drought condition and flooding condition it can be grown. So definitely they are very-very important
- To bring focus on raise investment in research and development and extension services to achieve the other

aims so that we can increase our food security and nutritional security. In that case IYOM become important for us. Second thing, we can do research and development so that production can increase and can be spread worldwide so that we minimize hunger index in other countries.

Types of millets

Major millets: Contains Ragi, Bajra and Jowar. Their size is bigger than minor millets. These are such millets which are found in many parts of the country. These millets are also grown in other countries. For example: in the country of Africa and Europe

Minor Millets: It includes Kutki, Kodo, Kangni, Sanwa, etc. The size of their seeds is small. These are grown only in certain areas i.e., there is regional production.

Time taken to digest rice, wheat and millets

Rice: 40 to 60 minutes

Wheat: 60 to 90 minutes

Millets: 180 to 350 minutes

✓ Millets take time to digest so sugar level in body is not increases.

Significance of millets

If I'm appreciating it so much then definitely it would have some significance.

Let's see what's that

- They have a lot of advantages over other crops, including as pest and drought tolerance.
- Additionally, they can survive harsh conditions and fertile soils.
- They are a superfood for everyone and grow profusely while being environmentally durable.
- They can also release oxygen while absorbing the maximum amount of carbon dioxide from the air.
- They are a powerhouse of nutrient-rich foods for the body:

When compared to rice and wheat flour, millets like jowar, bajra, ragi have a substantially lower glycaemic index, which is a measurement of how

Nutrients per 100 grams in millets compared to other cereals										
	Carbs (gm)	Protein (gm)	Fat (gm)	Fibre (gm)	Calorie (K. cal.)	Calcium (mg)	Phosphorous (mg)	Magnesium (mg)	Zinc (mg)	Iron (mg)
Jowar	67.7	9.97	1.73	10.22	334	28	274	133	2.96	3.95
Bajra	61.8	10.96	5.43	11.49	348	27	289	124	2.76	6.42
Ragi	66.8	7.16	1.92	11.18	321	364	210	146	2.53	4.62
Kodo	66.2	8.92	2.55	6.39	332	15	101	122	1.65	2.34
Kutki	65.6	10.13	3.89	7.72	346	16	130	91	1.82	1.26
Wheat	64.7	10.59	1.47	11.23	322	39	315	125	2.85	3.97
Rice	78.2	7.94	0.52	2.81	356	7	96	19	1.21	0.65

much a diet raises your blood sugar levels.

- As compared to meals like rice, wheat, etc., they also contain more fiber per serving.
- Millets are rich sources of high levels of protein, vitamin A, vitamin C (which aids in absorption of iron), vitamin B complex, magnesium, calcium and phosphorus.

It is expected that from next year Millets Day will also be celebrated on a specific date every year. Efforts were started from 2013 by the Government of India to bring awareness to the world. The year 2015 was celebrated by India as 'Pilates of the Year'. This year, when India presented the specialties of these millets in the Agriculture Department of United Nations Forum FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization), they were also impressed. They were named Nutri-Cereals. FAO have told that we have done a lot of research on these. Actually, Nutri-cereals means such cereals which are full of nutrients.

Due to these reasons a new campaign of Millets is being run

Food crisis: Due to increasing population, conflicts, droughts, floods, etc., the shortage of food grains has become a common thing all over the world. India is seeing an opportunity in this. Millets can be produced on a large scale in India. Since it does not require

much irrigation. So, this can be a solution for food hybrids.

In removing nutritional deficiency:

Whether it is major millets or minor millets, it is not less than rice or wheat in any sense. They contain all kinds of nutrients ranging from carbohydrates, proteins, calcium and iron. Simply put, they can play an important role in making a healthy plate. Since there are fewer insects in it, very little pesticide is also used. Along with this, the use of chemical fertilizers etc. also has to be reduced. Even better in this respect.

Even better in terms of health:

Since they do not contain gluten, that means people who find it difficult to digest gluten. Millets are better for them. Actually, gluten is a protein present in wheat and barley that is difficult for some people to avoid. Because of this, a disease called celiac occurs. In this disease there are very small pores in the stomach. Due to these reasons, the person constantly suffers from gas, indigestion, headache etc. Millets, on the other hand, digest slowly. That's why the level of sugar in the body does not increase suddenly after eating them. While the sugar level increases after rice and roti reach the body. After eating millets, there is a feeling of being full for a long time. That's why millets can be eaten by sugar patients and those who want to reduce their obesity.

Helpful in fighting global warming:

These crops do not require much water from sowing, irrigation to ripening, so they also reduce water consumption. On the other hand, it becomes more favorable for a country like India because out of total 140 million hectares of cultivable land in the country, about 51 per cent i.e., 72 million hectares of land is directly dependent on monsoon. Sometimes the monsoon is on time and sometimes it is not. Sometimes many areas remain dry. In such a situation, bajra, ragi and jowar can be cultivated in those places.

Millets are smart grains: They grow even in dry climates and get a good crop if it rains as per their wish, but they grow in both conditions, that is, they adapt themselves according to the weather. That's why they are also called smart grains. Benefits to the farmers: Their demand is increasing a lot. The economic health of the farmers is also improving due to this. That's why Prime Minister Narendra Modi called millets 'Shree Anna'. The truth is that these millets are the solution to many problems.

Initiatives taken by government

Minimum Support Price (MSP) rise for the Initiative for Nutritional Security through Intensive Millet Promotion (INSIMP):

- The government increased the MSP for millets, providing a significant price incentive for farmers.

➤ Furthermore, millets have been incorporated into the public distribution system by the government to guarantee a consistent market for the produce.

➤ For promotion of millets, many events were launched such as "India's wealth, Millets for health", Millets Startup Innovation Challenge, Mighty Millets-QUIZ, logo and slogan contests etc.

➤ Every Sunday on social media platforms is celebrating as "Recipe Ravivar" where each month is dedicated to a special variety of millet.

➤ Union Health Minister has eliminated fried food from the canteen menu in favour of healthier options like millet roti, cheelas, and the like.

Input Support: The government has introduced provision of seed kits and inputs to farmers, building value chains through Farmer Producer Organizations and supporting the marketability of millets.

FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) has given some guidelines for identification of millets:

- If any millet smells bad or tastes bitter, don't buy it.
- If dead or alive insects are seen in any millet, then stop buying it.
- Try to buy only packed millets.

- AGMARK symbol should be on the packing.
- The license number of FSSAI should also be there on the packing.
- Must check its manufacturing and expiry date before

The IYM 2023 event is an opportunity for India to promote Nutri-cereal Millets globally and establish them in the global "food map," in line with PM Modi's vision of "Vasudeva Kutumbakam"

(The World is One Family).

**MILLETS-
FARMER'S PROSPERITY
FOOD & NUTRITION SECURITY**

