

## International Year of Millets-2023

**Pardeep Kumar<sup>1</sup>, Gargi Sharma<sup>2</sup>, Raghuveer Singh<sup>3</sup> and Kuldeep Singh<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Hanumangarh-1

<sup>2</sup>Ph.D. scholar, Soil Science, Punjab Agriculture University Ludhiana Punjab

<sup>3</sup>Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Hanumangarh-1

<sup>4</sup>Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Hanumangarh-1Rajasthan-335063

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### Story of IYM 2023-

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, organized an opening ceremony for the International Year of Millets – 2023 (IYM2023) in Rome, Italy. An Indian delegation led by Sushri Shobha Karandlaje, Minister of State, Agriculture & Farmers Welfare along with Smt. Shubha Thakur, Joint Secretary (Crops), DA&FW, and other senior officials were present at the opening ceremony. During the event, India's ceremonial message by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was conveyed by Sushri Shobha Karandlaje.

Sushri Shobha Karandlaje conveyed PM Modi's compliments to the United Nations for declaring the Year 2023 as the International Year of Millets. PM, through his message, thanked the global community for supporting India's proposal to mark the International Year of Millets (IYM). It was mentioned that Millets are good for the consumer, cultivator, and climate. Millets are nutritious and

can be cultivated in semi-arid zones besides consuming less water for irrigation. There is a need for diversity on our land and our dining tables. Raising awareness to create 'Millet Mindfulness' is an important part of this movement.

Sushri Shobha Karandlaje, in her speech, said nations need to collaborate to develop a sustainable future, and millets will play a pivotal role in the process. There is an opportunity to contribute to the future well-being of mankind by bringing back ancient food grains through IYM. India will steer the IYM2023 celebrations worldwide and organize campaigns

### International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023





to promote the cultivation and consumption of Millet, both in India and abroad during the next year.

The United Nations general assembly adopted an India-sponsored resolution to Mark 2023 as the international year of millets. We delve into India's millets production their nutritional value and how the Indian government is promoting millets and their cultivation. Super grains super-food and wonder grain are some of the adjectives often used to describe millets, one of the oldest foods known to humans and probably the first grain used for domestic purposes. The unanimous adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the resolutions to declare 2023 as the international year of millets, a proposal sponsored by India and supported by over 70 Nations, underlines the international community's support to recognize the importance and benefits of the grain and for the Global food system. Speaking on the subject India's permanent representative to the UN Ambassador TS Tirumurti said, 'There is an urgent need to promote the nutritional and ecological benefit of millets to consumer, producer and decision makers to improve production efficiencies, research and development investments, and food sector linkages'. He expressed gratitude to all the co-sponsor, especially Bangladesh, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Russia, Senegal, and all member states of the UN for their strong support.

India, traces of millets have been found in the archaeological sites of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro and several ancient Indian scriptures make references to millets. For many years millets were a part of our daily diet. Today there is a growing realization among Indian farmers that cultivating millets requires fewer inputs and it's also an economically viable option, especially in harsh and dry environments. This is supported by the new-found knowledge of the health benefits of millets. Also, over the last few years, the Indian government has been making extensive efforts to encourage the cultivation of millets. The union government of India headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi had declared 2018 as the national year of millets to boost production of the nutrient rich grains.

'Millets' were among the first crops to be domesticated in India with several evidence of its consumption during the Indus valley civilization. Being grown in more than 130 countries at present, millets are considered traditional food for more than half a billion people across Asia and Africa. In India millets are primarily a kharif crop. Requiring less water and agricultural inputs than other similar staples. Millets are important by the virtue of its

Mammoth potential to generate livelihood, increase farmers' income and ensure food & nutritional security all over the world.

Millets are an important staple cereal crop for millions of smallholder dryland farmers across Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. They are also called nutri-cereals or dryland cereals and includes Sorghum, pearl millets, finger millets, foxtail millet, proso millet and offer high nutritional benefits.



### Easy to cultivate

Tolerant to drought and high temperature and other climate change vagaries millets are mostly cultivated on low fertile land, mountainous, tribal and rainfed areas of India Like Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Odisha, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu. The pearl millet genomes sequencing consortium, comprising 30 institutions, decoded the genome of pearl millet and identified genes for drought and heat tolerance that may be useful not only for millets but also for other major cereals. These researchers have contributed to developing several high-yielding hybrids and improved varieties of several millets that are grown by farmers in India.

**Nutritional Benefits of millets (For 100 g of each millet)**

	Protein(g)	Fiber(g)	Minerals(g)	Iron(mg)
Calcium(mg)				
Sorghum	10	4	1.6	2.6
54				
Pearl millet	10.6	1.3	2.3	16.9
38				
Finger millet	7.3	3.6	2.7	3.9
344				
Foxtail millet	12.3	8	3.3	2.8
31				
Proso millet	12.5	2.2	1.9	0.8
14				
Kodo millet	8.3	9	2.6	0.5
27				
Little millet	7.7	7.6	1.5	9.3
17				
Barnyard millet	11.2	10.1	4.4	15.2
11				
Teff	13	8	0.85	7.6
180				
Fonio	11	11.3	5.31	84.8
18				
Brown top millet	11.5	12.5	4.2	0.65
0.01				

Millets can be grown in mountainous, low-fertility, dry, rain-fed, and tribal areas. It requires less labour-intensive cultivation, has shorter cultivation cycles, and is beneficial to the soil. Millets can be a long-term source of income for farmers due to low investment requirements. Millets do not require a lot of water or other resources, making them a long-term option for combating climate change and constructing climate-resilient agri-food systems.