

Review

2023 The International Year of Millets
**(India sponsored resolution unanimously
adopted by 75th United Nations General
Assembly session)**



Miracle Grains of Future

The plant, Millet belonging to the family Poaceae was thought to be amongst the most suitable plants to be domesticated and consumed as traditional crop by farmers in the rain scanty areas of Asia and Africa for more than 4500 years, India being on the top as its producer followed by Niger, Nigeria and China. During the middle period, this plant was used to provide major grains in Europe too whereas today it is used mainly to produce hay in Western Europe and U.S.A.

The plants of this cereal are annuals 25 to 125 cms in height. They are rich in carbohydrates with protein 7% to 10% and fat 2 to 5

percent and are least exploited food consumed in the form of rice, porridges and round flat breads. The grains of these cereals of late have been incorporated in other foods and made traditional.

There are about nine types of millet in India viz; Pearl, Sorghum, Barnyard, Browntop, Little, Proso, Finger, Foxtail and Kodo millets.



Types of millet in India

Millet is one of the nutraceuticals which provides several health benefits, prevention and treatment of diseases. Grains of millet are rich in nutrients and phenolic compounds. The diverse percentage of nutrients and phenolic compounds present in the pearl and finger millet indicate its different varieties viz; of phenolic acids, tannins and flavonoids which are useful for health. Pearl millets have shown less unique abundance and diverse phenolic properties as compared to those of finger millets. Research work has indicated that millet phenolic properties are highly antioxidant. Phytochemicals present in the millet grains show positive effect on human health by reducing cholesterol and phytates in the body as well as defend the cereal grains against virus, bacteria and pathogens.

Dr. I. P. Saxena
Editor (USPAH)

