

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2407
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21/03/2025

CULTIVATION AND CONSUMPTION OF MILLETS IN PUNJAB

2407. SHRI SATNAM SINGH SANDHU:

Will the Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps taken to promote the cultivation and consumption of millets in Punjab, particularly in light of 2023 being declared as the International Year of Millets;
- (b) the details of specific schemes or subsidies introduced to encourage farmers in Punjab to adopt millet cultivation, especially in regions facing challenges related to water scarcity and soil degradation, if any;
- (c) the details of measures being implemented to raise awareness among consumers in Punjab about the nutritional benefits of millets; and
- (d) the steps taken to support the processing and marketing of millets in Punjab?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
(SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a) to (d): To create domestic and global demand and to provide nutritional food to the people, Government of India had proposed to the United Nations for declaring the year 2023 as the International Year of Millets (IYM). The proposal of India was supported by 72 countries and United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) declared 2023 as International Year of Millets. The Government of India has taken a proactive multi-stakeholder engagement approach (engaging various central government Ministries/Departments, States/UTs, farmers, start-ups, exporters, retail businesses, hotels, Indian Embassies etc.) to achieve the objectives of IYM and taking Indian millets globally.

The focus during IYM was to enhance production and productivity, consumption, export, strengthening value chain, branding, creating awareness for health benefits etc. The Government of India has organized various events to make it peoples' movement so that the Indian millets, recipes, value added products be promoted globally. Millets were promoted during the G20 presidency in India, Millet Culinary carnival, International Trade Events, Chef's Conference, exhibition of Farmers Producer Organizations (FPOs), road shows, kisan melas, Chef's training for paramilitary forces, ASEAN India Millet Festival at Indonesia and Delhi etc. To make India a global hub for 'Shree Anna', the Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR), Hyderabad has been declared as the Global Centre of Excellence for sharing best practices, research and technologies at the national and international level.

The Indian Institute of Millet Research (IIMR), Hyderabad is also providing training to the farmers, women farmers, home makers, students and young entrepreneurs on manufacturing of value-added millet food products, daily recipes etc., and supporting them to establish self-enterprise. The institute has also developed value-added technologies include "Ready to Eat" and "Ready to Cook" for millet foods, branding of millet foods under "Eatrite" tag, organized awareness programmes, agri-business incubator, technology business incubators etc.

A Sub-Mission on National Food Security & Nutrition Mission (NFSNM)-Nutri Cereals is being implemented in all districts of 28 States including Punjab & 2 Union Territories viz. Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. Under NFSNM–Nutri Cereals, the incentives are provided to the farmers, through the States/UTs, on crop production and protection technologies, cropping system based demonstrations, production & distribution of certified seeds of newly released varieties/hybrids, Integrated Nutrient and Pest Management techniques, capacity building of farmers through trainings during cropping season, organizing events/workshops, distribution of seed minikits, publicity through print and electronic media etc.

In addition, Government of India also provides flexibility to the states for state specific needs/priorities under Pradhan Mantri-Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY). The states can promote Millets (Shree Anna) under PM-RKVY with approval of State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC) headed by Chief Secretary of the State.

To promote the cultivation and production of millets, the Government of Punjab has organized exhibitions, fairs, state/district/village level camps, talks in school and colleges, awareness for consumers and farmers about the health benefit of millets etc. Further, the Government of Punjab has initiated a state project leveraging ‘MERA’ (Millets for Encouraging soil Restoration and healthy food Accessibility) - initiative for boosting farmers income and consumer health. The main component of MERA is production, promotion, processing, marketing and consumption of organic millets.
