



Millets Experience Centre

Why in News?

The Indian government has launched a first of its kind **Millets Experience Centre (MEC)** in collaboration with the [National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India \(NAFED\)](#).

- This initiative comes in light of the [UNGA](#)'s declaration of 2023 as the [International Year of Millets \(IYM 2023\)](#).
- Millet has been referred to as 'Shree Anna' in [Union Budget 2023-24](#).

What is the Millets Experience Centre (MEC)?

▪ About:

- The MEC is a unique concept that will promote **millets as a versatile, healthy grain by showcasing its dietary benefits and offering customers a unique dining experience.**
- Visitors to the center can purchase a **variety of ready-to-eat and ready-to-cook products** from local millet start-ups.
- The MEC will help widen the horizon for consumers who are actively looking for healthier alternatives.

▪ Significance:

- The establishment of the MEC is a step in the direction of India's goal to become a "**Global Hub**" for millet.
- The MEC will not only promote the dietary benefits of the ancient grain but also popularize millet as a **nutritional powerhouse fit for cooking a variety of dishes** such as millet dosa and millet pasta.
- This initiative will bring visibility to India's robust millet-based start-up community and will help in the recognition of the immense potential of millets as a versatile and healthy grain.

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Millets

About

- Small-grained cereals also known as **coarse grains**
- Often referred to as **'Superfood'**
- Among the **first crops to be domesticated** - evidence of millet consumption dates back to the **Indus Valley Civilisation (3,000 BC)**

Climatic Conditions

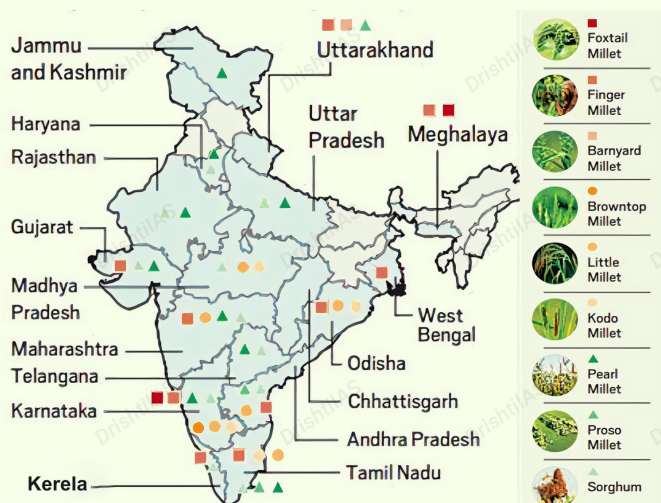
- **Mainly a Kharif crop in India**
- **Temperature:** 27°C - 32°C
- **Rainfall:** Around 50-100 cm
- **Soil Type:** Inferior alluvial or loamy soil

India and Millets

- **Global Largest Millet Producer:**
 - 20% of global production, 80% of Asia's production
- **Common Millets:**
 - **Ragi** (Finger millet), **Jowar** (Sorghum), **Sama** (Little millet), **Bajra** (Pearl millet), and **Variga** (Proso millet)
 - **Indigenous varieties** (small millets) - **Kodo, Kutki, Chenna and Sanwa**
- **Top Millets Producing States:**
 - Rajasthan (largest), Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh
- **Govt. Initiatives:**
 - Initiative for Nutritional Security through Intensive Millet Promotion (INSIMP)
 - **'India's Wealth, Millets for Health'**
 - Millet Startup Innovation Challenge
 - **Hiked MSP** for Millets
 - Agriculture Ministry declared millets as **"Nutri Cereals"** in 2018

Significance

- Less expensive, **nutritionally superior**
- High protein, fibre, minerals, iron, calcium and a **low glycemic index**
- Help **tackle lifestyle problems and health** (obesity, diabetes etc.)
- Photo-insensitive, **resilient to climate change & water efficient**



International Year of Millets - Year 2023

Proposed by India, declared by UNGA



What is IYM 2023?

▪ About:

- India's proposal to observe an International Year of Millets in 2023 was approved by the [Food and Agriculture Organisation \(FAO\)](#) in 2018 and the [UNGA](#) has declared the year 2023 as the International Year of Millets.
- This was adopted by a UN Resolution for which India took the lead and was supported by over 70 nations.

▪ Objectives:

- Awareness of the **contribution of millet to [Food Security](#)** and nutrition.
- Inspire stakeholders to improve sustainable production and quality of millets.
- Focus on **enhanced investment in research and development** and extension services to achieve the other two aims.

What are the Other Government-led Initiatives for Mainstreaming Millets?

- [Initiative for Nutritional Security through Intensive Millet Promotion \(INSIMP\)](#)
- [National Millets Mission \(NMM\)](#)
- [Price Support Scheme \(PSS\)](#)
- [Promoting Millets in PDS](#)
- [Hiked MSP of Millets](#)
- [Promotion of Organic Farming of millets](#)
- [Development of Value-Added Millet-based Products](#)

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. With reference to 'Initiative for Nutritional Security through Intensive Millets Promotion', which of the following statements is/are correct? (2016)

1. This initiative aims to demonstrate the improved production and post-harvest technologies, and to demonstrate value addition techniques, in an integrated manner, with a cluster approach.
2. Poor, small, marginal and tribal farmers have a larger stake in this scheme.
3. An important objective of the scheme is to encourage farmers of commercial crops to shift to millet cultivation by offering them free kits of critical inputs of nutrients and micro irrigation equipment.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 2 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (c)

Source: PIB

