






MILLETS

Fair-cum-Exhibition at Amritsar

1. Globally, year 2023 is being observed as International Year of Millets (IYoMs). The Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), Govt. of India has decided to organize 30 'Millet Fair-cum-Exhibition' throughout the country. Of this, 20 such events have already been conducted. Punjab Agro Industries Corporation, a State Government Undertaking, has been entrusted with the responsibility to organize One Day 'Millet Fair-cum-Exhibition' at Amritsar in August/September, 2023. Accordingly, the event has been scheduled for September 5, 2023 (Tuesday) in the lush green campus of Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU), Amritsar. It aims to create awareness and promote processing, value addition, entrepreneurship and consumption of Millets & other food products.
2. Punjab grows two types of Millets namely Bajra (Pearl Millet) and Jowar (Sorghum) in around 2,500 acres mainly in the districts of Bathinda, Fazilka, Mansa, Moga, Roopnagar and Sangrur. The acreage under these kharif crops is more or less consistent for the last many years. The crops are used as green fodder for cattle, whereas the grains (millets) are de-hulled, cleaned and sold for further processing for human consumption. It has been reported that in 1950s, millets used to be grown in around 11 lakh hectares in Punjab. However, with the advent of Green Revolution in the beginning of 1960s, area under food grain crops kept increasing and area under maize, oilseeds, pulses & millets kept decreasing to the extent that today 80% of the gross cultivable area of 8.4 million hectares is under wheat and rice.
3. Realising the importance of millets both as much less water consuming crops and offering tremendous health benefits, the Department of Agriculture, Punjab has decided to increase area under millets from 2,500 acres to 5,000 acres in 2022-23. An action plan to promote millet farming has also been prepared and a state-level nodal officer has been deputed to encourage farmers to sow millets. Progressive farmers and subject experts have reported that all the nine types of millets can be grown across all districts of the state. Millets like Kodra (Kodo), Kutki (Little Millet), Kangni (Foxtail), Chena (Proso), Ragi (Finger), etc. are already grown in Punjab, but in very small quantities for personal consumption. Meanwhile, demand for all types of millets is going up year after year. At present, Punjab is a net importer of various types of millets from Southern India and other places. It is estimated that wholesalers, retailers and processors import about 250 Metric tonnes of Millets. Millets are used to manufacture Ready-to-Eat products (Puffs, Extruded Snacks etc.), Bakery Products (Cookies, Cake, Muffins etc) and Other products (Roti, Laddu, Semolina, Pasta, Kheer, Flakes, Dalia, etc.). There are many FPOs like Gurdaspur Organic Producer Company Ltd., NGOs like Kheti Virasat Mission, Natural Millet Promoters Association and Start-ups working to promote cultivation and processing of millets in Punjab. There are four primary processing units in Punjab, located in Batala, Jaito, Sangrur and Ludhiana.

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4. As part of the One Day Millet Event, an Industry Meet has been planned to deliberate and understand the challenges that exist and scope for expansion of food processing sector (not restricted to Millets) in the region. About 20 Industry representatives not only from Amritsar but also from other parts of the State/Region, including PMFME beneficiaries, Processors/ Entrepreneurs/ Manufacturers/ Traders, FPOs/FPCs/ Cooperatives/ SHGs/ SHG Federations/ Concerned NGOs, Equipment suppliers and Officials from all sectors connected to Food processing will share their experience and give valuable inputs in the session.
 5. The Event will also have Technical Sessions on potential projects in food processing, PMFME scheme, Millet awareness and processing, experience of PMFME beneficiaries, Success stories, World Food India - 23, Health benefits of Millets, etc. The department of Food Science & Technology, GNDU University will be the knowledge partner for this session.
 6. There will be an exhibition wherein stalls will be allotted to PMFME Beneficiaries and others for displaying and sale of their products. We plan to offer 20/25 stalls free of cost. Live kitchen Cooking Classes for making millet based products will be an attraction of the event. Kheti Virasat Mission, Natural Millet Promoters Association and Amritsar Achar Murabba Association will provide technical support for the management of the exhibition.
 7. The Event will be attended by Millet growers/processors, students of GNDU University & Khalsa College pursuing courses like agriculture & food processing; food processing enterprises; SHGs; producer co-operatives; progressive farmers, officers & field staff of various departments of Punjab Govt. connected to PMFME Scheme; Resource Persons of PMFME Scheme, officers of MoFPI, FSSAI, APEDA etc.; Achar Murabba Association, banks functionaries, etc. it is expected that over 300 delegates from Punjab and neighboring states of Haryana, Himachal etc will attend the event and many more will visit the exhibition.
 8. The tentative minute-to-minute program is attached.