Smart Food Millet Recipes

GOOD FOR YOU | GOOD FOR THE PLANET | GOOD FOR THE SMALLHOLDER FARMER

International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-arid Tropics
About Smart Food – the triple benefits

Smart Food is a new concept that brings together solutions for different key global issues. Smart Food is defined as food that is:

**GOOD FOR YOU | GOOD FOR THE PLANET | GOOD FOR THE SMALLHOLDER FARMER**

Some of the biggest global issues are: poor diets (malnutrition to obesity); environmental issues (climate change, water scarcity and environmental degradation); and poverty.

Smart Food is one of the solutions that contributes to addressing all these issues in unison.

The UN has identified the need for **Sustainable Diets** they define as “diets with low environmental impacts which contribute to food and nutrition security...”, and believes that it is essential to set targets to strive towards this.¹

Smart Food is a key solution to sustainable diets.

**Millets**, often termed nutri-cereals, are a Smart Food as they are:

**Good for you** as millets are not only highly nutritious but target some of the highest malnutrition problems. For example,

- Pearl millet is high in iron, zinc and folic acid which is not only among the highest micronutrient needs but also particularly important for adolescent girls and women.²
- Finger millet has three times the amount of calcium as milk – also critical for women and babies.³
- Millets are also high in antioxidants and important for fighting diabetes and heart disease which are at significantly increasing levels in India.

**Good for the planet** reflecting the low water footprint and fewer pesticides and fertilizers needed and hence lower carbon footprint. This is not only better for the environment but means there is less financial investment risk for farmers.

**Good for the smallholder farmer** Millets are naturally climate smart. They are typically the last crop standing in times of drought. Some pearl millets have been known to withstand up to 64° Celsius. Millets can be a good risk management strategy for the farmers. The multiple untapped uses (fodder, biofuels, food products, brewing and more) also can be good value for farmers if developed. Millets also have a large scope for further yield development.

However, compared to other major crops, millets receive very little funding and attention, less government support, less developed value chains, less developed processing industry, and overall less awareness and knowledge about their value.

The Smart Food Initiative

Millets need to be brought into the mainstream along with the other major staples. It is therefore proposed to establish a Smart Food initiative with the overall goal to accelerate and popularize investments and support for the research and development of value chains for millets.

Approach

An initiative has been designed around ‘Smart Food – good for you, good for the planet and good for the smallholder farmer’. The approach is based on creating a demand pull by the consumer.

Efforts will focus on building a stronger scientific case for more support to millets. We will also highlight the issues and promote the value of millets along with building a new modern image around what have been the traditional crops and foods in many areas. Complementary to this will be promoting the need for new modern and exciting products made with millets.

² [http://www.icrisat.org/newsroom/latest-news/happenings/happenings1676.htm#1](http://www.icrisat.org/newsroom/latest-news/happenings/happenings1676.htm#1)
MILLETS are SMART FOOD

GOOD FOR YOU

MULTIPLE HEALTH BENEFITS

Their low glycemic index helps manage blood glucose levels and prevent diabetes.

MILLETS ARE HIGH IN ANTIOXIDANTS

Pearl millet has the highest folic acid acid content among cereals, which lowers heart disease and cancer risks and is recommended to pregnant women.

Highest Folic acid 46 mcg/100g

Millet are Highly Digestible Gluten-free

Fight against Cancer, diabetes heart disease

NUTRIENT DENSE GRAINS

Millet are high in protein, vitamins and micronutrients

Finger millet

340mg/100g Calcium
3 times more than milk

Pearl millet

iron 75mg/kg zinc 43mg/kg

“Mothers from Mali to Mumbai use finger millet as baby porridge due to its richness in calcium”

CRITICAL NEED FOR DIET DIVERSITY

Fewer crop species are feeding the world than 50 years ago, with a stark decline in millets and other traditional crops.

This globalized non-diversified diet of energy dense crops fuels the rise in diabetes and heart disease. Millets are part of the answer to reverse this trend.

Average change in the calories consumed from key crops worldwide (1961-2009)

Soybean +284% Sunflower +246% Palm oil +173%
Sorghum -52% Millets -45% Sweet potatoes -45%
Bajra -38% Cassava -38%
GOOD FOR THE PLANET

In drier and warmer climate, millets are more adapted.

HARDY AND DROUGHT-TOLERANT

Millets are often the only cereal crops that can grow in arid lands.

Only needs 350-400mm annual rain

FOOD SOLUTION IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

With global warming, 40% of land where we grow maize in sub-Saharan Africa may not support that crop by 2030. Millet survives better than maize in drought conditions. We will need drought tolerant alternatives like millets.

Need less water than other cereals

HEAT TOLERANT

Some pearl millets survive at temperatures up to 64°C

GROW FASTER

Some millets need 60-65 days to mature against 100-140 days for wheat

Millets can grow with no or little fertilizers and pesticides

A CROP TO BRING DIVERSITY ON FARM FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Easier to grow for poor farmers with difficult access to inputs.
Greater crop diversity on farm reduces pests, climate risks, improving farmers’ overall resilience.
GOOD FOR THE SMALL HOLDER FARMER

NEW SOLUTIONS NEEDED TO FEED 9 BILLION BY 2050
A third of rice, maize, and wheat growing areas have experienced yield plateaus or decrease in yield gain in the last decade.

HUGE SCOPE FOR GROWTH IN MILLETS
Better seeds, better inputs and farm practices can boost millet production to significant levels, e.g. +55% in Niger, if using microdosing microdosing can boost millet production

GREAT YIELD GAIN POTENTIAL FOR MILLETS
Average rainfed sorghum yield is as low as 600kg/ha, when realistic potential is three times higher. Significant impact is already proven

CRUCIAL STAPLE FOR MILLIONS IN THE DRYLANDS
Family nutrition: Millets are well-known traditional crops for most of the 2.5 billion people living in the drylands. 80% is eaten by the farmers’ family

MULTI USES EXIST WITH UNTAPPED MARKETS
Fodder: Pearl millet straw, with up to 50% dry matter, is the main animal feed for dryland herders in the dry season

Biofuels & fermentation industries not fully developed

Consumer Product: Health foods, sanitizers and more are untapped markets


Millet Dosa

Pearl millet has the highest folic acid content among cereals. It lowers heart disease and cancer risks and is recommended for pregnant women.

Extra Bites
Millet Dosa
(Makes 10-12 dosas)

INGREDIENTS

- Pearl millet – 180 g
- Black gram (without the skin) – 180 g
- Rice – 150 g
- Boiled rice – 40 g
- Fenugreek seeds – 1 teaspoon
- Salt – to taste
- Oil for drizzling

METHOD

1. Rinse the pearl millet and soak it for 4 to 5 hours. Soak separately black gram, rice, boiled rice and fenugreek seeds for 2 hours.

2. Grind all of them together to make a smooth batter, adding water as required.

3. Transfer the batter into a container with a lid and allow it to ferment in a warm place for 5-6 hours.

4. If the fermented batter is too thick, add water to bring it to spreading consistency.

5. Heat a griddle, take a ladle full of batter and keep spreading it in a circular motion outwards.

6. Drizzle oil around the dosa. When one side is crisp and brown, flip it and cook the other side for 30 seconds. Flip over and fold it.

7. Serve with any chutney.
5-Grain Soup

Extra Bites

The five grains used in this recipe grow in harsh, inhospitable climates with very little rainfall and poor soils. Their resilience under extreme weather conditions is critical to provide food security in the face of climate change.
5-Grain Soup

(Serving Size: Serves 4-6)

INGREDIENTS

- Water – 2 liters
- Bay leaves – 2
- Peppercorns – 5 g
- Carrot – 40 g
- Potato – 50 g
- Onion – 50 g
- Celery – 10 g
- Garlic – 4 cloves
- Olive oil
- Salt & pepper to taste

GRAINS

- Pigeonpea – 100 g
- Pearl millet – 100 g
- Sorghum – 100 g
- Groundnut – 50 g
- Chickpea – 50 g

METHOD

1. Soak all the grains together for 4 to 6 hours.
2. Rinse grains after soaking.
3. Chop the vegetables (save 1 tsp each of onion, celery and 2 cloves garlic) and cook together with the grains in a vessel/saucepan.
4. When cooked, separate the stock and keep aside.
5. Allow the vegetable-grain mixture to cool. Puree in a blender and keep aside.
6. Take a vessel/saucepan and drizzle olive oil. Add the chopped onions, garlic and celery. Fry till brown.
7. Add the vegetable-grain puree and keep stirring so that it does not stick to the vessel/saucepan.
8. When the mixture turns light brown add the stock and bring it to a boil. While boiling remove any scum on the surface.
9. Add salt and pepper to taste. Garnish with boiled grains.
10. Serve hot.

(For a non-veg soup, substitute the vegetables with 150 g of meat or seafood)
Sorghum Salad

Sorghum is grown on about 42 million hectares in 98 countries. West Africa produces roughly 25% of the world’s sorghum while India produces 20%.

Extra Bites

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Sorghum Salad

INGREDIENTS

Sorghum
• 1 cup sorghum, rinsed in a fine mesh colander
• 3 cups water

Roasted cherry tomatoes
• 1 pint cherry tomatoes
• 1 tablespoon olive oil
• Sea salt

Lemony dressing
• 2 tablespoons olive oil
• 2 tablespoons lemon juice
• ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
• ¼ teaspoon fine grain sea salt
• 1 clove garlic, pressed or minced
• Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Everything else
• 3 cups baby arugula
• ¼ cup crumbled feta
• 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
• Optional: 1 can (14 ounces) chickpeas, rinsed and drained

METHOD

1. First, cook the sorghum: Combine rinsed sorghum and three cups water in a small pot. Bring to a boil, then cover and reduce heat to medium-low. Cook until the sorghum is pleasantly tender but still has some chew to it, about 55 to 65 minutes. You can wait until the sorghum is halfway cooked before proceeding with the next steps.

2. To roast the cherry tomatoes: Preheat oven to 200°C (400°F). Line a small, rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper for easy cleanup. Toss the whole cherry tomatoes with one tablespoon olive oil and a sprinkle of salt. Roast until the tomatoes are soft, plump and starting to burst open, about 18 minutes.

3. To make the dressing: Whisk together the olive oil, lemon juice, red pepper flakes, salt and pepper until emulsified.

4. Once the sorghum is cooked: Drain off any excess water and pour the cooked sorghum into a serving bowl. Pour in all of the dressing, all of the cherry tomatoes and their juices, the arugula, feta, Parmesan and chickpeas (optional). Toss well and serve.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Millets were the staple grain in Asia before rice. Chinese archeologists found a 4,000-year-old bowl containing long noodles made from millet.
Millet Stir Fry

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup millet, rinsed
- 3 cups water
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 3 carrots, sliced into ribbons with a vegetable peeler
- Handful of asparagus, tough ends snapped off and sliced into 2-inch pieces
- 1 tablespoon or more of organic peanut oil or vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
- 2 eggs, beaten
- ½ inch fresh ginger, skin removed and finely chopped or grated
- 2 cloves garlic, minced or pressed
- ½ cup or more sliced green onions
- 1 tablespoon tamari, shoyu or soy sauce

METHOD

1. Cook the millet: Bring 3 cups of salted water to a boil in a large saucepan. Add the millet, lower to a simmer and cook, covered, for 20 to 25 minutes. Fluff with a fork and let it rest, covered, for 5 minutes. (You can do this ahead of time and refrigerate the leftover millet until you’re ready to heat up the skillet).

2. Over medium-high heat, heat half of the peanut or vegetable oil and sesame oil in a wok or large skillet. Once it is hot, pour in the eggs and swirl the pan to create a thin layer of egg. Let it set (about 45 seconds), then fold the eggs over on themselves and cook for about another 30 seconds and transfer to a plate or cutting board. Let it cool a little and then slice it into strips.

3. Arrange all of your prepared ingredients within easy reach of the stove. Wipe off any remaining egg from the pan and return it to medium-high heat. Add the remaining oil and let it heat up enough so that a drop of water evaporates within seconds. Stir in the ginger and garlic and cook for about 15 seconds. Stir in the green onions and carrots for another 30 seconds, stirring constantly. Stir in the millet and shoyu for 30 seconds, then add the egg and cook for another 30 seconds. Divide into two bowls and top with some fresh cilantro leaves, a sprinkle of red pepper flakes and a little dash of shoyu, sesame oil or tamari, if necessary.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

http://cookieandkate.com/2012/springtime-stir-fried-millet/
Millet & Chickpea Stuffed Peppers

Recipe

Millets are often the only cereal crops that can grow in arid lands since they need very little water and can withstand temperatures as high as 64°C.

Extra Bites
Millet & Chickpea Stuffed Peppers

(Makes 4 stuffed peppers)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup dry millet
- 3 cups water
- 2 carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- 1 can chickpeas (garbanzo beans)
- ¼ cup raisins
- 4 bell peppers

METHOD

1. Toast the millet in a pan to give it a nutty corn-like taste. Once the millet is toasted, add 3 cups water, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes – or until all the water has been absorbed.

2. While the millet simmers, take a large non-stick sauté pan. Add a little bit of olive oil, and sauté the onions, carrots, and garlic until they are soft – about 10 minutes or so. Once soft, add the curry powder and chickpeas. Cook for another minute or two, until everything is heated through.

3. Slice the peppers lengthwise. Place the peppers in a glass baking dish with a bit of water added – just enough to cover the bottom. Drizzle a little bit of olive oil, salt and pepper directly to the peppers before stuffing.

4. Once the millet is cooked, add the chickpea mixture and stir it all up to combine. Toss in a few raisins if you like.

5. Put a hefty scoop into each half. Pack the filling in and place the baking dish in a 200°C (400°F) oven for about 30 minutes.
Millet Couscous With Roasted Carrots

Recipe

Millets have a low glycemic index, thereby it helps to manage blood glucose levels and prevents diabetes

Extra Bites

Millets have a low glycemic index, thereby it helps to manage blood glucose levels and prevents diabetes
Millet Couscous With Roasted Carrots

INGREDIENTS

- 4 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 cup millet
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 2 1/4 cups chicken broth
- 6 medium carrots, peeled, cut into 1” pieces
- 1/4 cup roasted almonds, chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground pepper
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro leaves with tender stems (optional)

METHOD

1. Heat oven to 200°C (400°F). Toss carrots with 2 tbsp. oil on a rimmed baking sheet; season with salt and pepper. Roast until tender and golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes.

2. Heat 1 tbsp. oil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add millet and cumin seeds and cook, stirring, until it begins to brown, about 2 minutes. Add broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until millet is tender, 25–35 minutes.

3. Heat remaining 1 tbsp. oil in a small skillet over low heat; cook almonds and cayenne, stirring occasionally, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Serve millet topped with carrots, cilantro, and almond mixture.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

http://bewitchingkitchen.com/2014/10/30/millet-couscous-with-roasted-carrots/
Millet Shots

Finger millet is packed with calcium - containing three times more calcium than milk. Mothers from Mali to Mumbai use finger millet as baby porridge due to its richness in calcium.
Millet Shots

(Serving Size: 2 shots)

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 cup milk
- 1 tablespoon finger millet flour
- 2 tablespoons water
- 3 tablespoons chocolate sauce
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 tablespoons orange crush
- 2 tablespoons cornflakes
- 1 tablespoon chopped nuts
- 1 tablespoon crushed rice crisps
- 1 tablespoon raisins
- Half an apple cubed
- Pudding/ice cream any flavor (optional)

**METHOD**

1. Add 1 tbsp chocolate sauce to the milk. Bring it to a boil.
2. Using 2 tbsp of water make a thick paste of the millet flour.
3. Add the millet paste to the milk while it is boiling. Cook it on a low flame until the consistency is similar to porridge.
4. Remove from flame. Let it cool completely.
5. Now refrigerate all the ingredients for 2 hours.
6. Layer the ingredients in two shot glasses. Place orange crush in both the glasses, then add the millet porridge along with a small spoon of chocolate sauce, 1 spoon of cornflakes, a few rice crisps. Then add apple pieces, another spoon of millet porridge, nuts, raisins, etc. Repeat the process until the glasses are full.
7. Garnish with small scoops of pudding or ice cream and decorate with pieces of apple and orange.
8. Glaze the fruits by drizzling a little honey on them.
Millets, including sorghum, are gluten free.
Some millets need 60-65 days to mature while wheat needs 100-140 days.
Millet Cookies
(Serving Size: Makes 25 to 30 cookies)

**INGREDIENTS**

- 50 g butter
- 50 g icing sugar
- 50 g brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 40 g pearl millet flour
- 70 g all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- Flour for dusting

**METHOD**

1. Mix butter, icing sugar and brown sugar in bowl, add an egg and vanilla essence. Whip it well.
2. Add the millet flour, all-purpose flour and baking powder and knead it to a smooth dough.
4. Make a depression in the center of each ball and pipe jam into it (optional).
5. Flatten the ball. It should be about 0.5 inch thick.
6. Place the cookies wide apart on a cookie sheet.
7. Bake in a preheated oven at 180°C (360° F) for 20 to 25 minutes.
African Millet Patties

Pearl millet is naturally high in iron and zinc. Research shows it can meet daily requirements of iron and zinc for children.

Extra Bites
African Millet Patties

(Makes 4-6 patties)

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 cup pearl millet
- 2 cups water
- ¾ cup tahini or nut butter/raisins
- 1 small onion, finely diced
- 1½ teaspoons celery seed
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce

**METHOD**

1. Rinse the millet and soak in water at room temperature for 6 hours or overnight.

2. Bring the water and millet to a boil, quickly turn down the heat to low and cover. Simmer for 20 minutes or until the water is absorbed. Remove from heat, fluff with a fork, and let it sit uncovered for a few minutes to cool down.

3. Add all the other ingredients and mix well. Form into patties and shallow fry over medium heat in a lightly oiled pan for a few minutes on each side until brown. Serve with condiments or chutneys.

4. Alternatively, the millet may be served when warm without frying. It’s delicious this way as well.
Millets are high in protein, vitamins and micronutrients. Millet’s legacy persists in the Chinese language, where the signs for “millet” and “mouth” together make the word “harmony” and contribute to the word for “peace.”

Extra Bites

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Millet Sushi

(Serving portion: Makes 6 - 7 pieces)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups pearl millet
- ½ a cucumber or avocado
- 100 g tofu, thinly sliced and marinated in soy sauce with 1 teaspoon ginger
- 1 teaspoon demerara sugar
- 2 tablespoons Chinese sesame, coarsely ground
- Nori sheet (for rolling)
- A pinch of salt
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1 liter water

METHOD

1. In a pan, toast the millet on a low flame, stirring it every now and then for about five minutes or until it turns golden and releases its aroma. Let it cool.

2. Transfer the millet to a vessel/saucepan, add 1 liter water and boil. Stir every five minutes or so to ensure that the millet does not stick to the bottom of the vessel/saucepan. Remove from the flame when the mixture is of a uniform sticky consistency.

3. Transfer the millet to a shallow container and allow it to cool.

4. In a bowl mix rice vinegar, demerara sugar (coarse, light brown sugar), pepper and microwave for 5 seconds.

5. Add this mixture to the sticky millet in the container. Mix thoroughly and allow it to cool.

6. Meanwhile, transfer the marinated tofu to a lined baking tray and put it in an oven set to 'grill'. Drizzle a little of the marinade on the top. Grill them till they turn golden and crispy. If you don't have an oven, broil the marinated tofu in a pan.

7. Place a sheet of nori on top of your sushi mat. Spread out a thin layer of millet. At the end closest to you, place a line of tofu and cucumber/avocado. Now roll up tightly, tucking the nori sheet inside, into a nice cylinder.

8. Cut the sushi into 1½ inch thick pieces. Serve with miso soup, wasabi, soy sauce and pickled ginger.
Finger millet has properties that slow down the digestion of carbohydrates and can be regarded as food for long sustenance.
No Yeast Pizza

(Serving portion: Makes 2 pizza bases)

**INGREDIENTS FOR BASE**
- ½ cup pearl millet flour
- ½ cup sorghum flour
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- 100 - 150 ml warm water
- Salt to taste

**METHOD**
1. Make a dough using the millet flour, sorghum flour, oil, warm water and salt.
2. Roll it in the shape of a pizza base.
3. Bake it at 200°C for 15 minutes till it is crisp and keep it aside.

  **NOTE:** This will be a thin, crunchy base

**INGREDIENTS FOR PIZZA SAUCE**
- 6 tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon chopped garlic
- 50 g chopped onion
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ½ tablespoon oregano
- 50 g tomato ketchup
- 25 ml oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

**METHOD**
1. Heat oil in a saucepan.
2. Add chopped garlic, chopped onion, oregano and sauté.
3. After a while add chopped tomatoes, tomato ketchup, sugar, pepper and salt.
4. Heat it until it becomes a thick paste.

**INGREDIENTS FOR TOPPING**
- ½ green bell pepper
- ½ yellow bell pepper
- ½ red bell pepper
- 1 tomato
- ½ onion
- 100 to 150 g Mozzarella cheese

**METHOD FOR PIZZA**
1. Dice the bell peppers, tomato and onion.
2. Coat the base with the pizza sauce and garnish with the diced vegetables and mozzarella cheese.
3. Bake at 200°C (400°F) for 10 to 15 minutes. Serve hot.
Sorghum has an amazing range of multiple uses – the grain is used for food, beer and biofuels. The stalks are used as construction material, as fuel for cooking and as fodder for livestock.
Sorghum Muffins

(Makes 16 muffins)

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 cup sorghum flour
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 tablespoon cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 1 tin or 400 ml condensed milk
- 1 cup milk
- 3-4 tablespoons melted butter

**METHOD**

1. Sift the sorghum flour, all-purpose flour, baking powder, cocoa and baking soda in a bowl.

2. In another bowl, mix the condensed milk, milk, vanilla essence and the melted butter and mix thoroughly.

3. Add the wet ingredients to the flour mixture and mix only until the ingredients are well combined.

4. Grease the muffin cups with a little oil and spoon the batter till three-fourths full

5. Place in a preheated oven and bake at 180°C (360°F) for 30-40 minutes or till a toothpick inserted comes out clean.
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