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Traditional millet varieties to control lifestyle diseases

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Abstract

Traditional cumbu is cultivated in many areas of Trichy District, Particularly Kampalathupatti village of Manapparai Taluk, says that this traditional variety exists for more than 100 years. The apt season for cultivating this cumbu is Aadi pattern (July-August). It is well suited for garden land and dry land eco system. Since it is a rain fed crop, direct sowing is the sown during Aadi pattern and harvesting can be done in the month of Margazhi (January). Manual harvesting is done by using sickle, where the ear head alone is cut from the stem and collected. Kona cholam, sorghum is cultivated as an irrigated crop. All type of soil suitable for this sorghum cultivation. Chittan samai is cultivated traditionally in Alangayam, Javathu Malai village at Vellore district. Samai is cultivated during the month of June-August. Land is well ploughed and seeds are sown through Hans sowing. In one acre of land, 12 kg seeds are required.

Keywords: Traditional Knowledge, Millet, Ragi, Samai, Cholam

Introduction

It is Suitable for Hilly Region. It is a traditional Ragi Variety which is being grown in Thamarakarai village of Erode district. As per their perception, it is hardy in Nature. It is Suitable to prepare ethnic food called kali, muruku, koozh etc. It is harvested along with straw and dried for about 15 days. Threshing can be done manually or by using cattle. Whereas the other traditional varieties only the ear heads are reaped. The duration of the crop is three months. The season for growing this variety is in the month of Aadi (july). This variety is existence over 125 years.

Kattucumbu-pearl Millet

This traditional cumbu is cultivated in many areas of Trichy District, Particularly kampalathupatti village of manapparai taluk, says that this traditional variety exists for more than 100 years. The apt season for cultivating this cumbu is Aadi pattern (july-August).It is well suited for garden land and dry land eco system. Since it is a rain fed crop, direct sowing is the sown during Aadi pattern and harvesting can be done in the month of Margazhi (January). Manual harvesting is done by using sickle, where the ear head alone is cut from the stem and collected. These ear heads are sun dried for 2-3 days. It is then threshed manually by striking it with sticks or even bullocks are allowed to stamp on the ear head and thus the grains are separated. The separated grains are winnowed and cleaned. Grains are elliptical shape with pointed nose at the point of attachment with the rachis. They are faded green in color with milky taste. Normally, it yields about 600-700 kg/ac.

After cleaning process, it is stored in traditional storage called "Thaniya kuthir". When utilized for consumption, it is pounded well into course powdery form and consumed. It can be fed to both human and cattles. It contains minerals and other nutrients. Normally, an ethnic food called "cumbu koozh", is prepared by using the coarse powder made out of cumbu grains. This ethnic food controls fever, blood pressure, and even diabetes in human beings and it is very effective against food and mouth disease (Kaanai) in cattles, as stated by Thiru. Kuppamuthu of the said village.

Thattai varagu

It is also being cultivated in veppanthatai taluk perambalur district. The duration of the crop is 5 and half months. The seeds are sown directly in the field. For increasing the yield, one traditional practices is followed by the farmer since 20 years. i.e. 45 days after sowing, the grazing is done in the field by allowing the sheep for one day. This practice is called "kedai aadithal" and technically it called sheep penning. For one acre 100 sheep' are allowed. Sheep's are grazed the entire field and leave only the root of the crop, after that, the side tillers are developed well. Side tillers give more number of ear heads, It gives yield upto 10-12 q/ac.

Puvadan keazhvaragu-Ragi

It is also being cultivated in veppanthatai taluk at perambalur district. The durations of crop is three months. The seed rate is 3.5 kg/ac. The apt season for cultivating this cumbu is karthigai. Direct sowing and transporting system is used for growing this variety. It yields about seven qtl/ac. This crop is sown at the time of "pogi" (puvadana noonbu) i.e. 30th of Margazhi. This is the reason behind the name puvadana keazhvaragu.

Sorghum (kona cholam)

This sorghum is cultivated as an irrigated crop. All type of soil suitable for this sorghum cultivation. After first ploughing, Farm Yard Manure is applied as a basal. After that 2nd ploughing is done, during the 3rd ploughing seeds are sown. Seed rate is 3 kg/ acre. Season for cultivating kona cholam is Jan-Feb. Duration of this crop is 90 days. Irrigation is given once in 10 days interval. No need to done weeding. Grain yield in one acre of land is 2500 kg. one kg of seed Rs.12-15 for cultivating one acre of land Rs 3000 /- is required.

Chittan samai

Chittan samai is cultivated traditionally in Alangayam, Javathu malai village at Vellore district. Samai is cultivated during the month of June-August. Land is well ploughed and seeds are sown through hans sowing. In one acre of land, 12 kg seeds are required. The crop duration is 90 days. One weeding is done in DAS 30th day. For weeding, 10 labourers are required. One acre of land wages for weeding is Rs 30/- for women labour and Rs 70 /- for men labour. Crops are ready to harvest after 90 days. Plants are harvested by using sickle. Grains are separated by threshing. The straw yield from one acre of land is 800kg. The market rate of samai grain is Rs 10-12 kg.

Special Feature

- Very good taste and flavour compared to other varieties.
- Storage capacity is more than 4-5 years compared to other recommended varieties.
- It is used for biscuit preparation.

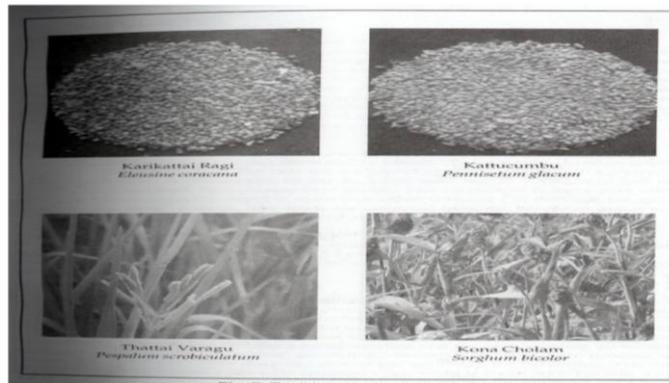
Sen Cholam (Wild Sorghum)

This is one of the traditional varieties in Salem district. The duration of the crop is 120 days and suitable for all the season. The color of the grain is dark reddish, ear heads are medium sized and oval in shape. The crop is mainly cultivated for cattle feed. In olden days, Sorghum grains are used as a food material, but now it is not preferred. Farmers are eager to cultivate this variety while compared to other varieties green fodder is mainly used for milch animals to induce the milk production. Twenty kg of green fodder is fed to one animal / day (At milking time especially for cow). Dry fodders are preserved and given for all the animals. After maturation, the ear headed are harvested by using knife and it is sun dried upto 2-3 days. The Grains are separated manually by using sticks. This seeds can be used for next sowing after three months.

Kakacholam (Traditional Cholam)

Traditional cholam varieties are grown in Kothali village at Thoothukudi district. It is a Black seeded (Crow colour in tamil kaka) variety. Duration of the crop is 6 months. They are cultivating this crop as rain fed and irrigated system. The

seed rate is 30Kg/acre. It may be sown in the month of September –October and to be harvested in the month of January – February. The seeds are kept for next sowing by farmers themselves. This variety is suitable for livestock as fodder. It can be used as inter crop along with any other crops.



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