

Millet Cultivation Guide

A Quick Reference

I. Introduction

Millets are a group of small-seeded grasses widely grown in India, notably in Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh, valued for drought tolerance and nutritional benefits. Common types include pearl millet (bajra), finger millet (ragi), foxtail millet (kangni), little millet, barnyard millet, kodo millet, and proso millet.

II. Growth Requirements

Requirement	Optimal Range	Notes
Temperature	23°C to 32°C	Sensitive to low temperatures during seedling and flowering
Rainfall	250 to 700 mm (evenly distributed)	Ideal range; drought tolerant but prolonged dry spells reduce yield
Soil pH	Slightly acidic to neutral (around 5.5 to 7.5)	Deep, well-drained fertile soils best

III. Recommended NPK Fertilization (kg/ha)

Nutrient	Recommended Dosage	Notes
Nitrogen (N)	60-100	Promotes tillering and vegetative growth
Phosphorus (P)	30-50	Supports root development
Potassium (K)	30-50	Improves drought resistance and grain quality

Split applications and organic amendments improve nutrient use efficiency.

IV. Best Cultivation Practices

- Land preparation: Deep ploughing, cross harrowing, and field leveling.
- Sowing: Optimal planting depth 2-3 cm; line sowing preferred with 20-30 cm row spacing.
- Water Management: Early irrigation critical, especially during flowering.
- Pest and disease management through integrated pest management (IPM) and use of disease-resistant varieties.
- Crop rotation and organic soil amendments enhance productivity and pest resistance.

V. Common Diseases and Pest Management

- Downy mildew (green ear disease), smut, blast, rust, aphids, shoot flies, and armyworms.
- Use seed treatments, fungicides, and biological controls as appropriate.
- Removal and destruction of infected plants recommended during outbreaks.

VI. Types of Millets in India

- Pearl millet (Bajra)
- Finger millet (Ragi)
- Foxtail millet (Kangni)
- Little millet (Kutki)
- Barnyard millet (Sawan)
- Kodo millet (Kodon)
- Proso millet (Chena)
- Browntop millet (Choti Kangni)

NPK Fertilization for Millet

