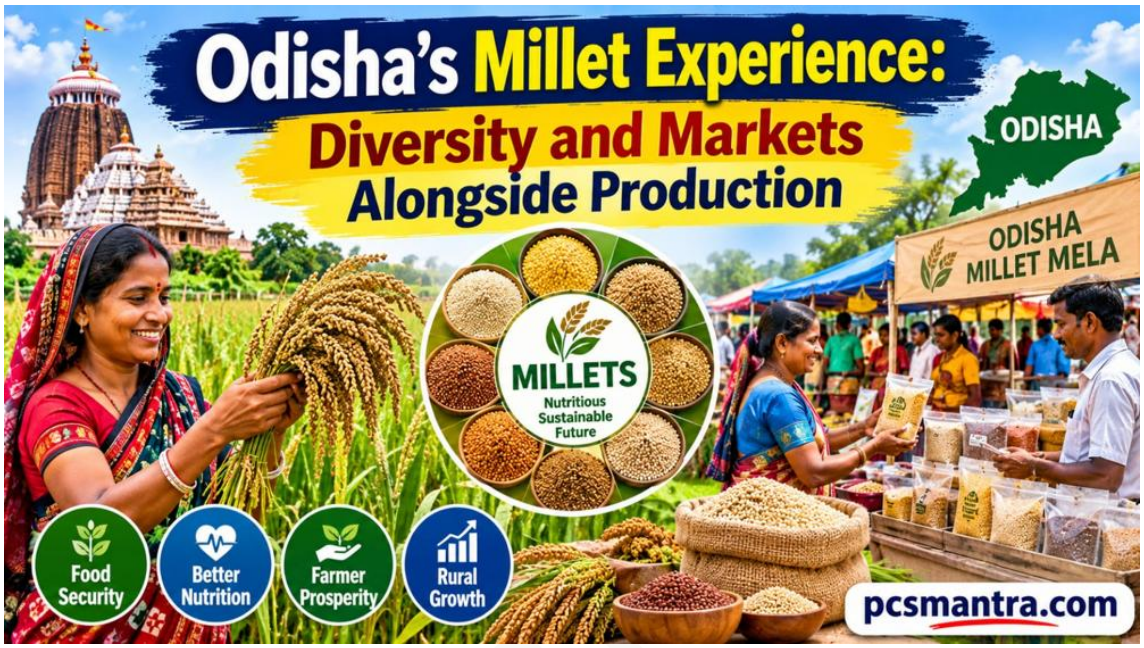
Odisha's Millet Experience: Diversity and Markets Alongside Production



News reference: 10 November 2026 | Mains: GS-III, agriculture, nutrition and climate-resilient farming

Original symbolic image: pcsmantra.com

Why in the News

A two-day national event on agrobiodiversity, climate-resilient agriculture and sustainable food systems began in Bhubaneswar. Discussing the Odisha Shree Anna Abhiyan, ICAR Director General Dr M. L. Jat described it as a potential national model for millet-based transformation.

He called for expanding the millet area from 1.79 lakh hectares to 5 lakh hectares and production to 8 lakh metric tonnes by 2047. This is a target put forward in the address, not an achievement or a new binding target applicable across India.

Four Connected Aspects

Production and procurement: The release mentions procurement of 7.5 lakh quintals of ragi in KMS 2024-25 and a target of 8 lakh quintals for 2025-26. This procurement target is different from the 2047 production target of 8 lakh metric tonnes. The period, unit and activity are all different.

Agrobiodiversity: The discussion covered 163 documented ragi landraces and the conservation of traditional varieties. Local crop diversity cannot be reduced to yield figures alone; conservation is also part of agricultural strategy.

Processing and organisation: Emphasis was placed on affordable machinery, scientific farming, stronger farmer producer organisations and women's self-help groups, and better market links. If production rises without improvements in processing and access to customers, benefits to farmers may remain limited.

Research: Collaboration with ICAR-IIMR, Hyderabad, and a millet centre of excellence at the Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology were proposed. A proposal is not evidence that the centre has been established or has begun work.

The National Lesson

Odisha's experience may help other states, but adaptation to local crops, food preferences and markets will be necessary. Expansion of cultivation, procurement, processing, conservation of local varieties and demand must be considered together. An increase in area alone is not final proof of improved farmer incomes or nutrition.

Prelims Practice Question

With reference to the 10 November millet event in Odisha:1. A production target of 8 lakh metric tonnes was put forward for 2047.2. The ragi procurement target for 2025-26 is also 8 lakh metric tonnes.3. A millet centre of excellence at OUAT was proposed.Which statements are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 1 and 3 only

(c) 2 and 3 only

(d) All three

Answer and Explanation

Answer: (b). The ragi procurement target for 2025-26 is 8 lakh quintals, not metric tonnes. The centre of excellence is proposed.

Mains Practice Question

Why must production expansion, local diversity, processing and markets be connected in millet-based agricultural transformation? Explain with reference to Odisha. (250 words)

Answer Outline

Introduction: Expansion of area versus actual benefits.

Main Body: Local varieties; the role of procurement; FPOs and women's groups; machinery, research and markets; adaptation by state.

Conclusion: Distinguish targets from achievements.

Sources

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