



Coarse Grains Are the New Cash Crops: A Study on Production Performance in Tamilnadu

¹Dr. R. Govindasamy,

Assistant professor, Department of Economics, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore-641046.

²Deepthi. A,

PG Student, Department of Economics, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore-641046.

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Abstract

Agriculture is the major source of livelihood in India as well as Tamil Nadu, and more than 93 percentage of farmers are small and marginal farmers. Tamil Nadu is slowly bringing back the lost glories of our heritage and to make individuals lead a solid and infection free millets. The growth in area, and production of millets namely jowar and bajra in Tamil Nadu were focused on the study. Thus, the backdrop shows that there are fluctuations in cultivation and production of millets. Jowar and Bajra are known for gluten free food source and hence a useful dietary cereal. Millets frame a successful shield against modern day ailments. These millets suited the Agro-climatic conditions of Tamil Nadu as they were very tolerant to heat, drought and flood and that makes the crop an excellent option for farmers to face the dynamic climatic change and gradual depletion of natural resources and it requires less water compared to the rice and wheat. This encouraged the farmers to take up millet cultivation. The demand for millet-based foods increased, which increased the income of the farmers and encouraged the farmers to become entrepreneurs.

Keywords: Climate, Cultivation, Demand, Growth, Millets, Production etc.

I. Introduction

Agriculture is the foundation of India's cultural livelihood. If we take history of food and variety of crop cultivation in the Indian context, the history will be incomplete without the millet production or consumption. But in past five years, suffered a backwardness in production due to Change in food habits of the people. The changes in the state policies that favor rice and wheat cultivation led to a sharp decline in the production

of millets. Millet's act as an important crop for small-scale farmers as they require minimal investment and have low input cost, so the Tamil Nadu government implemented, Tamil Nadu Millet Mission (2014-15) was formed under National Agriculture Development Program (NADP) with the intention to bring back the forgotten millets to normal cultivation by incentivizing cultivation. Its aim was to increase the productivity of millets to 4000kg/hectare. This mission helped in transforming fallow land into cultivable land and crop diversification from high water intensive to low water intensive crops.

Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the area, production and share percentage of millets in Tamil Nadu.
2. To understand the health benefits, value added products and government schemes for millets.

II. Review of literature

Handral and Prakash (2017): The growth patterns and productivity instability have changed over time. The decline in coarse grains cultivation area in 2000s paved way for hybrid seeds and varieties. The study highlights the need for policy interventions to maintain and improve the stability of production of coarse grains due to their increasing nutritional and commercial value. *Gowri and Prabhu (2017)*: This study found that cereals occupy 51 percent of the gross cropped area and millet crops constitute 60 percent of area. The area under coarse cereals declined by 1.5 percent per year, while marginal gains production increased due to increase in productivity levels.

III. Methodology

The study is purely based on secondary sources which consist of area and production of



Bajra and Jowar in Tamil Nadu in comparison with India during the year 2010-11 to 2019-20 from IIMR. Apart from this, health benefits, value added products and government schemes are taken to highlight the importance of millets from various sources like newspaper reports, private websites

and so on. The formulae used in this study to calculate share percentage was:

- $\text{Area (Tamil Nadu)} \div \text{Area (India)} * 100 = \text{Area Share Percentage.}$
- $\text{Production (Tamil Nadu)} \div \text{Production (India)} * 100 = \text{Production Share Percentage.}$

IV. Results and Discussion

The outcomes of this study have provided insight into share percentage of area and production of millets in Tamil Nadu as compared to India.

Table 1: Area and Production of Bajra in Tamil Nadu as compared to India.

Year	India		Tamil Nadu		Share Percentage	
	Area ('000 Hectares)	Production ('000 Tonnes)	Area ('000 Hectares)	Production ('000 Tonnes)	Area ('000 Hectares)	Production ('000 Tonnes)
2010-11	9612.34	10360.90	49.50	77.40	0.51	0.75
2011-12	8776.70	10276.00	46.67	114.45	0.53	1.11
2012-13	7297.42	8741.98	42.93	56.93	0.59	0.65
2013-14	7810.72	9250.09	54.41	3627.47	0.70	39.22
2014-15	7317.95	9184.22	57.70	4456.12	0.79	48.52
2015-16	7128.61	8066.63	51.61	3527.29	0.72	43.73
2016-17	7458.50	9729.84	49.67	4154.97	0.67	42.70
2017-18	7480.60	9208.85	63.03	3753.35	0.84	40.76
2018-19	7105.03	8664.13	46.88	118.00	0.66	1.36
2019-20	7542.68	10362.68	67.49	185.13	0.89	1.79

Source: Indian Institute of Millet Research (IIMR), Share percentage: Computed.

Table 1 depicts the area, production and share percentage of bajra in Tamil Nadu as compared to India from 2010-11 to 2019-20. There are fluctuations in the share percentage of the area as well as production of bajra. There is no constant increase or decrease in the area and production of bajra for the following years.

Table 2: Area and Production of Jowar in Tamil Nadu as compared to India.

Year	India		Tamil Nadu		Share Percentage	
	Area ('000 Hectares)	Production ('000 Tonnes)	Area ('000 Hectares)	Production ('000 Tonnes)	Area ('000 Hectares)	Production ('000 Tonnes)
2010-11	7381.73	7003.15	243.47	246.99	3.30	3.53
2011-12	6245.08	6006.47	197.69	252.52	3.17	4.20
2012-13	6214.36	5281.48	193.86	165.02	3.12	3.12
2013-14	5793.44	5541.81	347.13	449.57	5.99	8.11
2014-15	6161.39	5445.30	347.52	512.60	5.64	9.41
2015-16	6077.03	4238.02	339.16	467.99	5.58	11.04
2016-17	5624.42	4567.90	268.39	153.87	4.77	3.37



2017-18	5024.45	4803.38	385.64	430.59	7.68	8.96
2018-19	4092.87	3475.09	385.85	464.48	9.43	13.37
2019-20	4823.76	4772.10	450.00	520.07	9.33	10.90

Source: Indian Institute of Millet Research (IIMR), Share percentage: Computed.

Area, production and share percentage of Jowar in Tamil Nadu as compared to India during the year 2010-11 to 2019-20 are represent in table 2. It has been found that there are fluctuations in the area, production and their share percentage of India and Tamil Nadu.

Why are Millets considered Super Grains?

Millets were once known as inferior coarse grains or small seeded grass. But now, they are known as super grains and Nutri-Cereals as they provide huge economic, environmental and health benefits. Millets are extremely adaptive to a wide range of ecological conditions and grow well in rain-fed as well as arid climate regions. These properties make them agriculturally superior to other commercial crops like rice and wheat. The United Nations, other governments, FMCG giants and also people who are health conscious are taking millets. United Nations has declared 2023 the International Year of Millets.

Health Benefits

Millets are slowly gaining popularity among people because of its nutritional properties, as they have high amounts of proteins and fiber, B-complex vitamins. Recently, the obese cases are increasing day by day, so the millets will be the best solution for weight loss because they are gluten-free, fiber rich and low in glycemic index, which makes them as the good choice for people with gluten intolerance, diabetes and metabolic disorders.

Government Schemes

- **Integrated Cereals Development Programmes in Coarse Cereals ICDP-CC** based Cropping Systems Areas under Macro Management of Agriculture -MMA.
- **Initiative for Nutritional Security through Intensive Millet Promotion – INSIMP** a part of Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana” – RKVY which is the only comprehensive initiative to support millet production.
- **Rainfed Area Development Programme – RADP**: A component of the Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana – RKVY.

- **Five-year Millet Mission Plan**: Tamil Nadu Government have allotted 82 crores in the State Budget 2023-2024.

Value Added Products

Millet grit and flour can be used to prepare Ready-To-Eat (RTE) products. Noodles, macaroni and penne pasta-like products could be prepared from millet flour. Millets are also used in health foods as they contain a higher proportion of insoluble dietary fiber which is suitable for those suffering from or prone to diabetes. In millets, especially finger millet, can be successfully utilized for the development of weaning foods, as it can satisfy the nutritional requirement of infants during the transitional phase from breast milk to other type of food, and it can provide at reasonable cost. A popular traditional drink called as ‘Cumbu Cool’ which is made from bajra (pearl millet) is consumed in Tamil Nadu during summer to reduce body heat.

V. Conclusion

Millets are true super foods that deserve to be more widely recognized and appreciated. While examining the millets, it has been noted that there is no constant increase or decrease in area and production of Bajra and Jowar in India and Tamil Nadu. However, many value-added products can be made from millets which help in tackling lifestyle problems and health challenges such as obesity and diabetes as they are gluten-free and have a low glycemic index. To tackle the fluctuation and considering of the importance of millets, the government has implemented several schemes.

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