



MILLET CONSUMPTION: ECONOMY

NEWS: Rejuvenating the millet market in rural India

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

Millet consumption in India is growing in urban areas due to rising incomes and health trends, while rural areas continue traditional millet use, especially in key producing states. However, gaps in the supply chain and the Green Revolution's emphasis on wheat and rice have led to a decline in rural millet consumption. Government initiatives like PDS distribution in states like Odisha and Karnataka support millet accessibility.

Millet Consumption Trends in India: Rural and Urban Perspectives

Rural and Urban Consumption Patterns

- **Rising Urban Demand:** Urban areas are witnessing an increase in millet consumption, driven by rising incomes and a shift towards healthier diets.
- **Sustained Rural Traditions:** Contrary to the notion of rural decline in millet use, rural communities continue to grow and consume millets. Local varieties and traditional recipes are still part of everyday diets in areas where millets are cultivated.
- **Comparison of Consumption:** While rural millet consumption has reduced over the decades, it still exceeds that of urban areas, particularly in millet-producing regions where millets serve as staple foods.

Historical Decline and Recent Revival

- **Impact of Green Revolution:** The Green Revolution led to a decline in millet consumption as wheat and rice became more popular due to higher yields and government promotion.
- **Current Demand Trends:** The introduction of millet-based, ready-to-cook, and ready-to-eat products is rekindling interest, particularly in urban markets. Rural areas are beginning to show interest in similar products if they are tailored to local tastes and sold in affordable, smaller packages.

Regional Consumption and Production

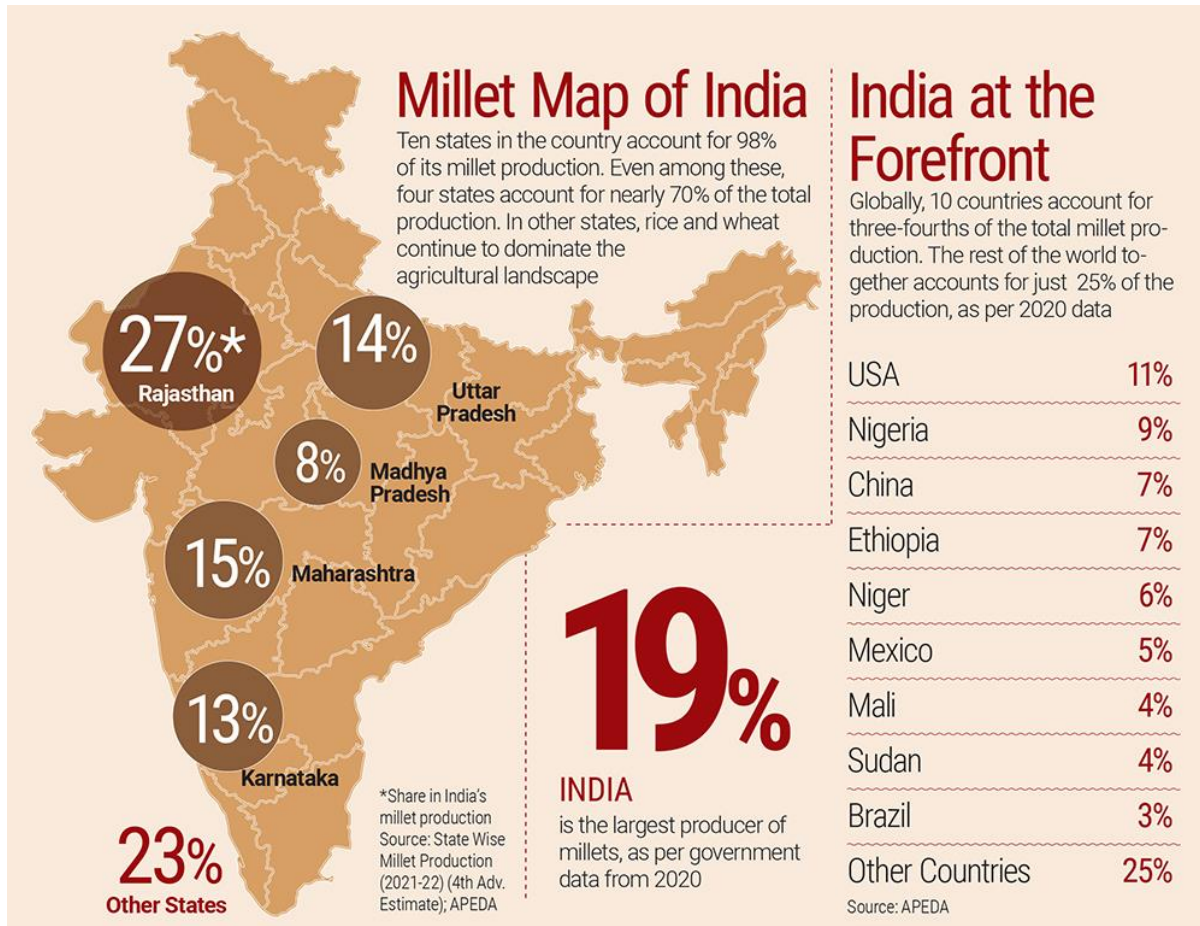
- **Key Millet-Producing States:** States like Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Karnataka not only grow but also consume millets extensively. These regions incorporate millets in diets and use them for fodder and certain industrial purposes.

Opportunities and Market Expansion

- **Product Differentiation for Rural Markets:** To expand millet consumption in rural areas, companies are advised to explore a variety of millet products tailored for different eating occasions, while raising awareness about their nutritional benefits.



- **Need for Localization:** Companies must adapt their products to local flavors and preferences rather than replicating urban offerings, making the products more appealing and accessible in rural markets.



Role of Local Entrepreneurs

- **Supporting Small Businesses:** Local entrepreneurs are creating millet-based products that resonate with regional palates, which could increase millet interest in rural areas. Affordable, ready-to-eat millet options can attract consumers and support local economies.

Supply Chain Challenges

- **Connectivity Gaps:** The current millet supply chain lacks robust connectivity between growers and markets, limiting farmers' access to consumers. Leveraging technology to facilitate direct sales can enhance farmers' incomes and promote locally grown produce.

Government Initiatives to Boost Millet Demand

- **Central and State Programs:** Various government initiatives are supporting millet consumption, especially in rural areas. For example, states like Odisha and Karnataka procure and distribute millets at subsidized rates through the Public Distribution System (PDS).



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- **Inter-State Millet Procurement:** Odisha procures millets from other states to ensure an adequate supply for distribution through its PDS, highlighting government efforts to make millets more accessible to the public.

Source: <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/catalyst/rejuvenating-the-millet-market-in-rural-india/article68826582.ece>



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