

Demonstration cum input distribution programme under ‘Frontline Demonstration on Pearl Millet in Umphrew village, Meghalaya

Millets are grown by indigenous people of the Northeast region. In Meghalaya, tribal communities were producing and consuming millets since immemorial and are locally known as ‘Krai’ and are sown in ‘bri-khlaw’. Millets are highly nutritious and are prime source of many vitamins, dietary fibre and minerals. One of the primitive tribes of Meghalaya, the Khasis used to prepare a dish formed out of rice and millet which is still a practice in some remote pockets. They also used millets for brewing of beer. But with the time the recent agricultural production system of the state has lost the growing and consuming trend of millets. The farmers of Meghalaya also have less knowledge about the modern cultivation practices of millets and also about their health benefit. In this regard, an attempt was made by ICAR Research Complex for NEH region, Umiam by popularizing the newly notified and improved varieties/technologies for varietal diversification and efficient management of millet resources. On 11th December, 2020 ‘Front Line demonstrations (FLD) on Pearl Millet’ was conducted in a tribal populated Umphrew village, Ri-Bhoi district where the team of scientists demonstrated the production technology of pearl millet. Total 20 farmers including farm women were present in the demonstration programme. The objective of the programme was to make familiar the farmers with the crop, sensitize them about nutritional benefits of millets and importance of including it in the food basket. Critical inputs like seeds and organic manures were also distributed to the farmers.

The FLDs on Pearl millet are approved component of National Food Security Mission (NFSM) coordinated by ICAR-AICRP on Pearl millet, Jodhpur and are conducted by Research Institutions with an objective to demonstrate improved Crop Production Technologies of Pearl Millet on the farmers’ fields.



Figures: Demonstration cum input distribution under ‘Frontline Demonstration on Pearl Millet’ in Umphrew village, Ri-Bhoi District, Meghalaya

The program was coordinated by Dr. Rajappa J.J., Scientist, NRM Division of ICAR Research Complex for NEH Region, Umiam who explained on role of millets in food and nutritional security of farmers. Dr. Amit Kumar, Sr. Scientist, Division of Crop Production advised the farmers to take-up the millet cultivation on fallow land and on uplands. Dr. Pampi Paul, Scientist, Division of Social Sciences imparted farmers with information on nutritional importance of the millets in their diets especially the women in the village. Dr. A. Ratan Kumar Singh, Scientist, Division of Plant Protection has given information on disease management of millets in general and pearl millet in particular. Ms. Nivedita Shettigar, Scientist, Division of Crop Production emphasized on package of practices for pearl millet including post-harvest management of pearl millet crop.