

Little Millet Saamalu



Local name (in Telugu)	: Saamalu
Common name (in English)	: Little Millet
Scientific name	: <i>Panicum sumatrense</i>
Description	: Small, shiny, and round grains.
Duration of the crop cycle	: Three months



Local Landraces

Chinna Saamalu:

- ✿ It has a shorter panicle and less foliage.
- ✿ It is blackish in color and is shiny.

Pedda Sammalu:

- ✿ It has a longer panicle and has more foliage.
- ✿ It is cementish in color



Chinna Saamalu

A. Growing conditions

Ideal time/season for sowing: Little millet is best sown during **Arudra karthi** and can be sown until Chinna Pushalu karthi.

Best temperature/ weather condition: It can withstand all kinds of weather conditions as long as the soil has enough moisture.

Ideal Soil type: This crop can grow in a wide variety of soils. But it gets better yield when grown in red soils in comparison to black soils as the soil is less sticky and more conducive for the small seeds.

Soil condition during sowing: The soil should not be too sticky/clayey or too dry. It is said to have the ideal amount of moisture for sowing when it has moisture at least up to 2 inches and has a powdery texture.



Pedda Saamalu



Sunlight requirements: It can bear all levels of sunlight but moderate amount of sunlight is optimal.

Humidity preferences: Being a kharif crop, humidity is not a key factor.

Water requirements: Continuous rainfall for at least 3 days is beneficial for good growth of the crop. In the case of red soils, heavy rainfalls don't affect the crop.

B. Characteristics

Soil interaction: Little millet extracts from the soil

Yield and productivity: The yield per acre can vary based on the variety. In one acre of red soil, it can yield 2-3 quintals in a mono-crop setting.

Health benefits: Little millet has various health benefits such as cooling the body, and weight loss. It is also rich in magnesium which improves heart health, and also in niacin which aids in cholesterol reduction.

Grain shelf-life: It can be stored for consumption up to 10 years when it is periodically sun-dried.

C. Preparation & Cultivation

Seed treatment before sowing: Little millet is sprinkled and mixed with cow urine as its smell helps repel the grasshoppers.

Stages of Cultivation:

- Within 7 days- germination starts
- Within 30 days- weeding done
- After 60 days- flowering starts
- After 90 days- the crop will be ready for harvest

Diseases and pests: Little millet attracts ants if the harvest is delayed.

D. Other Uses

Advantages of Multi-crop setup: Little millet thrives more when grown separately as it cannot tolerate shade. It is recommended to grow them in borders or in patches of land where soil is considered unsuitable for other crops.

Uses as Food: Little millet is commonly used as rice in summers as it helps in cooling the body. It is also used to prepare a variety of dishes including little millet rice, payasam, upma, and sweets like Chirottelu.

Utilisation of the Crop/Stalk: It is not used as fodder or for any other use apart from food for human consumption.



E. Seed saving and storage

Seed Selection: Traditionally, the winnowing process is used to separate the lighter and hollow seeds from the bulkier and healthier seeds, and to remove dust as well.

Storing method/technique: The seeds that are chosen from the grain can be stored in '*Simple Storage Method*' as Little Millet is naturally pest-resilient grain. The seeds can stay fresh and also germinate for as long as 3 years.

Ideal conditions: Dark, dry, and airtight conditions are ideal for storing any seeds.

Challenges: There are no challenges, if the seeds are dried properly before storing them as discussed in the above section.



Saama Kichidi

