



Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)

Finger Millet



Dr. A. Abirami

Programme Officer

C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre
Chennai

Botanical Name	:	<i>Eleusine coracana</i> (L.) Gaertn.
Tamil Name	:	Kezhvaragu; Keppai; Aariyam
Sanskrit Name	:	Madhulika
English Name	:	Finger Millet

Distribution and Habitat

Finger millet (*Eleusine coracana* (L.) Gaertn), is one of the millets characterized with highly variable small-seeded monocotyledon and belongs to *Poaceae* family. It is widely grown as a cereal in the arid areas of Africa and Asia.



Finger millet is originally native to the Ethiopian Highlands and was introduced into India approximately 4000 years ago. It is very adaptable to higher elevations and is grown in the Himalaya up to 2,300 m altitude. It is an annual herbaceous cereal crop, growing to a height of 30-150 cm and maturation starts in 75-160 days. Leaves dark green, linear, mainly smooth with some hair along the leaf edges narrow, grass-like, produce many tillers and nodal branches. The panicle consists of a group of digitally arranged spikes referred to as a finger. The inflorescence is a panicle with 4-19 finger-like spikes that takes after a clenched hand when developed, consequently the name finger millet.

Parts used: Seed as grains; Leaves as fodder

Phyto-chemical constituents

Carbohydrates, protein, essential amino acids, dietary fibre, minerals, tannins, steroids, alkaloids, terpenoids, cardiac glycosides, balsams, lignans, phyto-estrogens and phycocyanins, phenolic acids, flavonoids, and hydroxy-cinnamic acid.

Uses

Finger millet grains can be cooked whole or ground and used as flour. It is used in cakes, puddings, porridge preparation. These grains are often used to provide malt for making local beer and other alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverages.

Medicinal uses

Finger millet is a main source of food for many, especially in dry areas of India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The grain is higher in protein, fat and minerals than rice, corn, or sorghum. When consumed as food it provides a sustaining diet, especially for people doing hard work. Finger millet is rich in iron and used in diets to get recovery from anaemic condition and malnutrition



(Saleh et al. 2013). The juice of the plant leaf is given to the women in childbirth and the plant is reported to be diaphoretic, diuretic and Vermifuge. Finger millet is a remedy for leprosy and liver disease. It also works in curing measles, pneumonia and small pox. It is also known for several health benefits such as anti-diabetic, anti tumerogenic, atherosclerogenic effects, anti-oxidant and antimicrobial properties. Finger millet is gluten free and highly recommend or advisable for celiac patients. (Chandrasekara and Sahidi, 2010). The seed is astringent, tonic and cooling. It is used in the treatment of fever, biliousness and hepatitis. The phyto-chemicals present in finger millet slows down the digestion process resulting in blood sugar level control as well as improving antioxidant level in the body. The seed coat phenolic of finger millet acts as an inhibitor that helps to reduce the postprandial hyperglycemia through restricting the role of enzymes, such as amylase, alpha-glucosidase etc., essential in hydrolysis of complex carbohydrates (Singh, 2016). Amino acids present in finger millets helps to remove unnecessary fat from liver and decrease the cholesterol level and encumbers the fat formation (Lee et al. 2010).

Photo link: <https://www.afa.go.ke/updates/finger-millet-a-versatile-grain-worth-cultivating/>

Free Siddha Medical Camp

In this month Free Siddha Medical Camp was successfully conducted at Green Rameswaram project office from 25th to 28th March 2026. During the programme, 124 patients received benefits and treatment through this camp.

The inaugural ceremony began with the lighting of the traditional lamp by Vai. Nagalingaraja, Siddha Doctor, Green Rameswaram staff of Sis.Bhuvaneshwari, Sis.Janani, Sis.Rekha, Shri.Balaguru, Shri.Bharath Kumar and Sis.Sagunthala helped in organising the camp.



Doctors and Vaidyas checking the patients

Medical Services:

- Medical consultations and treatments were provided for four consecutive days.
- Many patients received special attention for complicated medical problems, for which customized Siddha medicines were prepared on the spot.
- Each patient received an average of ₹500 worth of Siddha choornams and oils, free of cost.
- Two masseurs and one masseuse provided therapeutic massage treatments to the patients, helping relieve pain and muscular issues.



Medicines preparation is on for free distribution

