Cultivation practices of pearl millet

Being a highly nutritous grain, millet production is low due to poor practices used which lead to low and poor quality and quantity of yield.

Millet is a rich source of nutrient which helps human body to fight against diseases. Its production involve practices such as land preparation, weeding, fertilizer and manure application harvesting and post harvest handling.

Millet agronomy

Land preparation should be carried out by ploughing and followed by 2 harrowings. On top of that, ridges and farrows are formed for irrigated type or form flat bed system for rain fed type and apply farm yard manure. FYM should be added at 8-10 tonnes/ha.

Similarly, sow 3kg/ha of seeds for good soil and 4.5kg/ha for poor soils at a spacing of 30 x 60cm basing on irrigation and fertility of the soil. In rain fed conditions, space seeds at 45 x 10-12cm using 6 line drill method leading to a plant population of 1.5-1.75 lakhs/ha.

Furthermore, innoculate the seeds with azobacter or azospirillum to increase grain yield. Apply fertilizer such as N 40-60 kg/ha, phosphorous pentoxide 20-30 kg/ha and potassium for rain fed crop where as for irrigated crops add N 100-120 kg/ha, phosphorous pentoxide 40-60 kg/ha and potassium. Apply half of N at planting and another half at 45 days from planting. Apply P and K only during rainy fed conditions irrigated conditions.

Irrigation is followed by broad bed farrows, deep ploughing and manure application for efficient water utilisation. Use

inter-cultivation, hand weeding and herbicide spray to control weeds.

Not only the above but also use proper cropping system such as sequential, mixed and inter cropping systems. Harvest millet by cutting the whole plant base or ear when the moisture content is 20% after 85-95 days and dry for 2-3 days to reduce moisture up to 12% and then thresh and store.

Major diseases are ergot and downy mildew which is controlled by treating seeds, deep ploughing, avoiding mono cropping, spraying etc.

Finally, millet varieties include CZP-ic923, pusa comp 383, WCC75, HC10, HC20 and pusa comp 334.