

International Year of Millets 2023 and ICAR@100 Celebrated in the Bajra Heartland

International Year of Millets was celebrated through a Scientist-Farmers' Interface Meeting at Utambar village (Balesar tehsil, Jodhpur district) on 16 May 2023 under SCSP in which 52 farmers and farm women participated. Dr. B.L. Manjunatha delivered a lecture on the importance of millets cultivated in arid and semi-arid regions of the country in the context of climate change and shift in food habits. He added that millets were not only climate-smart crops but integral part of our culture and tradition. He narrated to the farmers that his family in semi-arid Ballari district of Karnataka cultivated three millets each year and his childhood days consisted of sorghum/ bajra rotis in breakfast and foxtail millet rice in lunch and dinner. However, the consumption of these millets was gradually replaced by paddy rice since last 20 years. In response, farmers shared that bajra is an integral part of their diet and is consumed in different forms even today. He called upon the farmers not to discontinue the tradition of bajra consumption in the name of development and urbanization.

Dr. B.L. Manjunatha also highlighted the significant contribution of CAZRI and ICAR in the development of agriculture in general and millets (bajra) in particular. He added that ICAR would complete 100 golden years of its service to the nation in 2028. After the programme, the farmers were distributed with fertilizers for use in upcoming kharif season field demonstrations.

