

Sattvik : A Celebration of Traditional Foods

The year 2023 being the International Year of Millets, the Sattvik Traditional Food and Nutrition Festival, 23rd - 26th December, 2022, featured several home-cooks and farmers championing millets, and other nutritious food. Over 500 farmers and others participated as sellers, and around 25,000 visitors came to encourage them.

Dr. Pandya, VC Gujarat University, commended all participants for promoting health and learning, and lauded SRISTI and HBN for preserving heritage foods for two decades through the festival. He spoke of future collaboration - perhaps, the University could help in testing the nutritive value of food grown in the region's nutrient-rich soil, and make the public aware of the results.



Prof. Gupta added that the health of the soil contributes to nutrient diversity and richness in food. The soil health is crucial for our health, the ecosystem, and thereby

for a productive and creative society. Millets grow well in semi-arid soils, and he suggested that the government could procure dryland harvest as part of its food security programs. Apart from benefiting farmers in drought-prone and rainfed regions, it would also diversify the food grain options available at ration and other shops.

Food Stalls

The festival provided 74 micro-entrepreneurs and home cooks a platform to sell a wide range of hearty traditional nutritious foods. They represented diverse tastes from different corners of the country, including Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Nagaland, Sikkim, Mizoram, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand.

GIAN has specially invited communities from three Himalayan regions.

Communities supported by GIAN in a DBT supported project on bio-enterprises not only offered food made of millet and other ingredients but also acquired valuable skills. The women groups from Baramulla, West Sikkim and Kiphire Nagaland learned to deal with urban consumers. Most of them had never gone out of their district, much less out of state.

Future and Past: Millets

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Stall-owners were requested to use millets as an ingredient in at least three dishes. About 300-plus offerings were millet-based, including ragi, kang (*Setalica italia* (L.)), kuri (*Panicum sumatrense* (L.)), samo (*Echinochloa frumentacea* (L.)), bunti (*Panicum miliaceum* (L.)), besides amaranth, bajra, maize and jowar. Millet grains were exhibited, with posters describing their uses.

Almost one-third of the stalls belonged to farmer organizations and women's SHGs. They displayed their recipes, and interacted with attendees who were curious about ways to improve their health. Students from the Department of Food and Nutrition at Gujarat University volunteered to speak with visitors to spread awareness.

In addition, Sanjay Bhavsar and Tula Patel of the Vishwagram Sanstha, and 15 teacher volunteers helped conduct games and fun activities for children to stimulate their creativity. They engaged more than 2,000 children in weaving, carpentry, sweeping, walking, painting, quizzes, folk songs, paper crafts, etc.

Diverse Tastes

Rather than use run-of-the-mill ingredients like wheat flour, cheese and paneer, stalls served dishes made

with cactus, hibiscus and aloe vera. They completely avoided using soda, artificial colors or preservatives. One of the goals of the festival is to feature

dishes that are out of the ordinary, so customers can have a unique culinary experience which they would not get at a restaurant.

Sattvika Rasodhamantri - A Select Menu

Beverages

Solkadhi (kokum) | Coconut crush | Red okra sherbat | Kahwa | Masala camel and goat milk | Jasud and aparajita (hibiscus and blue pea) flower tea | Fenugreek tea

Snacks and Appetizers

Ragi soup | Karela soup | Ragini raab (sweet soup) | Artichoke Soup Magpalak (moong-spinach) soup Millets bhajipatra (fries) | Jowar pank (roasted seeds) | Morada muthia (seepweed (*Suaeda maritima* (L.) Dumort) cutlet) | Stuffed bajra rotala | Tikki | Anarsa (rice biscuit) | Thalipeeth | Parsi dal puri | Ragi methi dhokla | Moong chilla (thin pancake) Palak frankie | Kodo millet paratha | Urad dhebras | Fang muthia (banana leaf cutlet) | Kothimba kachari | Math pudla (math bean pancake)

Mains and Meals

Dangi thali | Marathi thali | Potli dhokali | Millets khichdi | Maize thuli (porridge) | Kuarpathu (aloe vera) flower sabzi | Green turmeric sabzi Ker sangri | Litti-chokha | Rajwadi tandoori khichdo | Mustard greens Sherakand shaak (root vegetable sabzi) | Quinoa millet salad | Kutchhi undhiyu (mixed vegetables)



Desserts

Mahua laddoo | Mahua lapsi (pudding) Findlani (prickly pear cactus) kheer | Fresh hot mohanthal | Ragi truffles Country pumpkin pudding | Ragi gulab jamun | Green gram halwa | Saffron-spinach jalebi | Adadiya





Khedut Haat: Chemical-free Agri-products

Around 85 organic farmers sold their chemical-free products. A thorough inspection of each farmer's field was conducted by students from the Department of Journalism at Gujarat University. They noted the cropping system including border crops, organic practices, presence of fauna and weeds, run-off from neighboring fields, and groundwater pollution levels. They also spoke with agricultural workers tending the fields and neighboring farmers to ascertain whether the field could be certified "chemical-free".

The farmers sold staples such as spices, grains, jaggery, honey, and cold-pressed oils of coconut, sesame, and groundnut. There were over 30 varieties of farm-fresh vegetables and fruits. Customers flocked to buy farmers' value-added products. Tribal farmers from Dang district brought their much-demanded ragi papad. Turmeric chocolate and candies, various sherbets, and powders of beet, hibiscus and amla were also crowd-pleasers. Hamirbhai from Bhavnagar, Saurashtra, offered *krishnaphal* (passionfruit), rarely grown in Gujarat, among a range of juices. There were 34 stalls selling specialized Ayurvedic products.

Sattvik festival connects *sattvik* food suppliers with conscious consumers, promotes a fair and transparent supply chain, and has helped launch new

entrepreneurs. Through sheer hard work, and with the strong support of the community, 85 farmers made sales worth over Rs. 2.5 crores during the four-day festival.

For further information on the Sattvik Food Festival, and to stay updated on its upcoming dates please visit <https://www.sristi.org/sattvik/>.



Recipe Competition

Sixty-five women participants shared the recipes of 150 dishes in total which they had prepared for the occasion. The dishes were evaluated by Mr. Anil Moolchandani, the founder of Food Entrepreneur Association, Richa Soni of the Department of Food Science and Nutrition, and Nidhi Gondalia of the Department of Life Sciences.

Winners of the

Traditional Recipe Competition

The dishes were judged on the basis of nutritional value and variety. The top three were:

1st Prize: Santokaben Vyas who made Badam-e-Bahar (raw badam sinjaro) and rice rotla.

2nd Prize: Tarulattabhan Panchal who had prepared Harira (green turmeric raab), sour rye flower soup, wheat milk papdi, champak flower bhaji, turnip pickle, and gubich (jaggery candy)

3rd Prize: Jigishabehan Modi with her dishes ber sherbat, and linseed chikki

