

## **Pearl millet sowing will boost income of dryland farmers**

Pearl millet is one of major food, feed and fodder crop. It is drought resistant crop among cereals. India is the largest producer of pearl millet. It is used as food and also as poultry and cattle feed. It is used as important component in preparation of nutrient health mix.

According to Second Advance Estimate, Ministry of Agriculture production of pearl millet in 2014-15 is estimated at 7.91 million tonnes which is 17 per cent lesser than the previous year.

In Tamil Nadu, during 2013-14, it was grown in an area of 54,412 hectares and produced 1.17 lakh tonnes with a productivity of 2.15 tonnes per hectare. Villupuram district has the highest production followed by Thoothukudi, Madurai, Theni, Thiruvannamalai, Virudhunagar and Dindigul districts. Currently the price of pearl millet in Villipuram market is Rs.1550 per quintal. Trade sources revealed that there was a shift in area towards maize crop in the current year.

Back office of Agro Marketing Intelligence and Business Promotion Centre (AMI &BPC), Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development Studies (CARDS) in Tamil Nadu Agricultural University analyzed the last 15 years prices of pearl millet that prevailed in the Villupuram regulated market. The analysis revealed that the farm gate price of pearl millet during February-March 2016, would revolve around Rs. 1500-1600 per quintal. Whole grain, greenish and clean pearl millet fetches good price. Based on the above price farmers are advised to take up sowing decision of pearl millet.

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