



North American Millets Alliance

Introductory/Information Meeting & Discussion

21 October 2022

About NAMA

- Who: Joni Kindwall-Moore (RN), Jonathon Landeck (PhD), Don Osborn (PhD)
- What: Initiative to promote millets in US & neighboring countries
- Genesis: Idea to take advantage of International Year of Millets 2023
- Organization: Flat; as yet, not funded not incorporated, & no host organization
- Approach: Networking, developing plans, ideas, & proposals
- Internet & social media: Developing new website; email list; LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter presence; internal communications media



What are millets?

And what is their status in North America?

Many millets = challenge for messaging?

- There are on the order of 20 cultivated species we call millets
- These include sorghum & teff, which some may not count as millets
- 5 of these are the most produced & traded worldwide – sorghum, pearl millet, foxtail millet, proso millet, & finger millet
- A few are grown mostly locally & little known in other regions
- In US, only 3 are grown for food (as grain) – sorghum, proso, & teff
- Those plus several others are grown to feed animals, or as cover crops
- “Millets” is not a botanical category, crossing sub-families & tribes

Common name	Species	Tribe	Sub-family	Family
Sorghum	<i>Sorghum bicolor</i>	Andropogoneae	Panicoideae	Poaceae
Job's tears / adlay millet	<i>Coix lacryma-jobi</i>	Andropogoneae	Panicoideae	Poaceae
Taiwan oil millet	<i>Spodiopogon formosanus</i>	Andropogoneae	Panicoideae	Poaceae
Pearl millet	<i>Pennisetum glaucum</i>	Paniceae	Panicoideae	Poaceae
Foxtail millet	<i>Setaria italica</i>	Paniceae	Panicoideae	Poaceae
Proso millet	<i>Panicum miliaceum</i>	Paniceae	Panicoideae	Poaceae
Little millet	<i>Panicum sumatrense</i>	Paniceae	Panicoideae	Poaceae
Indian barnyard millet	<i>Echinochloa frumentacea</i>	Paniceae	Panicoideae	Poaceae
Japanese barnyard millet	<i>Echinochloa esculenta</i>	Paniceae	Panicoideae	Poaceae
Browntop millet	<i>Brachiaria ramosa</i>	Paniceae	Panicoideae	Poaceae
Guinea millet	<i>Brachiaria deflexa</i>	Paniceae	Panicoideae	Poaceae
White fonio	<i>Digitaria exilis</i>	Paniceae	Panicoideae	Poaceae
Black fonio	<i>Digitaria iburua</i>	Paniceae	Panicoideae	Poaceae
Raishan	<i>Digitaria compacta</i>	Paniceae	Panicoideae	Poaceae
Kodo millet	<i>Paspalum scrobiculatum</i>	Paspaleae	Panicoideae	Poaceae
Finger millet / ragi	<i>Eleusine coracana</i>	Cynodonteae	Chloridoideae	Poaceae
Teff	<i>Eragrostis tef</i>	Eragrostideae	Chloridoideae	Poaceae

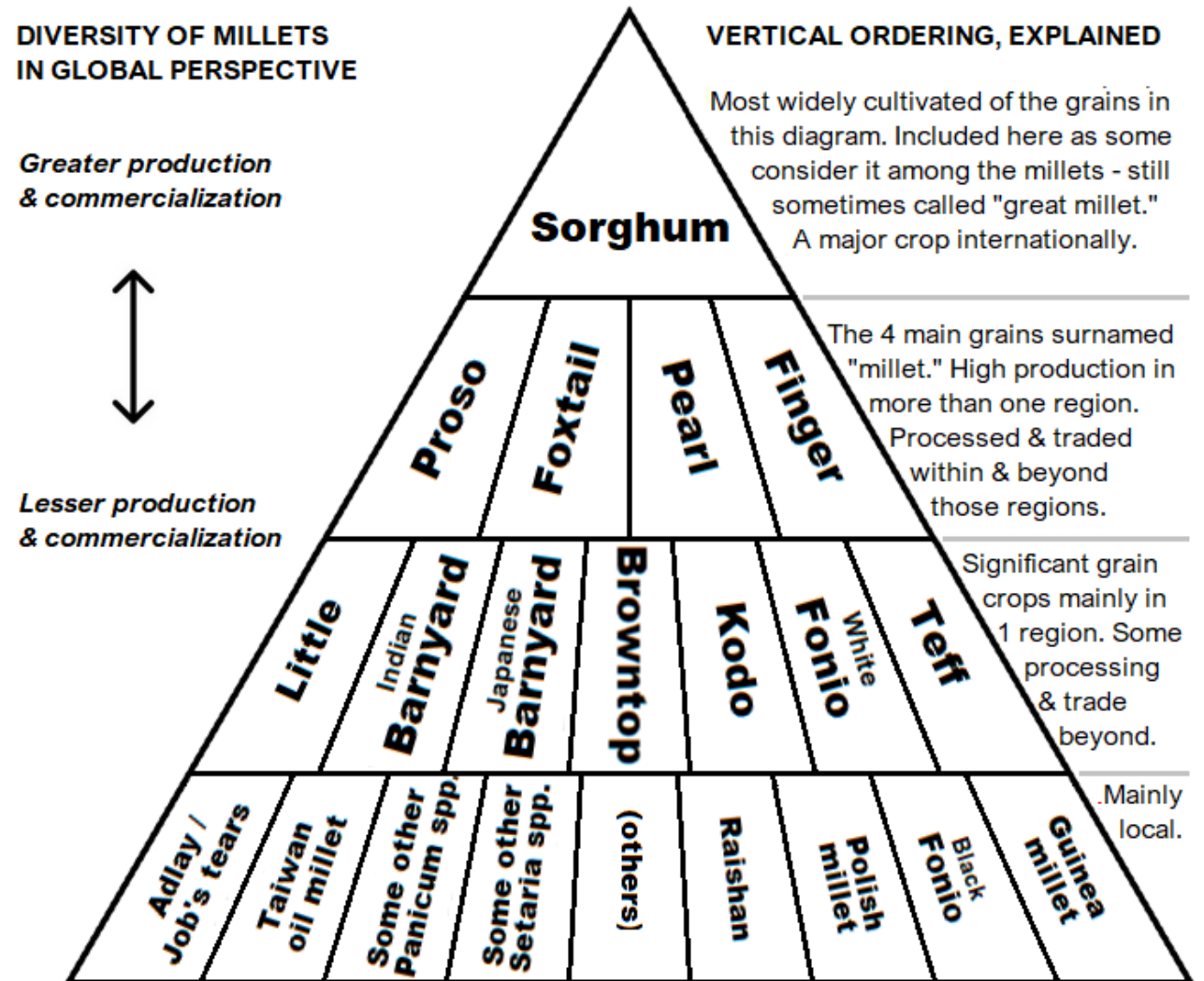
“Millets triangle”

A simpler way of conveying information about millets.

Organized with more produced higher, & lesser lower. Asian in origin towards left; African towards right.

Related species generally in adjacent cells.

Can be used with color-coding to illustrate uses.



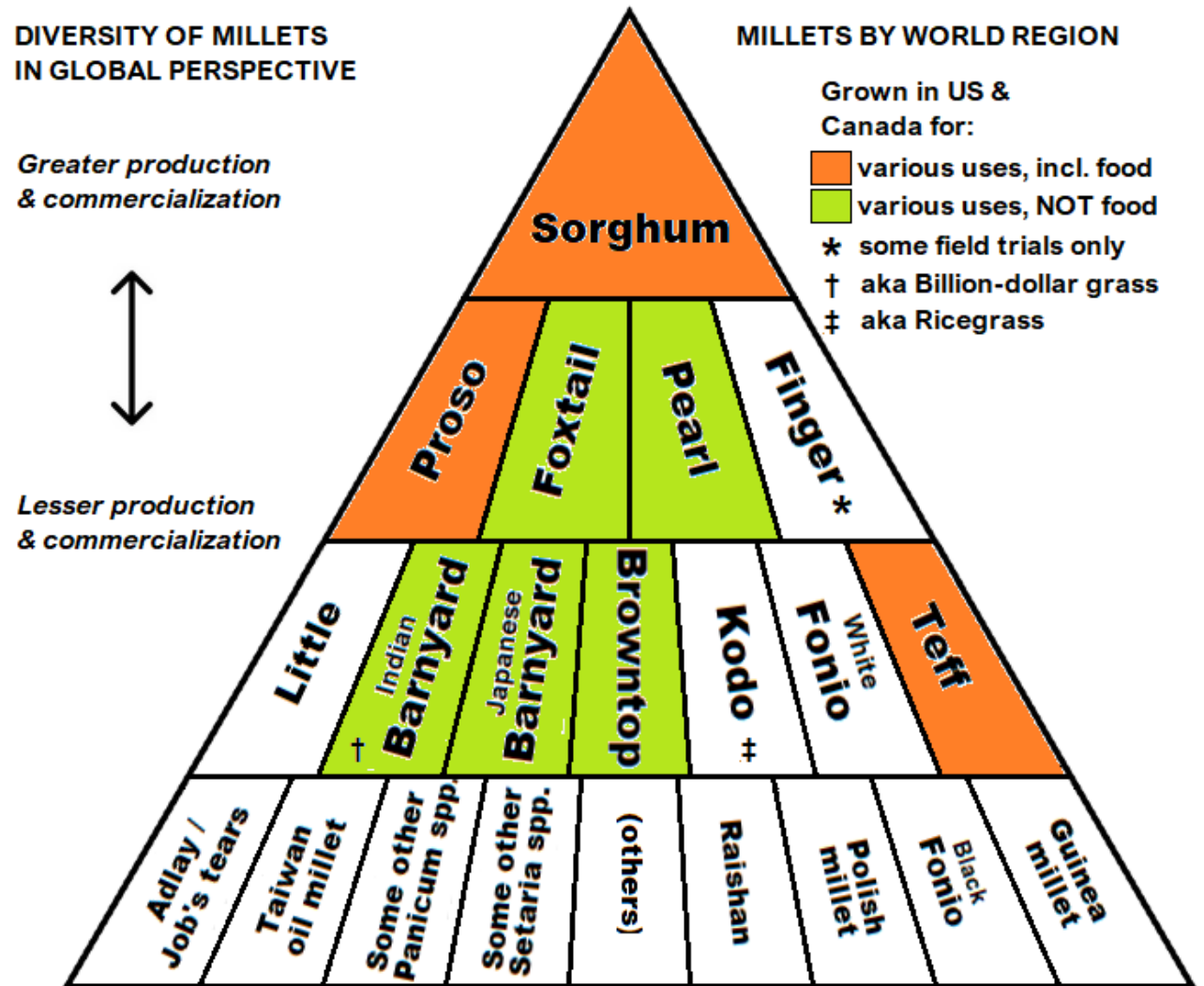
Millets in the US & Canada

Example of use of triangle (which also helps situate our discussions today)

All colored cells indicate being grown for some or all of a range of uses on farms (forage, feed) & wildlife.

Orange indicates also being grown for food-grade grains (for human food)

This is a work in progress.





What is NAMA hoping to do?

Quick overview of project concepts & ideas

Current ideas & proposals

- Proposals

- Millet-of-the-month during 2023 (concept & proposal)
- Webinars on millets & related topics (proposal)
- Virtual conference (proposal)

- Ideas

- US land grant schools & IYM
- Press package
- Millets “triangle”
- Schools (packages for teachers at selected grade levels)
- “Millets box” sampler idea (commercial item)
- Food museums & chefs

Millet-of-the-month (calendar & proposal)

Assign one millet (or 2 closely related millets) to each month

Facilitates “spotlighting” that millet out of the group of many

Framework could be adopted or adapted in any world region

Our accompanying proposal would be for 12 short video productions on each m-o-t-m

Tentative list on right...

1. Jan., proso millet, *Panicum miliaceum*
2. Feb., finger millet, *Eleusine coracana*
3. Mar., foxtail millet, *Setaria italica*
4. Apr., pearl millet, *Pennisetum glaucum*
5. May, sorghum, *Sorghum bicolor*
6. June, fonio, *Digitaria spp.*
7. July, barnyard millet, *Echinochloa spp.*
8. Aug., little millet, *Panicum sumatrense*
9. Sep., browntop & Guinea, *Brachiaria spp.*
10. Oct., kodo millet, *Paspalum scrobiculatum*
11. Nov., teff, *Eragrostis tef*
12. Dec., adlay/Job’s Tears, *Coix lacryma-jobi*

Webinar series (proposal; not final list)

1. Intro & tour of the millets
2. Really Ancient Grains: Millets from the dawn of agriculture
3. Modern history of millets: Trends in ag & food preferences
4. Are millets the ideal crops for Anthropocene conditions?
5. Processing millets: From the field to the kitchen
6. Tasty grains: What millets bring to the table (part 1)
7. Tasty grains: What millets bring to the table (part 2)
8. Millets as nutrition powerhouses
9. On & off the shelf: Millet products in markets today
10. Drink up! Millets beverages, alcoholic & non-alcoholic
11. Not just for the birds: Millets & animal farming
12. Brooms, biofuel, & pillow-fill: Millets' other uses

Virtual conference (proposal)

- Rolling event over several months on millets & related topics
- Educational & public information focus
- Virtual format is relatively egalitarian in access & low carbon footprint
- Will use an existing virtual conference software
- Accommodates various session formats
- Application/recruitment of presenters/panels; will have own “rooms”
- Recordings of live sessions to remain accessible
- Coordination with other planned IYM conferences/sessions to assure non-duplication & complementarity

Other project concepts

- Information clearinghouse on millets in North America for growers, producers, & consumers
- Showcasing millets at land-grant universities (field & food service)
- Teacher packets for classes on selected school levels (in K-12)
- Millet sampler boxes (for sale items)
- Developing exhibits or programs with food museums & chefs, to explore culinary traditions & possibilities of millets
- Press packets for IYM in North America (language & country specific)



Thank you!

