



# Millet-Based Food and Beverage Industry in the United States

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- Are you interested in knowing the current status of the U.S. millet industry (production and market of millet-based products)?
- Do you want to know what millet foods are available in the U.S.?

This NebGuide provides an overview of the millet-based food and beverage industry in the U.S. (excluding sorghum), compared to the world’s leading millet producer and exporter – India. Learning about the different products available in the market can boost producer and consumer awareness of this climate-resilient cereal grain and encourage new startup companies to launch businesses centered on millet-based products in the U.S.

## Status of the Global Millet Market

The United Nations designated 2023 as the “International Year of Millets,” which has led to a global expansion of the millet market. Currently, the worldwide millet market is valued at approximately \$12.60 billion and is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.95% by 2030, reaching around \$16.04 billion. India is the world’s leading millet producer, accounting for 20% of the total global production. In Africa, countries such as Niger, Sudan, Nigeria, Mali, and Burkina Faso collectively dominate global millet consumption (mainly pearl millet and finger millet), where it is a traditional staple crop.

## Millet Production in the United States

While most major millet-producing countries, such as India, grow various millets (e.g. pearl millet, finger millet, barnyard millet, foxtail millet, proso millet, and kodo millet), the U.S. commercially produces only proso millet (commonly known as millet) as a commodity grain. In the U.S., millet production varies significantly from year to year and is influenced by market prices, according to USDA-NASS data. The national acreage, production, and yield for 2024, along with trends from 2015 to 2024, are summarized in Table 1.

### Millets...

- are a diverse group of small-grain dryland cereals.
- are called “super grains” owing to their numerous health, economic, and environmental benefits.
- thrive in harsher climatic conditions (characterized by high temperatures, low rainfall, poor soil, etc.).
- are nutritionally superior comparable to other grains like rice, wheat, and corn.
- help combat both climate change as well as food and nutrition insecurity.

Table 1: Trends observed in acreage, production, and yield of proso millet in the U.S. (2015–24).

Parameter	Unit	2024	Average from 2015–2024	Range over 2015–2024
Area Planted	'000 acres	481	544	433–725
Area Harvested	'000 acres	427	478	390–663
Production	'000 bushels	14061	13841	9158–20430
Market Price	\$/bushel	3.61	5.65	2.87–11.20
Yield	bushel/acre	33	29	19–37
Market Value	\$ million	50.76	78.20	36.04–172.28

About 90 percent of the total proso millet produced in the country is grown in the Great Plains states of Colorado, Nebraska, and South Dakota. Figure 1 summarizes the state-by-state contribution of these three states to total production from 1999 to 2024. Overall production in 2002 and 2012 was notably low due to severe drought conditions in the High Plains region.

- Growing millet is beneficial to the farmers as it can be grown in adverse climatic conditions because of its high water-use efficiency (i.e. low water requirement),
- short -growing season, and low input cost.
- Farmers often grow millet after a failed season of winter wheat and remain profitable in the US High Plains, aiding to its potential increase in popularity among the farming community.

Fig. 1: State-wise contribution toward total millet production ('000 bushels) in the U.S. (1999–2024).

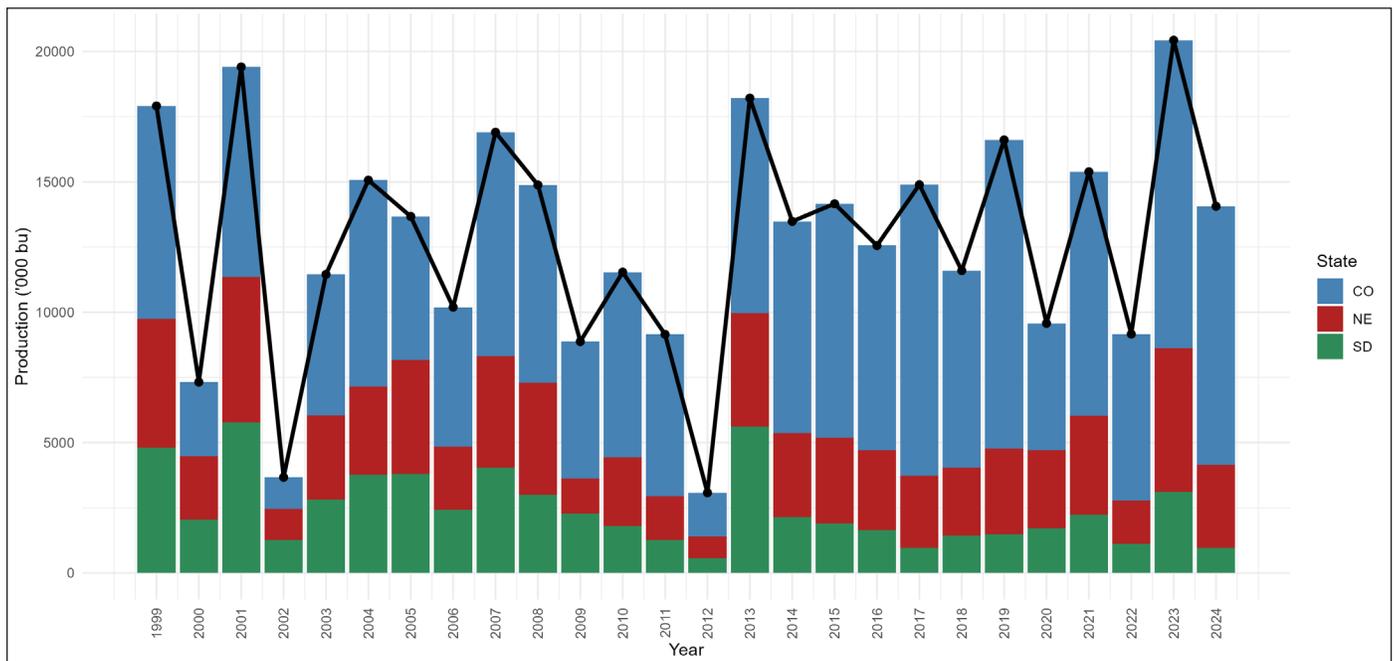


Table 2: Nutritional composition of proso millet vs. common cereals per 100g uncooked grain.

Nutrient	White Rice	Wheat	Corn	Quinoa	Proso Millet
Calories	365	329	365	368	378
Fat (g)	1	2	4	6	4
Carbohydrates (g)	80	72	77	64	73
Dietary Fiber (g)	1	11	7	7	9
Protein (g)	7	13	8	14	11
Calcium (mg)	28	25	6	47	8
Iron (mg)	4	4	3.5	5	3
Potassium (mg)	115	340	287	563	195

### Nutritional Value of Proso Millet

Proso millet is naturally gluten-free and high in fiber, aiding digestive health, especially for people with gluten sensitivities. It also has a low glycemic index (52.7) and can help prevent blood sugar spikes, improving insulin sensitivity in diabetic patients. Owing to these qualities, proso millet is regarded as a niche grain for health-conscious consumers. Table 2 summarizes the nutritional information of this crop compared to other common grains.

### Millet-based Food and Beverage Companies in the U.S.

The value of the U.S. millet market was approximately \$51 million in 2024. The market demand for millet in the United States is primarily driven by its use in commercial and homemade bird feed formulations. Diversification of millet-based products for human consumption has recently been observed in the U.S., primarily as a healthy snack alternative. Expansion of value-added products using millet is on the rise, with common items including ready-to-eat snacks (such as crackers, puffs, and bars), flour mixes, cereals, and pasta. This section highlights some millet-based food and beverage products and companies in the U.S. market. The products shown (Figure 2) are available at mainstream grocery stores, health food stores, and online.

- Snacktivist Foods** (snacktivistfoods.com) is a women-led company focused on creating a variety of allergy-friendly baking mixes (~ \$9.99 per 16 oz bag) made with environmentally sustainable ingredients, sourced from farmers practicing regenerative agriculture. The company aims to significantly change human nutrition by turning staple foods into more than just empty calories. Their products are available for purchase through their website, Walmart, and Amazon, and are certified as non-GMO, gluten-free, and vegan.
- Golden Prairie Millet** (<https://goldenprairie.com>) is a certified organic proso millet provider based in Nunn, Colorado. This family-owned farm, operated by the Hediger family, offers 100% organic and gluten-free certified hulled millet, available in different bag sizes at select stores across the county, as listed on their website.
- Ardent Mills** (<https://www.ardentmills.com/products/alternative-grains/gluten-free-ancient-grains/millet/>) and **Bob's Red Mill** (bobsredmill.com) are two popular grain brands in the U.S., both of which also sell hulled millet grain and flour in various packaging sizes across different retailers in the country.
- Schär** (schaer.com) is an Italian company that sells a variety of gluten-free breads, crackers, buns, and more. One of the main ingredients used in their products is millet, and their items are available for purchase online or at various local retailers across the U.S.
- Choputa Eats** (choputa eats.com) is a new company founded by Uche Jumbo in Chicago. The company focuses on using fonio to produce an instant breakfast cereal available in three flavors: maple, apple cinnamon, and mixed berry. Fonio is a small millet cultivated and sourced in Africa. The nutritious breakfast option is available for purchase through their website (\$14.99 for a 4-pack).
- Rainfed Foods** (rainfedfoods.com), based in Toronto, Canada, is a startup specializing in alternative milk made from millet, pea protein, and avocado oil. This alternative milk can be enjoyed straight or used for baking and cooking various dishes. Per serving, it provides 8g of complete protein and the same amount of calcium as cow's milk. Because it is made primarily from millet, it is free from a variety of allergens (wheat, gluten, dairy, soy, nuts, carrageenan).

- **Grouse Malt House** (<https://grousemalthouse.com/>) was founded by Twila Soles in 2013 in Wellington, Colorado. Grouse Malt House produces a variety of specialty millet malt, which beer companies then purchase to make gluten-free beer.
- **Holidaily Brewing Company** (<https://holidailybrewing.com/>) was founded by Karen Hertz in Golden, Colorado. The company specializes in producing 100% gluten-free beer made with millet as a key ingredient. The beer is available for purchase through pick-up at their taproom and in various stores across California, Texas, Arizona, Wyoming, and Kansas, in addition to Colorado.
- **Koval Distillery** ([koyal-distillery.com](http://koyal-distillery.com)) was established by Dr. Robert Birnecker and Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart in Chicago in 2008. They are the first distillery in the U.S. to use millet in their whiskeys, a feature that has been highlighted in Forbes and The Wall Street Journal. Their 100% millet whiskey received a silver medal at the 2015 Spirits Prestige International (SIP) Awards. They also produce bourbon with a blend of 51% corn and 49% millet, which earned a gold medal at the Women's Wine & Spirit Awards 2020 and the International Whisky Competition 2014. Additionally, it was honored as the best whiskey from the U.S.A. at the Falstaff Whisky Trophy 2019. Their website offers details on where to buy their products.



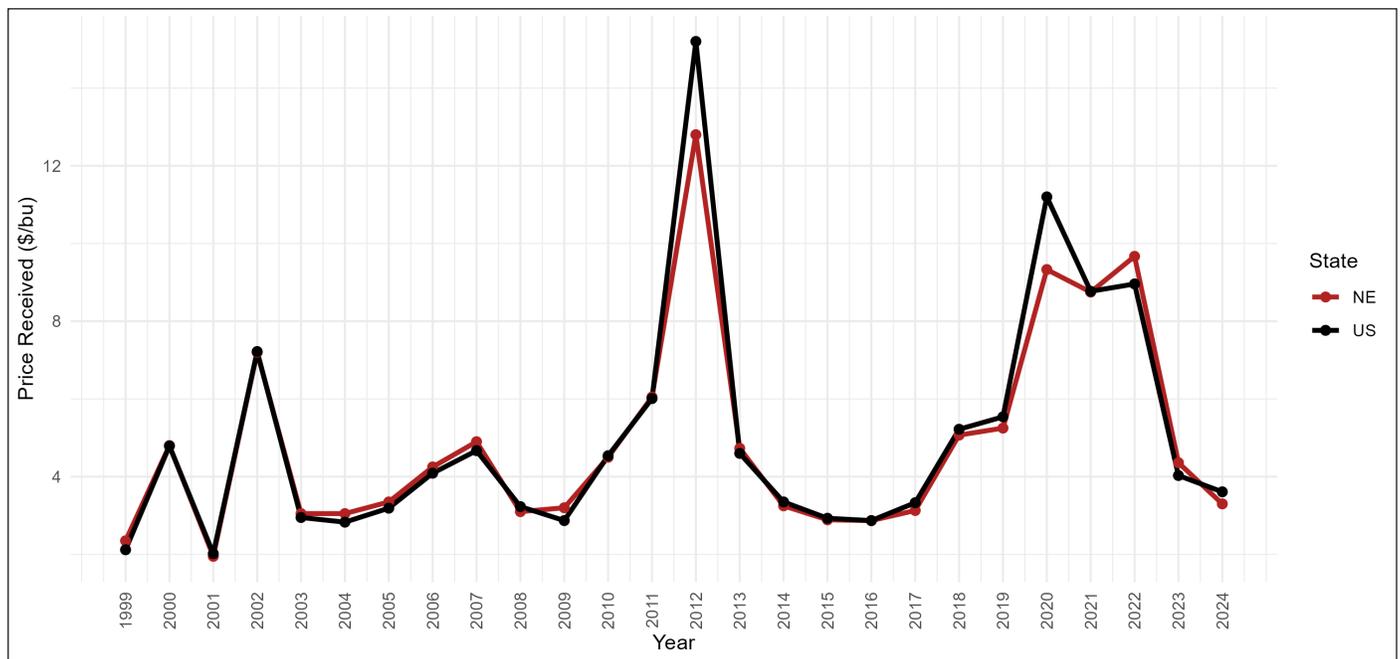
Fig 2: Some of the millet-based food and beverage products from the brands/companies mentioned in this article.

### Millet Industry's Potential in the U.S.

With the market for millet-based human foods slowly starting to diversify in terms of product range, the future looks promising. However, the expansion of the millet market comes with certain limitations. Farmers growing millet face significant price fluctuations in the market, as shown in Figure 3.

The absence of organized spot markets, price benchmarks, and futures trading hampers the development of a stable supply chain. Additionally, there are no significant government policies or crop insurance schemes for millet production in the U.S. Increasing consumer awareness of millet, establishing adequate processing facilities, promoting R&D for new millet products, and policies such as

Fig 3: Trend for market price received for millet in Nebraska compared to the U.S. average (1999–2024).



guaranteed minimum support prices and subsidized crop insurance will address current bottlenecks and help grow the millet market in the U.S.

### **Concluding Remarks**

There are exciting opportunities in the U.S. millet industry for both consumers and producers as the millet-based food and beverage sector aims to transition from a niche market to a mainstream presence in the United

States. From porridges and snack bars to pasta, baked goods, and beverages, companies continue to find innovative ways to bring “the healthy forgotten ancient grain” back into modern diets. Growing public interest in plant-based diets, functional foods, and sustainable farming has created a strong foundation for millet to succeed.



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