

Researchers from Central University of Odisha identified some Stress resistant local Finger millet (Ragi)

Koraput, (KCN): cultivated by the tribal farmers of Koraput district that showed superior drought tolerance capacity. These stress resistant Ragi might be reliable food security crops for tribal people of the locality during climate change.

The research was conducted by Dr Debabrata Panda, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biodiversity and Conservation of Natural Resources at the Central University of Odisha on climate resilience traits of local finger millet from Koraput with the help of scientists from Swaminathan foundation, Jeypore. Dr. Kartik Charan Lenka.

The Researchers identified six local finger millet variety: Ladu, Lala, Bati, Biri, Tumuka and Bhalu having superior drought tolerance



capacity compared to the improved variety Bhairabi, Chillika, Arjuna (developed by O U A T , Bhubaneswar) and GPU 28 (developed from GKVK, Bangalore, Karnataka). These variety require less water and maintain better photosynthesis and growth under water deficit condition. Genetic analysis and DNA profiling these genotypes confirmed the presence of one or

more tolerant gene to drought and that can be used for breeding program for the development of new varieties.

Recently, their findings of Research published in the Journal of Plant Physiology Report, an International Reputed Peer reviewed Springer Link Journal on 11 August 2023.

Dr. Panda said Now-a-days due to modern agricultural practices

and green revolution these traditional Ragi varieties are being gradually depleted. It is high time that we take necessary steps to conserve these valuable landraces of Ragi in their natural habitat. These superior native ragi varieties should be popularised for climate resilience breeding programs for the development of new varieties to address food security said by Dr. Panda.