PLANT FACT SHEET

Panicum sumatrense Roth. ex Roem & Schult.

GENUS *Panicum* **FAMILY** Poaceae

COMMON NAMES Little millet, Blue panic, Indian millet

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Cereal, Seeds - drink

The grain is cooked and eaten like rice. It can be ground into flour for bread.

DESCRIPTION

A millet grass. It can be erect or lie over. It is a grass which grows each year from seed. It can be 2 m tall. Plants which lie over can form roots at the nodes. The stem is strongly branched. There can be 46 erect flowering branches. Erect plants only produce 26 flowering shoots. The leaf blade is narrow and 56 cm long by 21 mm wide. The flowering heads can be open or compact. They are 50 cm long. They can have 14-52 branches. The spikelet is sword shaped and 2.5 mm long. The seed is shiny white to almost black.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It can tolerate drought. It can produce in poor soil. It is cultivated between 300-1000 m altitude. The annual average rainfall is 950-1200 mm. It grows in semi-arid areas. In Nepal it grows between 600-1,500 m above sea level. It suits the seasonally dry tropics.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It is often grown in mixed plantings with foxtail millet, sorghum or pearl millet.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants can take 2.5-5 months to mature. Plants are harvested withy sickles then threshed and the grains removed by pounding. A yield of 200-600 kg/ha is average. In Rajasthan in India the seed are available August to November.

NOTES

There are about 500 Panicum species.

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