

## Preliminary studies on minor cereals grown in Sri Lanka

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Proximate analysis of popular varieties of minor cereals grown in Sri Lanka ie Kurakkan (*Eleusine coracana*), Meneri (*Panicum missiaceum*), Sorghum (*Sorghum vulgare*) and Thanahal (*Setaria italica*) were carried out. These varieties of cereals i.e. Kurakkan (Ravi and Rawana), Meneri (AC 254), Sorghum (ICSV 94002) and Thanahal (935) were obtained from the Field Crop Research Development Institute at Mahaillupallama.

Moisture content of the cereals ranged from 7.1-11.5% and carbohydrate content ranged from 71.0 – 80.5%. Low content of fat (1.5 – 1.9%) was found in kurakkan and meneri while relatively a higher fat content (2.8 - 4.6%) was seen for sorghum and thanahal. Crude protein content of these varieties was between 6.9-12.6% and crude fiber content were between 0.5-3.6 %.Energy values were in the range of 426 - 454 kcal/100 g. Both varieties of kurakkan showed very high levels of calcium 203.0 mg/100 g and 203.5 mg/100 g. Phosphorous content varied between 100-300 mg/100 g. Percentage iron contents in the minor cereals are 2.9 - 5.6 mg/100 g.

The following food products were developed using the above minor cereals; A malted drink using kurakkan,sugar,milk powder and green gram, instant porridge with meneri and thanahal using green gram, rice, spices and salt and a breakfast cereal using sorghum, green gram ,sugar, milk and dehydrated fruits. Their sensory attributes were evaluated using a nine point hedonic scale. The mouth feel of Kurakkan malted drink was judged to be coarse and there is a tendency for separation of two phases. Porridges made out Meneri and Thanahal were judged to be satisfactory. The breakfast cereal made out of Sorghum was also acceptable.

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