BioThink E – Magazine, Vol. -3, Issue -1, January 2026
ISSN No. – 3048- 7943
www.biothink.in

Analyzing the Financial Performance and Resilience of Millet Farmers in Uttarakhand: A Statistical Evaluation of Government Subsidy Impact

Parul Singh✉,

Department of Commerce and Business Management, Pal College of Technology and Management, Haldwani, India

✉ parul16vishen@gmail.com

Millets (nutri-cereals or "Shree Anna") are coarse grains—such as finger millet (mandua), barnyard millet (jhangora), sorghum (jowar), and pearl millet (bajra)—valued for nutrition and climate resilience. In India, millets were officially declared "nutri-cereals" in April 2018, and have since been promoted under the National Food Security Mission's Nutri-Cereals sub-mission. Uttarakhand's mountain farms have a deep history with millets—mandua and local ragi are staples here. Farmers mostly grow these crops on rainfed land, and a lot of them stick to organic methods. For a long time, though, millet fields didn't really expand. Government policies pushed rice and wheat, and honestly, growing millets just didn't pay enough. But things are picking up now. Both the national and state governments kicked off millet campaigns. They've raised minimum support prices, started buying more millets directly from farmers, and added them to public food programs like the PDS and ICDS. Across India, millets made up about 9–10% of the country's foodgrain area by 2022–24, with total production landing somewhere between 17 and 18 million tonnes

NITI Aayog and ICAR note that millets productivity had declined earlier due to disincentives (e.g. poor price support). The Indian government really stepped up its push for millets in recent years. The NFSM-Nutri Cereals scheme, which kicked off in 2018–19, brought in subsidies for seeds, inputs, and equipment. Then in 2023, they went further—millets started showing up in the public distribution system, school lunches, and the POSHAN nutrition program. On top of that, Uttarakhand rolled out its own State Millet Mission (the Shree Anna Mission) in 2023, and there's a multi-phase millet policy on the way for 2025 to 2031. That plan aims to cover between 30,000 and 70,000 hectares in the hill districts.

The numbers look promising so far. An IIM-Kashipur survey of 2,100 farmers found that about three-quarters of millet growers in Uttarakhand saw their incomes go up by 10–20% thanks to these programs. Reports on best practices point to Uttarakhand's focus on organic millet clusters and new ways of buying up farmers' crops. Cooperative procurement, in particular, helped push market prices higher for local farmers. Best-practice reports also

highlight Uttarakhand's organic millet clusters and procurement initiatives, noting that interventions like cooperative procurement raised market prices for farmers. Nonetheless, literature emphasizes ongoing challenges (market access, low consumer awareness, limited processing). This review underscores the rationale for our statistical evaluation of production trends and subsidies in Uttarakhand's millet sector using official data and ground-level case evidence.

Year (Agric.)	**Uttarakhand Production**	**All-India Production**
2018–19	179.74	13,711.21
2019–20	191.09	17,260.63
2020–21	200.85	18,020.55
2021–22	200.38	15,999.76
2022–23	181.62	17,151.75

Table 1. State and national millet (Shree Anna) production, 2018–23 (thousand tonnes). (Data source – Ministry of Agriculture (3rd Advance Estimates))

This table shows Uttarakhand's millet output (locally branded "Shree Anna") grew from 179.7 thousand tonnes in 2018–19 to a peak of ~200.4 in 2020–21, then moderated to 181.6 in 2022–23. All-India production followed a similar pattern (13.7 mt 18.0 mt 17.2 mt). Thus, Uttarakhand's share of national millets rose modestly over 2018–21. Despite a dip in 2021–22 (likely due to aberrant weather), production rebounded by 2023.

From 2018 to 2023, Uttarakhand's millet sector has shown clear signs of revival. Production trends (Table 1, Fig. 1) indicate sustained output at historically high levels, buoyed by policy support. Government measures – including NFSM subsidies, explicit State Millet Missions, higher MSPs, and expanded procurement – have tangibly benefited farmers, who report significant income gains. Statistical data and case evidence together indicate that millet farming has become a more profitable and resilient livelihood in the hills.

Millet acreage in Uttarakhand remained proportionally high. According to Agri. Dept. estimates, millets occupied 133.0 thousand hectares in 2021–22, 115.0 thousand in 2022–23, and 109.1 thousand in 2023–24, roughly 15–17% of the state's foodgrain area. (Notably, Uttarakhand's millet-area share exceeds the 10–11% national average.) Yields in the hills average ~1.5–1.6 t/ha, modestly above India's mean of ~1.35 t/ha. These data indicate that central/state support (seed subsidies, extension, premium pricing) may have stabilized yields even as area shifted.

BioThink E – Magazine, Vol. -3, Issue -1, January 2026
ISSN No. – 3048- 7943
www.biothink.in

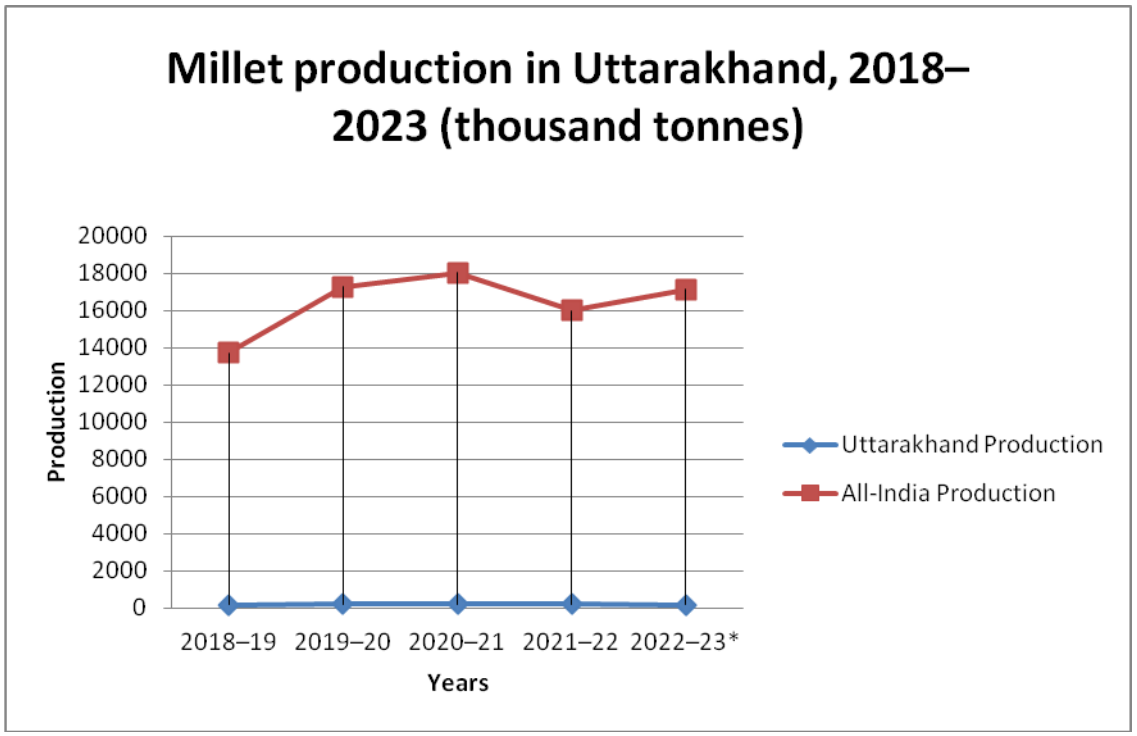

Figure 1. Millet (Shree Anna) production in Uttarakhand, 2018–2023 (thousand tonnes) (Source: Ministry of Agriculture)

Economically, policy interventions appear to have raised farmer incomes. The Uttarakhand government substantially increased the MSP for mandua (finger millet) from ₹2,500 per quintal (2021–22) to ₹4,200 (2024–25) – a 68% hike. Concurrently, state procurement was expanded: by 2024–25 there were 270 mandua collection centers versus just 23 in 2020–21. These moves and guaranteed buying had an immediate effect on prices. As one Uttarakhand official noted, announcing state procurement of millets caused market prices to jump and farmers to "get better returns".

In concrete terms, a recent survey by IIM Kashipur found that roughly three-quarters of millet farmers reported 10–20% higher annual incomes thanks to the renewed push (subsidies, MSP, and market programs) for millets. In Almora (a key millet district), analogous cooperative initiatives (cluster models) also show large gains: for example, an Almora garlic cluster project nearly doubled yields and raised farmgate prices by ~75%, implying that similar millet clusters could substantially boost earnings.

These income gains show better financial resilience. Millets typically need fewer resources and can grow in less productive soils, which helps diversify farm portfolios. Uttarakhand's experience shows that blended support, including organic-input subsidies under RKVY/PKVY, premium MSP, and new market connections, has made

millets more profitable. However, challenges still exist. Many growers continue to cultivate millets mainly for home use and do not know much about market demand. It is important to strengthen post-harvest processing, add value such as millet-based snacks, and raise consumer awareness, like including millets in ICDS meals. Official guidelines now recommend including millets in the PDS/ICDS to boost demand. Overall, the data indicate that focused government support has reversed decades of decline, making millets a viable cash crop for Uttarakhand farmers. Uttarakhand's targeted subsidy framework has greatly improved the financial performance of millet farmers, and ongoing support will be crucial for maintaining this progress. To ensure long-term resilience, it is vital to keep strong incentives along with initiatives that build lasting market demand. Improving connections between hill producers and urban consumers through strategic branding and export promotion will stabilize income streams further. Overall, these actions position Uttarakhand to meet its nutritional goals and promote broader rural development through the millet sector.