



Good for you - the planet - the farmer



Smart Food is

food that **fulfills all the criteria** of being:

GOOD FOR YOU

GOOD FOR THE PLANET

GOOD FOR THE FARMER



Smart Food helps solve a number of our biggest issues in **unison**: rural poverty, malnutrition and adaptation to climate change and environmental degradation.

A major impact can be made if we not only popularize but also **mainstream** Smart Food – bringing diversity in diets and on the farm.

This must be undertaken, ensuring rural communities benefit through better health and livelihood improvements. Other global benefits will be new market development and growth and more sustainable diets.

Aims of the Smart Food initiative

A Smart Food initiative has been developed with the aim to mainstream Smart Food back as a in developing countries – bringing diversity in diets and on the farm. This is to make a major breakthrough in overcoming malnutrition and rural poverty, and being more sustainable on the environment.

The approach

The **overall approach** is based on:

Starting with creating a demand pull by the consumer.

This will be done through campaigns and needs to be complemented with: scientific backing to any claims; full value chain support; and ensuring small holder farmers and rural communities benefit their income and nutritionally from the market growth.

Concerted efforts on millets and sorghum, as well as grain legumes. There will be a geographic focus on countries where these crops traditionally grew (Africa, India and other areas of Asia), as well as the large, influential markets in the West (USA, Europe and Australasia).

The **methodology**, as shown in the diagram, will include:

1. Creating the Smart Food concept and messaging:

This will include building a strong scientific case for selected Smart Food, developing the marketing approach and building an accreditation scheme for Smart Food.

2. Creating a demand pull with consumers: This will include promoting a modern image for the selected Smart Food through an intensive and highly creative viral campaign, complemented with facilitating innovative, and nutritious convenience food products. From policy makers to urban aspirational markets, rural communities, processors and investors will be engaged, along with the food service, media and health industries.

3. Ensuring smallholder farmers and rural communities are pulled out of poverty and hidden hunger: This will require a concerted effort working with rural health workers, connecting farmers to the value chain and advocacy for research and development and supporting policies.

4. Filling the knowledge gaps: Identify and address the gaps and scientific research needs on how these foods affect you (nutrition and health), the planet, the farmer and the whole value chain (cooking, processing, marketing, etc).

Partners on the Smart Food initiative

Significant impacts and mainstreaming Smart Food can only be achieved through partnership. This requires a wide variety of players: from the food, retail and catering industries (new entrepreneurs to multinationals); the health industry; marketers; social media players and governments to development agencies, foundations and NGOs.

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Smart Food is a global initiative founded by ICRISAT and coordinated globally by:



INTERNATIONAL CROPS RESEARCH
INSTITUTE FOR THE SEMI-ARID TROPICS



Dryland cereals like **millets** and **sorghum**, and **grain legumes** are Smart Food.

How are they Good for You?

These Smart Food crops are **highly nutritious** and targeting some of the largest micronutrient deficiencies and needs, especially of women and children.

For example:

- **Iron, zinc and folic acid** - Pearl millet has very high levels and bioavailability studies have shown that they will provide the average person's daily requirement of iron and zinc.
- **Calcium** - Finger millet has 3 times the amount compared to milk.
- **Affordable protein** - provided by grain legumes.
- **Low Glycemic Index** - which means escalating levels of diabetes – can be avoided or managed by sorghum and millets because they have low Glycemic Index.

- **High antioxidants** - Fights against heart diseases, life style disorders and cancer
- **Gluten Free**

How are they Good for the Smallholder farmer?

Smart Food are good for the small holder farmers because

- Their climate resilience means they are a good risk management strategy.
- Legumes have an important contribution to soil nutrition and when rotated with other crops, increase the water use efficiency of the entire crop cycle.
- Their multiple uses and untapped demand means they have a lot more potential.
- Unlike the other crops they have not yet reached a yield plateau and have great potential for productivity increases.

How are they Good for the Planet?

These are also crops critical in the drylands that will best survive the harsh environments and are **most resilient** hence climate smart crops. Basically, millets are the **last crop standing in times of drought**. The millets, sorghum and legumes have close to the **lowest water and carbon footprints** of all the crops.

The major constraints

The major constraints for these dryland cereals and grain legumes that are holding them back from reaching their full potential are – very little investment, significantly underdeveloped value chains, and the image of the food as old fashioned, especially the case for millets and sorghum.

More investment and policy support have significant potential to increase yields, provide better nutrition, fulfill multiple uses (food, feed, biofuels, brewing), develop modern processed food products and integrate farmers into the value chain.

1

Concept and science backing

Scientific backed case

- Develop criteria for Smart Food commodities. Apply.
- Publish scientific backed cases how commodities are good for you, the planet and farmer. Start with millets and sorghum, then legumes. Place on a platform to build global communities.
- Produce a high end article and documentary film on the reasoning behind Smart Food.

Marketing & messaging

- Create branding, trademark, messages and marketing material and packages for others to use.
- Promote the concept to strategic players.

Certification of Smart Food

- Set up certification scheme for Smart Food products.

Operations

- Institutionalize Smart Food with a governance structure, business plan and fundraising streams.

2

Create demand pull with consumers

Consumer campaigns

Country level:

- School activities
- Public campaigns
- Bring Smart Food into feeding programs

Global:

- Influence the influencers

Engage food processors

- Awareness raising with processors
- Develop Smart Food SME clusters
- Identify and facilitate overcoming barriers.

Engage Health, Food service, Retail, Export & Media sectors

- Initiate Smart Food Network.

3

Ensure farmers & rural communities benefit

Better nutrition

- Integrate Smart Food and diversity into the rural health programs.

Better livelihoods

- Linking farmers and buyers
- Facilitate value adding on-farm
- Facilitate branded franchised products with the women groups

Identify and promote: R&D, supporting policies and on-farm support

- Identify and promote industry needs and research gaps (e.g. workshops and survey)
- Promote 'nutrition' and 'processing qualities' into crop improvement programs.

4

Fill knowledge gaps

Undertake or promote for more research and feed this back into the concept and approach

