Where does your food come from?

Are you dedicated to making healthy and socially responsible food choices? Eight crops from the Nepal Himalayas are the ideal choice for a healthy, whole-of-diet approach. These local foods provide nutrients that support a healthy, nutritious and sustainable diet, making them great alternatives to generic grains.

Supporting these foods is beneficial not only to you, but also to the rural farmers. By providing a market value for these crops, farmers can continue to cultivate these unique varieties and utilize the high altitudes and extreme conditions in which these crops are able to thrive.

Make a simple choice at the grocery store to help rural communities to continue to grow these extraordinary crops, to benefit your well-being and the global environment by reducing our dependence on generic staple crops.

Eight crop varieties

Buckwheat

Buckwheat is a pseudo-cereal that is a good gluten-free alternative. Its grain has nearly twice as much protein as standard varieties of rice and corn, and it is a rich source of fibre, magnesium, copper, and manganese. These minerals, combined with buckwheat’s high rutin content, maintain cardiovascular health and may also help prevent diabetes. Likewise, honey made from buckwheat flour has a distinct taste and is a common cough remedy.

Foxtail millet

Foxtail millet features a variety of uses, from being cooked and eaten like rice, ground into a hearty porridge or used to brew alcoholic beverages. It is a traditional staple food in drier parts of the high mountain landscape and has been used as an offering to local deities. A recent study indicates that foxtail millet can lead to a significant fall in blood glucose, making it a useful food to help manage and prevent diabetes.

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Amaranth

Amaranth has been cultivated for over 8000 years and was regarded by the ancient Aztecs as a symbol of immortality. Its seeds can be eaten as a gluten-free grain alternative, its leaves as fresh produce, and its stalks used as fodder, meaning it creates almost zero waste. Amaranth is rich in protein, manganese that is essential for healthy bones, and research suggests that it lowers cholesterol levels. Likewise, the amino acid profile of this crop is similar to that of human blood, leading to its recognition by various cultures as an ideal ‘fasting food’.

Finger millet

Finger millet, considered one of the world’s most nutritious cereals, is a veritable superfood. Its high content of calcium, iron, fibre, and amino acids make it important for bone health, anemia prevention, GI tract health, and muscle repair. Perhaps the most anomalous attribute of finger millet is that it can be stored for up to ten years with little deterioration in quality, securing its status as a crop critical for long-term global food security.

Proso millet

Proso millet, which can be grown up to 3500m in elevation and has one of the lowest water requirements of any cereal, makes it an incredibly resilient crop. This crop has been popular for millennia all across the world, playing an important role in traditional Chinese and Russian cuisine. It is completely gluten-free and is packed with a variety of essential minerals, potassium in particular, which contributes to nervous system health. Current research suggests it may also be an alternative to corn in the production of biofuels, leading to a potential future role in the green-energy industry.