

ICBA Organizes “Millets Harvest Day” to Support the Adoption of Climate-Smart Crops in the UAE

Held to mark World Environment Day, the event builds on the momentum of the National Agricultural Initiative for the Adoption of Climate-Smart Crops in the UAE

Dubai, United Arab Emirates – 5 June 2026 – The [International Center for Biosaline Agriculture](#) (ICBA) hosted “Millets Harvest Day” to mark World Environment Day, as a field-based milestone that builds on the launch of the National Agricultural Initiative for the Adoption of Climate-Smart Crops in the UAE. The initiative was launched by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment and ICBA during the Emirati Agriculture Conference and Exhibition 2026.

The event was attended by H.E. Dr. Mohammed Salman Al Hammadi, Assistant Undersecretary for the Food Diversity Sector at the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, alongside Their Excellencies, senior officials, representatives of national entities and strategic partners, as well as farmers, researchers, decision-makers and a group of university students. It highlighted the importance of millet as a crop capable of adapting to climate-related challenges, and its role in supporting sustainable agriculture and strengthening food security.

The event forms part of ICBA’s efforts to translate scientific research into practical field applications by demonstrating the value of crops that can tolerate drought, high temperatures and salinity, while requiring less water than conventional crops. This supports more efficient use of natural resources and helps expand food and fodder production options in arid and saline environments.

H.E. Dr. Mohammed Salman Al Hammadi, Assistant Undersecretary for the Food Diversity Sector at the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, said: “The National Agricultural Initiative for the Adoption of Climate-Smart Crops in the UAE reflects the Ministry’s commitment to advancing practical solutions that enhance local food production and support the sustainability of the agricultural sector. Millets Harvest Day highlights the importance of our collaboration with ICBA, whose research, field trials and technical expertise contribute to identifying climate-smart crops suited to the UAE’s environmental conditions and supporting their adoption. Through this



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partnership, farmers gain access to science-based, more resource-efficient production options that strengthen their resilience and support the long-term sustainability of the agricultural sector”.

H.E. added that the Ministry is working to support scientific research and its practical applications to develop agricultural solutions capable of adapting to and withstanding harsh climate conditions, contributing to the UAE’s sustainable national food security objectives, increasing local food production, particularly of strategic crops such as grains.

H.E. Dr. Tarifa Alzaabi, Director General of ICBA, said: “Millets Harvest Day represents an important field milestone in ICBA’s efforts to translate the objectives of the National Agricultural Initiative for the Adoption of Climate-Smart Crops in the UAE into practical agricultural solutions. Organizing this event in conjunction with World Environment Day also underscores the environmental importance of crops such as millet, which can support more resilient production systems in arid and saline environments, where heat, salinity and water scarcity are major challenges. Through our research and field trials, we are working to connect science with field application, support farmers with evidence-based options, and strengthen the role of climate-smart crops in future food and fodder systems”.

The program featured an overview of the objectives of the National Agricultural Initiative for the Adoption of Climate-Smart Crops in the UAE, an introductory session on the importance of millets as climate-smart and highly nutritious crops, a presentation of ICBA’s research and field efforts in this area, and a field visit that included a live millet harvesting activity.

Millets are among the strategic crops highlighted under the initiative due to their strong ability to adapt to drought, high temperatures and salinity, as well as their lower water requirements compared with conventional crops. They also have high nutritional value, containing around 7 to 12 percent protein, and are a source of iron, zinc, fiber, magnesium and essential antioxidants, reinforcing their relevance to food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture.

Farmers also expressed their appreciation for the importance of seeing millet in the field, noting that this practical experience helped them better understand the crop’s potential to tolerate heat, water



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scarcity and salinity, while strengthening the connection between scientific research and farmers' needs on the ground.

The event also showcased the “Resilience” prototype, which presents a practical concept for the potential of climate-smart crops in developing sustainable food options. Attendees were introduced to three millet-based food prototypes, including millet milk, millet muffins and millet cookies, and had the opportunity to taste them and learn about their nutritional value and future development potential. The prototype reflects ICBA’s approach to connecting scientific research with practical application, while highlighting the role that climate-resilient crops can play in supporting food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture in arid and saline environments.

Through this event, ICBA continues to strengthen its role as a scientific and technical partner in supporting the adoption of climate-smart crops, developing sustainable agricultural solutions for arid and saline environments, and contributing to more resilient food systems in the UAE and the wider region.

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About ICBA

Established by the Government of the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic Development Bank, the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) is a unique international not-for-profit applied research-for-development center. The center’s approach integrates strategic alliances, technical expertise, and knowledge empowerment to co-create innovative solutions for sustainable livelihoods and food security in saline and arid environments. The center’s research is at the nexus of soil, water, crops, and climate to prevent, manage and recover from salinity in agricultural lands. Through this holistic and integrated approach, ICBA strives to make a lasting positive impact on the lives and livelihoods of farming communities, ensuring their resilience and contributing to a more sustainable future for all. www.biosaline.org