

Himalayan Superfoods



Sajal Shapit/LI-BIRD

Amaranth (*latte, marshe*)

Amaranth is consumed as a nutritious grain in the high mountain communities and as an iron rich leafy vegetable in the rest of the country. Amaranth grain is gluten free and a great source of protein and the essential amino acids lysine, especially important for vegetarians. It can be part of a nutritious breakfast for busy urbanities. Amaranth is considered an ideal fasting food by various cultures. Over 35 tons of amaranth is exported from Doti to India predominantly for this purpose annually.



Laxmi Lama/LI-BIRD

Barley & Naked Barley (*Jau & Uwa*)

One of the oldest grains to be cultivated, barley has been grown for over 8000 years. Monks have consumed barley as a nutritious breakfast food that helps the body conserve energy in cold weather. Barley is an excellent source of complex carbohydrates that helps lower cholesterol levels and the risk of type-2 diabetes. Pearled barley can be used in nutritious soups, while barley groats and grits can be consumed as a part of a healthy and nutritious breakfast for busy urbanities in Pokhara and Kathmandu.



Laxmi Lama/LI-BIRD

Beans (*simi*)

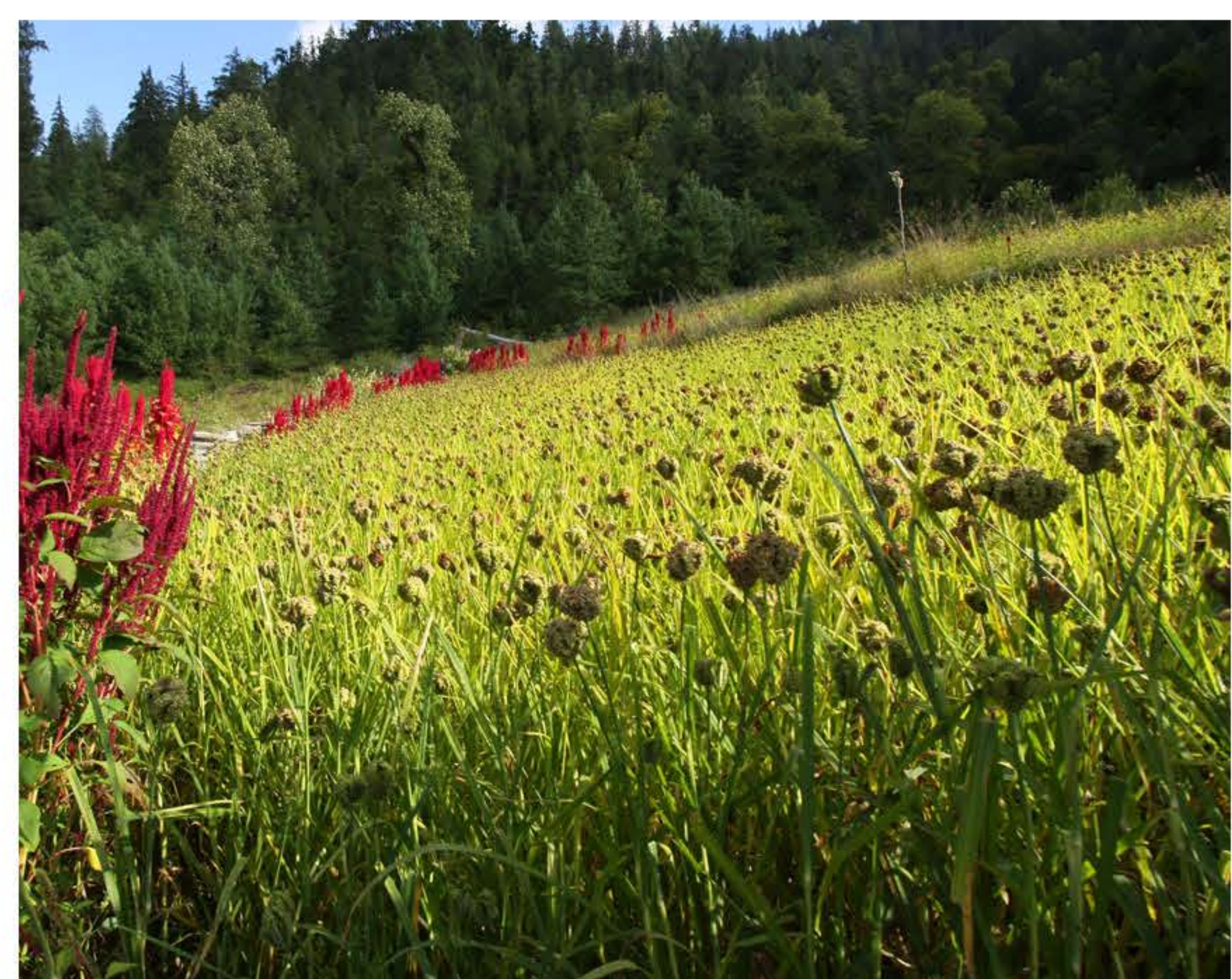
The high diversity of beans have been an important source of vegetable protein for the people in the high mountains of Nepal, where dietary and nutritional diversity is especially limited. Beans of different shapes, sizes and colours are cultivated and consumed in a mixture providing wholesome nutritional benefits. These mountain beans are now becoming increasingly popular among urban consumers.



Krishna Lamsal/LI-BIRD

Buckwheat (*phapar*)

Buckwheat is consumed as a gluten free flour and a leafy vegetable. Rich in fibre and micro nutrients such as magnesium, copper, and manganese, it is a good alternative for people at risk of diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. Tartary buckwheat contains the chemical rutin that improves blood circulation. Mountain communities in Nepal have used tartary buckwheat as a treatment for bleeding gums. Honey made from buckwheat flower has a distinct taste and is a common cough remedy.



Sajal Shapit/LI-BIRD

Finger Millet (*kodo*)

Finger millet is a good source of calcium, iron, fibre, and amino acids making it important for blood and bone health, better digestion and muscle repair. The human body digests finger millet slowly and moderates spikes in blood sugar. It is a good alternative grain for people at risk of diabetes. It has cultural importance in mountain communities for preparation of local liquor (raksi) essential in every ceremony. Consequently, mountain people the key custodians in maintaining the local diversity of finger millet.



Sajal Shapit/LI-BIRD

Foxtail Millet (*kaguno*)

This vividly named small millet is a traditional staple food grown in the drier parts of the high mountain landscape. It also grows well in the mid-hills. Regular consumption of foxtail millet leads to a significant fall in blood glucose, making it a useful food to help manage and prevent diabetes. Foxtail millet features a variety of uses, from being eaten as *bhaat*, a hearty porridge or used to brew alcoholic beverages. Foxtail millet cooked with milk and sugar (*kheer*) as a pudding makes an excellent and upscale dessert.



Sandesh Neupane/LI-BIRD

Proso Millet (*chino*)

Proso millet (*chino*) has among the lowest water requirements of any cereal thus making it an incredibly climate resilient crop. It is a gluten free food, packed with a variety of essential minerals, potassium in particular, which contributes to nervous system health. Proso millet is traditionally consumed in the mountain communities as a staple food, cooked in the form of *bhaat* where access to rice is still limited.



Laxmi Lama/LI-BIRD

Red Rice (*dhan*)

The famous *Jumli Marsi* variety of rice sets the record for being grown at the highest elevation, upto 3000 metres above sea level in Chhumchaur, Jumla. The high mountains of Nepal are important for cold tolerant genes in rice. Our *Chomrong* rice has become the most important variety in Bhutan and Madagascar covering around 85% of their rice area. Internationally, rice of different hues and colours are increasingly popular in upscale market for their novelty and nutrition (antioxidants and minerals). It is time for *Nepali Red Rice* to have its day in the sun.

Collaborating for Research and Promotion of Alternative Crops in Nepal