

Diversity and Utilize of Ignored, Underutilized, and Uncommercialized Horticultural Species in Nepal

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Abstract : Local indigenous community in Lalitpur, Nepal, use Ignored, Underutilized and Uncommercialized Horticultural Species (IUUHS) for medicine, food, spice, pickles, and religious purposes. But, research and exploration about usage, status, potentialities, and importance of these future sustainable crops are inadequately documented and have been ignored for a positive food transformation system. The study aimed to assess the use and diversity of NUWHS in terms of current status investigation, documentation, management, and future potentialities of IUUHS. A wide range of participatory tools through the household survey (100 respondents), 8 focus group discussions, 20 key informant interviews was followed by individual assessment, participatory rural assessments and supplemented by literature review. This study recorded 95 IUUHS belonging to 43 families, of which 92 were angiosperms, 2 pteridophytes, and 1 gymnosperm. Twenty seven species had multiple uses. The IUUHS observed during the study were 31 vegetables, 20 fruits, 14 wild species, 7 spices, 7 pulses, 7 pickle, 7 medicine, and 2 religious species. Vegetables and fruits were the most observed category of IUUHS. Eighty nine species were observed as medicinally valued species, and 86% of the women had taken over all the agricultural activities. 84% of respondents used these species during food deficient period. IUUHS have future potential as an alternative food to major staple crops due to its remarkable ability to be adapted in marginal soil and thrive harsh climatic condition. There are various constraints regarding the utilization and development of IUUHS, which needs initiation of promotion, utilization, management, and conservation of species from the grass root level.

Keywords : agrobiodiversity, Ignored and underutilized species, uncultivated horticultural species, diversity use

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