

Conference Abstract

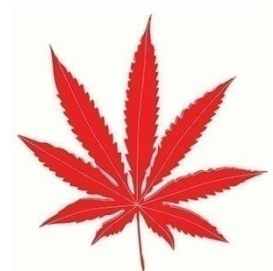
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Conference Abstract

**ENSURING FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SECURITY BY USING INDIGENOUS FRUITS IN
AZAD JAMMU AND KASHMIR**

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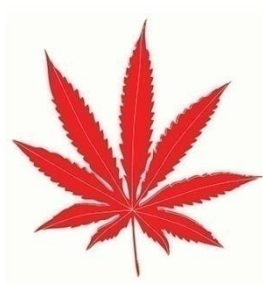
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ABSTRACT

Food is the fundamental requirement for human existence and food security occupies central place for ensuring social peace and stability. Globally, more than one-third of human beings are confronted to severe form of malnutrition, while only one-third of human populace enjoys food and nutritional security. In South Asia, majority of the populace has meager access to required nutrition and resultantly malnutrition continues to remain rampant. On economic dimension, the prices of non-staple food commodities including various pulses and vegetables have skyrocketed compared to grains. Furthermore, the use of healthy diets has declined sharply owing to deteriorated quality of agricultural produces caused by global warming and climate change. These circumstances have created hidden hunger and the available diets could not meet dietary requirement leading to the unhampered risk of physical as well as mental impairment. Malnutrition has emerged as one of the most serious challenge but has not been addressed keeping in view the socioeconomic perspectives of diversified communities. In such a gloomy scenario, only indigenous plants resources have the potential to offer biologically as well as economically viable solutions to address malnutrition and hunger. The region of Azad Kashmir is bestowed with rich agro-biodiversity, while the indigenous fruits are quite nutritious and may offer multiple health benefits leading to devising a multi-pronged nutritional security strategies. A variety of value added fruits products can be developed from these indigenous fruits as these fruits are available

throughout the season. These indigenous fruits have the potential to serve as rich source of nutrition especially in the wake of climate change and economic crunch. They provide essential nutrients such as antioxidants (carotenoids, ascorbic acid, phenolic, anthocyanin and flavonoids), vitamins and micronutrients (iron, calcium, zinc and copper and phosphorus) for maintaining health. In this context, the study aimed to scrutinize the nutritional status of indigenous plant sources found at varying altitudes. In addition, the development of various market-oriented value-added products from these plant sources has also been emphasized.



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