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CONTENTS

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ORGANIC CARBON MANAGEMENT FOR SOIL HEALTH IN FODDER-BASED SYSTEMS

Sanjeev Kumar[1]* and Dilip Kumar[2]

Agronomy Section, ICAR-National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal, Haryana 132001

ICAR-Indian Institute of Sugarcane Research, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226002

*Corresponding author email: bhanusanjeev@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The intricate tapestry of fodder-based agriculture, emphasizing the profound interplay between soil health and sustainable farming practices. Fodder cultivation plays pivotal role in enriching soil with organic carbon for soil vitality. Practical strategies, including cover cropping, green manuring, and reduced tillage, showcase their transformative impact on organic carbon management in fodder-based systems. Conservation measures like agroforestry and rotational grazing are unraveled for their role in creating balanced ecosystems. The fodder-based systems benefit organic carbon management through fostering microbial activity to improving water retention. The article culminates in a discussion on the challenges and solutions in implementing these practices, paving the way for a visionary outlook into future trends and innovations that will shape the sustainable future of fodder agriculture.

INTRODUCTION

Fodder-based agriculture is a pivotal component of livestock farming, serving as the fundamental source of nutrition for grazing animals. It goes beyond being a mere agricultural practice, emerging as a linchpin for the entire livestock industry. This method involves cultivating crops explicitly for animal consumption, recognizing the intricate relationship between fodder cultivation, animal well-being, and ecological equilibrium. The significance of fodder extends to soil health, necessitating sustainable practices to preserve soil fertility. The article explores organic carbon management, emphasizing its role in soil structure and nutrient availability. Additionally, it delves into organic farming practices, reduced tillage, and conservation measures, showcasing their tangible benefits for soil health, water retention, and nutrient availability in the context of fodder-based systems.

IMPORTANCE OF ORGANIC CARBON IN SOIL: ENHANCING SOIL HEALTH AND FUNCTIONALITY

In agricultural ecosystems, soil is the foundation, with organic carbon playing a crucial role in maintaining soil health. Organic carbon enhances soil fertility by facilitating nutrient availability to plants, acting as a reservoir for essential nutrients found in decomposed plant and animal residues. Moreover, organic carbon contributes to the structural integrity of the soil by acting as a binding agent, promoting the formation of aggregates that improve water infiltration and retention, essential for growing fodder crops. This improved soil structure also reduces the risk of erosion, preserving topsoil and preventing nutrient loss. The symbiotic relationship between organic carbon and soil microorganisms, such as beneficial bacteria and fungi, is vital for nutrient cycling and organic matter decomposition, creating a fertile and resilient soil environment ideal for successful fodder cultivation. Understanding the significance of organic carbon in soil is fundamental for sustainable agriculture and plays a pivotal role in enhancing soil health and functionality.

ORGANIC FARMING PRACTICES IN FODDER-BASED SYSTEMS: ENHANCING SOIL HEALTH FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Organic farming practices form the bedrock of sustainable agriculture, particularly in fodder-based systems where soil health is paramount. Under fodder cultivation following strategies aimed at effectively managing organic carbon, crucial for fostering robust soil health and promoting environmental sustainability.

Cover Cropping:

Cover cropping is one pivotal organic farming practice. Farmers are introduced to the concept of planting specific crops during non-harvest periods to cover the soil surface. These cover crops, often selected for their ability to fix nitrogen and enhance organic matter, play a dual role. They prevent soil erosion, acting as a protective blanket, and contribute to organic carbon accumulation as they decompose. Insights into suitable cover crops for fodder-based systems and their rotational benefits will empower farmers to make informed decisions.

Green Manuring:

Green manuring takes center stage as a practice where specific crops are grown and then ploughed back into the soil while still green. Green manures benefits through organic carbon enrichment, nitrogen fixation, and improved soil structure. By understanding the principles of green manuring, farmers can strategically incorporate leguminous crops or other nitrogen-fixing plants into their fodder cultivation cycles, reaping the rewards of enhanced soil fertility.

Composting Techniques:

Composting emerges as a crucial technique for organic carbon management, offering farmers a sustainable way to recycle organic waste and residues. Composting process guides farmers on how to create nutrient-rich compost suitable for fodder-based systems. Exploring different composting methods, such as aerobic and vermicomposting, empowers farmers to choose approaches aligned with their resources and agricultural practices.

REDUCED TILLAGE PRACTICES

In the intricate web of sustainable agricultural practices, the adoption of reduced tillage emerges as a pivotal strategy, particularly in the context of fodder-based systems. Traditionally, agriculture has been synonymous with extensive soil cultivation, a practice that inadvertently leads to the loss of organic carbon – a vital component for soil fertility. Reduced tillage, as the term suggests, involves minimizing mechanical disturbance to the soil, specifically limiting the depth and intensity of ploughing. The rationale behind this approach is rooted in the understanding that excessive tillage accelerates the decomposition of organic matter, including crucial carbon content, adversely affecting the soil's health.

The examination of reduced tillage extends beyond the mere preservation of organic carbon; it delves into its wider implications for soil erosion control. Traditional tillage practices can leave the soil vulnerable to erosion, particularly in fodder-based systems where maintaining soil integrity is paramount. Reduced tillage acts as a natural safeguard, mitigating erosion risks and contributing to the overall stability of the soil structure. Moreover, the positive impact of reduced tillage on soil health in fodder-based systems will be thoroughly explored. This practice promotes the development of a healthier soil ecosystem, fostering microbial activity and creating a conducive environment for beneficial soil organisms. By minimizing soil disturbance, reduced tillage contributes to the preservation of soil structure and moisture, crucial elements for successful fodder cultivation.

CONSERVATION MEASURES IN FODDER CULTIVATION: AGROFORESTRY AND ROTATIONAL GRAZING

In the pursuit of sustainable and ecologically balanced fodder cultivation, the adoption of conservation measures becomes paramount. Agroforestry and rotational grazing stand out as two crucial practices, wielding considerable influence in organic carbon management within the realm of fodder agriculture.

Agroforestry:

Agroforestry represents a strategic integration of trees or woody perennials with conventional agricultural practices. This conservation measure goes beyond the conventional monoculture approach, introducing a harmonious coexistence between trees and fodder crops. The benefits of agroforestry extend beyond the enhancement of organic carbon levels in the soil. The presence of trees contributes to improved soil structure, increased water retention, and overall nutrient cycling. The symbiotic relationship between trees and fodder crops creates a microenvironment conducive to fostering biodiversity, attracting beneficial insects, and providing shade for livestock.

Rotational Grazing:

Rotational grazing is a dynamic practice that involves systematically moving livestock through different paddocks, allowing for the periodic rest and recovery of grazed areas. As a conservation measure, rotational grazing plays a pivotal role in organic carbon management by mitigating soil compaction and promoting the even distribution of animal manure. The rotational grazing emphasizing its impact on preventing overgrazing, stimulating plant growth, and enhancing nutrient cycling. The rotational aspect ensures that each paddock undergoes a recovery phase, allowing for the restoration of organic carbon content and the preservation of soil health. Readers will gain a comprehensive understanding of how rotational grazing not only supports the nutritional needs of livestock but also contributes significantly to the creation of a sustainable and balanced fodder-based agricultural ecosystem. It underlines the transformative potential of these conservation measures in not only managing organic carbon effectively but also fostering biodiversity and ecological harmony within the unique context of fodder-based agricultural landscapes.

BENEFITS OF ORGANIC CARBON MANAGEMENT

In this section, we delve into the tangible and transformative outcomes that result from adopting effective organic carbon management practices in the context of fodder-based agricultural systems. The emphasis is on practical and observable benefits that directly impact soil health, agricultural productivity, and sustainability.

Fostering Microbial Activity:

Effective organic carbon management acts as a catalyst for the enhancement of microbial activity within the soil. Organic carbon serves as a vital energy source for diverse microbial communities, promoting their proliferation and activity. Increased microbial activity, in turn, contributes to the breakdown of organic matter, nutrient cycling, and the creation of a microbiologically rich soil environment. This not only augments soil fertility but also facilitates the development of a robust and resilient soil microbiome essential for the health of fodder crops.

Improving Water Retention:

One of the critical advantages associated with organic carbon management is the improvement in soil structure, leading to enhanced water retention capabilities. Organic carbon functions like a sponge within the soil, absorbing and holding moisture. This results in improved water availability for fodder crops, especially during dry periods. By mitigating water stress and reducing irrigation requirements, effective organic carbon management plays a pivotal role in ensuring consistent and reliable water access for optimal fodder growth.

Enhancing Nutrient Availability for Growing Fodder:

A key highlight of prioritizing organic carbon is its direct correlation with improved nutrient availability in the soil. Organic carbon acts as a reservoir for essential nutrients, gradually releasing them into the soil as it decomposes. This steady nutrient supply becomes particularly crucial for the nutrient-hungry fodder crops, ensuring a sustained and balanced provision of nutrients throughout their growth stages. The outcome is not only increased yields but also the cultivation of nutritionally rich fodder, contributing to the well-being of livestock dependent on these crops.

By comprehensively understanding and embracing the benefits of organic carbon management, farmers in fodder-based systems can witness a positive transformation in their agricultural practices. From fostering a thriving microbial community to fortifying soil structure and ensuring nutrient-rich fodder, the advantages underscore the pivotal role of organic carbon in the sustainable and resilient cultivation of fodder crops. This knowledge empowers farmers to make informed decisions, optimizing their agricultural endeavors for both productivity and environmental stewardship.

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS: IMPLEMENTING ORGANIC CARBON MANAGEMENT IN FODDER AGRICULTURE

Implementing organic carbon management in fodder agriculture is a transformative process, but it comes with its set of challenges that farmers must navigate. There are some common obstacles faced during the adoption of organic carbon management practices and proposes practical solutions to empower farmers in overcoming these challenges. One of the primary challenges encountered is the constraint of resources. Farmers may face limitations in terms of finances, technology, or access to necessary inputs for organic carbon management practices. Insufficient funds for implementing cover cropping, green manuring, or composting can impede progress. The solution lies in exploring cost-effective alternatives and government support programs that can alleviate financial burdens, making these sustainable practices more accessible to a broader spectrum of farmers. Resistance to change is another prevalent challenge, often rooted in traditional farming practices. Farmers accustomed to conventional methods may be skeptical about transitioning to organic carbon management. There is a need for awareness campaigns and educational initiatives to demonstrate the tangible benefits of these practices. Showcasing successful case studies and engaging in peer-to-peer knowledge exchange can be instrumental in breaking down resistance and fostering a positive attitude towards change.

Additionally, the lack of knowledge and technical know-how poses a significant hurdle. Farmers may be unfamiliar with the intricacies of cover cropping, green manuring, or composting techniques. The solution involves the implementation of comprehensive training programs, workshops, and extension services. Empowering farmers with the knowledge and skills required for successful organic carbon management is pivotal in ensuring widespread adoption. Another challenge is the variability in agro-climatic conditions, as different regions may require tailored approaches to organic carbon management. Solutions involve the development of region-specific guidelines and adaptive strategies. Collaborating with agricultural experts and research institutions to create customized plans based on local conditions can enhance the effectiveness of organic carbon management practices.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES AND INNOVATIONS

As we peer into the future of fodder-based agriculture, the trajectory of organic carbon management is poised for intriguing developments. The aims should be to illuminate the emerging trends and innovative approaches that will shape the landscape of sustainable farming practices, specifically focusing on the cultivation of fodder.

Emerging Trends:

The future holds promising trends that underscore a paradigm shift towards more sustainable and efficient organic carbon management in fodder agriculture. Advancements in precision agriculture, coupled with data-driven insights, are anticipated to revolutionize how farmers monitor and enhance organic carbon levels in their soils. Precision technologies, such as sensor-based soil monitoring and satellite imaging, will provide real-time data on soil health, enabling farmers to make informed decisions and optimize their organic carbon management strategies.

Furthermore, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning in agriculture is set to play a pivotal role. AI algorithms can analyze vast datasets, offering tailored recommendations for organic carbon management based on specific soil types, crop rotations, and local climate conditions. This personalized approach is poised to maximize the efficacy of organic carbon practices, ensuring they align seamlessly with the unique needs of fodder-based systems.

Innovative Approaches:

Innovation will be a driving force in the future of organic carbon management. Biochar, a carbon-rich material derived from organic waste, is gaining attention for its potential to enhance soil fertility and sequester carbon. This section will delve into how biochar and similar innovations can be integrated into fodder cultivation systems, providing a sustainable solution for organic carbon enrichment.

Additionally, the exploration of microbial-assisted organic carbon management is on the horizon. Harnessing the power of beneficial soil microbes to enhance organic carbon decomposition and nutrient cycling holds immense potential. Future innovations may include bioinoculants and microbial amendments designed to optimize organic carbon processes, fostering a more resilient and nutrient-rich fodder growth environment.

Encouraging Reader Engagement:

Encouraging readers to stay informed about these advancements and actively engage with agricultural research and extension services will be a focal point. Attendees of workshops, webinars, and conferences focused on sustainable agriculture and soil health will be better equipped to incorporate cutting-edge practices into their fodder-based systems.

CONCLUSION

In the intricate dance of soil, organic carbon emerges as the maestro, orchestrating a symphony of benefits crucial for the success of fodder-based agriculture. The theoretical underpinnings of organic carbon management provide actionable insights for farmers to navigate the practicalities of implementation. As the agricultural landscape evolves, embracing emerging trends and innovations becomes paramount, transforming challenges into opportunities. The imperative of continuous learning, adaptation, and collaboration in fostering resilient, sustainable, and harmonious fodder-based agricultural ecosystems. The future beckons with promises of precision technologies, biochar innovations, and microbial collaborations—inviting farmers to actively engage in the evolving narrative of organic carbon management for the flourishing of both soil and sustenance.

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DIGITAL INNOVATIONS REVOLUTIONIZING PLANT PATHOLOGY

Lellapalli Rithesh[1*] and N.V. Radhakrishnan [2]
[1]Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Plant Pathology, Kerala Agricultural University, Vellayani, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India
[2]Professor and Head, Department of Plant Pathology, Kerala Agricultural University, Vellayani, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India
*Corresponding author email: rithesh132@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Recent digital innovations in plant pathology, including remote sensing, machine learning, and genomic tools, have revolutionized disease detection and management in agriculture. Technologies like hyperspectral imaging and drone-based imaging enable early disease detection, while AI-driven platforms offer real-time diagnosis and autonomous management solutions. Mobile apps and IoT-based systems enhance disease surveillance, while digital platforms facilitate global collaboration among plant health practitioners. Integration of Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) technologies provides immersive tools for disease visualization and collaborative research. These innovations promote sustainable agriculture through early detection, information management, and global knowledge exchange in plant pathology.

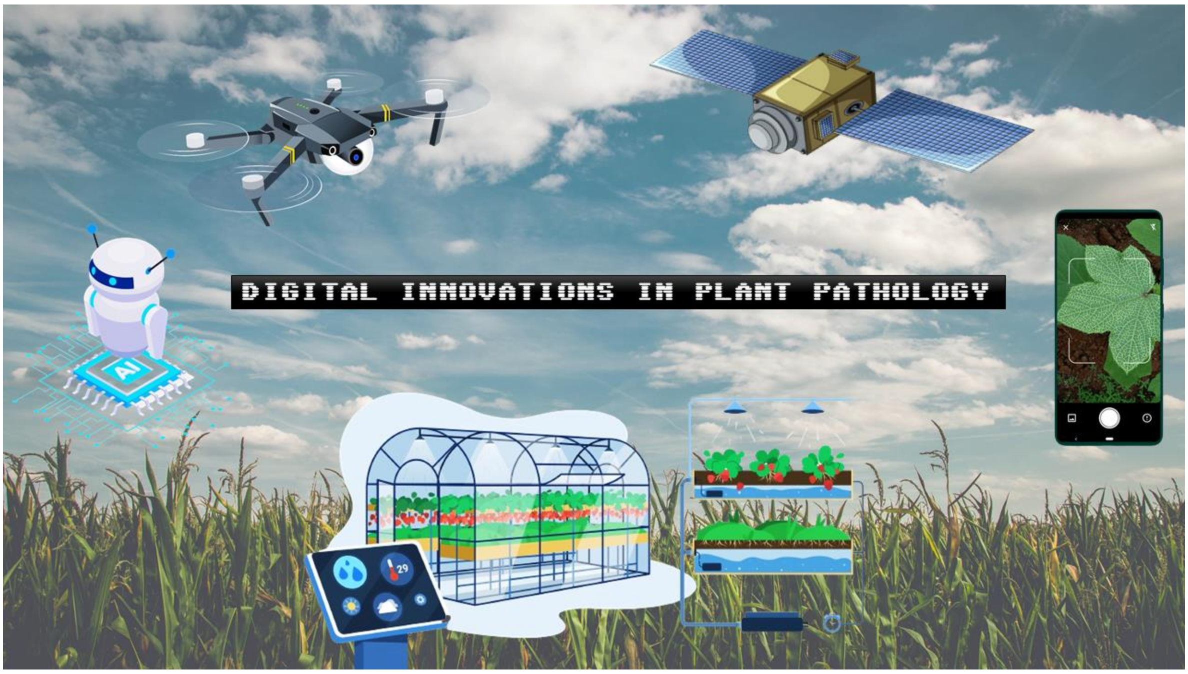
INTRODUCTION

Recent digital innovations have transformed plant pathology, revolutionizing disease detection, monitoring, and management in agriculture. Technologies like remote sensing and machine learning are optimizing resource use and boosting crop yields. This article explores how these innovations are reshaping traditional methods and promoting sustainable agriculture through early disease detection and enhanced crop management.

REMOTE SENSING AND IMAGING TECHNOLOGIES

***Hyperspectral Imaging*:** Remote sensing techniques, such as multispectral and hyperspectral imaging, drones, and satellite imagery, are being used to detect plant diseases at an early stage by capturing subtle changes in plant health and foliage reflectance. These technologies enable large-scale monitoring of crops and early detection of diseases, allowing for timely intervention. Researchers have utilized hyperspectral imaging to detect diseases in many crops. For example, a study in 2020 demonstrated the use of hyperspectral imaging to detect citrus greening disease (huanglongbing) in citrus trees by analyzing subtle changes in leaf reflectance.

***Drone-Based Imaging*:** Drone-based imaging platforms equipped with multispectral cameras provide high-resolution images of crop fields, allowing farmers to monitor crop health and detect diseases such as fungal infections or nutrient deficiencies. Many companies are offering drone-based imaging solutions for



precision agriculture, helping farmers make informed decisions about disease management.

***National Crop Disease Forecasting System* (NCDFS):** The NCDFS, initiated by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), integrates remote sensing data, satellite imagery, and weather information to monitor crop health and forecast disease outbreaks in real-time. By analyzing satellite data, the system identifies areas susceptible to diseases and provides early warnings to farmers, enabling timely interventions and preventive measures.

MACHINE LEARNING AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Machine learning algorithms and AI-based systems are being developed to analyze large datasets generated from remote sensing, imaging, and other sources to identify patterns associated with plant diseases. These systems can provide accurate and rapid diagnosis, predict disease outbreaks, and recommend appropriate management strategies based on environmental conditions and disease dynamics.

***PlantVillage*:** PlantVillage is a mobile app and online platform developed by researchers at Penn State University. It utilizes machine learning algorithms to diagnose plant diseases based on images uploaded by users. The app provides real-time advice and recommendations for disease management strategies. Users can also access a database of plant diseases and their symptoms.

***Deepfield Robotics' Bonirob*:** Bonirob, developed by Deepfield Robotics, a subsidiary of Bosch, is an AI-powered agricultural robot designed to autonomously identify and treat weeds and diseases in crops. Equipped with cameras and sensors, Bonirob uses machine learning algorithms to distinguish between crops and weeds and to detect signs of disease or nutrient deficiencies.

MOBILE APPS AND SENSOR TECHNOLOGIES

Mobile applications equipped with image recognition capabilities allow farmers and plant pathologists to quickly identify plant diseases by taking photos of symptomatic plants. Sensor technologies, such as wireless networks and Internet of Things (IoT) devices, can monitor environmental conditions in real-time, providing early warnings of disease outbreaks and optimizing disease management practices.

***Plantix*:** Plantix is a mobile app developed by PEAT GmbH that uses image recognition technology and machine learning algorithms to diagnose plant diseases. Users can take photos of diseased plants and receive instant diagnoses along with recommendations for treatment. The app covers a wide range of crops and diseases, making it valuable for farmers and agricultural professionals worldwide.

***IoT-Based Disease Monitoring Systems*:** Companies like Phytech offer IoT-based solutions for monitoring plant health and disease. Their sensors measure various environmental parameters such as soil moisture, temperature, and humidity, providing real-time data to farmers and enabling early detection of diseases like powdery mildew in vineyards.

GENOMIC TOOLS AND BIOINFORMATICS

Genomic Tools and Bioinformatics are revolutionizing plant pathology, providing crucial insights into the molecular intricacies of plant diseases. Through high-throughput sequencing and advanced bioinformatics, researchers can decode pathogen-host interactions, identify virulence factors, prediction of potential disease risks and develop targeted control strategies. This information is valuable for developing disease-resistant crop varieties and targeted control measures.

***BLAST (Basic Local Alignment Search Tool)*:** BLAST is a bioinformatics tool developed by the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) that allows researchers to compare nucleotide or protein sequences against a database to identify similarities. Plant pathologists use BLAST to analyze and compare pathogen genomes, aiding in the identification of virulence factors and understanding the genetic basis of plant diseases.

***USDA's National Plant Disease Recovery System (NPDRS)*:** The NPDRS is a database maintained by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that contains genomic sequences of various plant pathogens. Researchers and plant pathologists use this database to access genomic data for studying pathogen diversity, evolution, and developing molecular diagnostic tools.

DIGITAL PLATFORMS FOR DISEASE SURVEILLANCE

Digital platforms have emerged as indispensable tools for disease surveillance and communication in plant pathology. These platforms enable the rapid dissemination of disease-related information, including outbreak alerts, disease management strategies, and research findings. By facilitating real-time communication and collaboration among stakeholders, digital platforms play a crucial role in monitoring disease spread and implementing timely interventions to mitigate its impact on crops and ecosystems.

***Global Plant Health Information System (GloPHIS)*:** GloPHIS, developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, is a global platform for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating plant health data. It provides a centralized repository of information on plant pests and diseases, enabling countries to monitor and respond to emerging threats in real-time.

***Plantwise Knowledge Bank*:** The Plantwise Knowledge Bank, managed by the Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI), is an online platform that provides practical information and resources for plant health practitioners. It offers access to pest and disease management guides, diagnostic tools, and case studies, empowering extension agents and farmers to make informed decisions about disease management.

***Epidemic Intelligence for Plant Health (EIPH)*:** EIPH, developed by the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO), is a web-based platform for monitoring and reporting plant pest and disease outbreaks in Europe. It provides stakeholders with real-time information on disease incidence, distribution, and control measures, facilitating coordinated responses to mitigate the spread of pests and diseases across borders.

***Phytosphere*:** Phytosphere is an online platform developed by the American Phytopathological Society (APS) that serves as a hub for plant pathology research and collaboration. It provides access to peer-reviewed journals, research articles, and discussion forums, enabling researchers to share findings, exchange ideas, and collaborate on projects related to plant disease management.

***Plantwise Online Community*:** The Plantwise Online Community, established by CABI, is a virtual platform for plant health practitioners to connect, share experiences, and access training resources. It offers discussion forums, webinars, and e-learning courses on various topics related to plant pathology, fostering knowledge exchange and capacity building among extension agents and researchers worldwide.

***Plant Health Australia (PHA) Online Portal*:** PHA's online portal is a centralized platform for sharing information and resources related to plant biosecurity in Australia. It provides access to pest and disease profiles, surveillance reports, and biosecurity guidelines, enabling stakeholders to collaborate on national biosecurity initiatives and coordinate responses to plant health threats.

VIRTUAL REALITY (VR) AND AUGMENTED REALITY (AR) IN PLANT PATHOLOGY

In the realm of plant pathology, the integration of immersive technologies such as Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) is revolutionizing disease management practices. VR and AR offer novel approaches to visualizing, understanding, and addressing plant diseases, empowering researchers, farmers, and educators with immersive learning experiences and innovative tools. This article explores the applications and benefits of VR and AR in plant pathology, highlighting their potential to enhance disease detection, diagnosis, and management.

***Visualizing Pathogen Interactions*:** VR and AR simulations allow researchers to visualize the complex interactions between plant pathogens and their hosts in three-dimensional (3D) environments

***Disease Symptom Recognition*:** VR and AR applications enable users to immerse themselves in virtual crop fields and orchards, where they can interact with virtual plants and identify disease symptoms in real-time.

***Virtual Crop Monitoring*:** VR and AR technologies facilitate virtual crop monitoring by integrating real-time sensor data with immersive visualizations. Farmers can use VR headsets or AR-enabled devices to visualize crop health indicators, pest infestations, and disease outbreaks in their fields, enabling timely interventions and optimized resource management.

***Collaborative VR Environments*:** VR platforms enable researchers from different geographic locations to collaborate in virtual environments. By sharing data, models, and simulations in immersive VR spaces, researchers can collaborate on disease research projects, visualize complex datasets, and exchange insights in real-time.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Digital innovations in plant pathology are revolutionizing agriculture, reshaping methods with remote sensing, machine learning, and immersive technologies. These advancements enhance crop yields, promote sustainable practices, and empower scientists and farmers to identify and manage diseases effectively, bolstering global food security and environmental sustainability. Ongoing innovation in the digital realm promises further transformative impacts on plant pathology and agriculture.

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TRANSFORMING INDIAN AGRICULTURE: A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH IN PRODUCTIVITY AND GDP

Hari Om[1] and Sanjeev Kumar[2]*

[1]Bihar Agriculture University, Sabour, Bihar--813210

[2]Agronomy Section, ICAR-National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal, Haryana 132001

*Corresponding author email: bhanusanjeev@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The transformative journey of Indian agriculture, reflecting on its historical significance and current challenges. Contributing approximately 17% to the GDP, the sector has undergone remarkable shifts, evident in the growth of key crops and diversification into horticulture, dairy, and fisheries. However, multifaceted challenges obstruct its full potential. Inadequate research investments, slow technology adoption, water management issues, infrastructure deficiencies, and financial constraints hinder sustainable growth. The article proposes a comprehensive strategy to address these challenges, emphasizing increased R&D funding, technology adoption, water management, market access enhancement, sustainable practices, financial inclusion, and skill development.

INTRODUCTION

India's agricultural sector, a stalwart in the nation's economic narrative since independence, has played a pivotal role in shaping the country's self-sufficiency and growth. Currently contributing around 17% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the sector has undergone transformative phases, notably witnessed during the Green Revolution. The impact of this agricultural transformation is exemplified by remarkable increases in the area, production, and productivity of key crops. For instance, wheat production surged from 6.5 million metric tons in the 1950s to an impressive 109 million metric tons in 2021, establishing India as a global wheat-producing powerhouse. Similarly, rice production soared from 20 million metric tons in the 1950s to over 120 million metric tons, contributing significantly to national and global food security.

Looking forward, the trajectory of Indian agriculture gains further significance in light of evolving demographic patterns and dietary preferences. The diversification of agricultural output is evident in the horticulture sector, where fruits and vegetables production has surged from 16 million metric tons in the

1950s to an extraordinary 320 million metric tons. Beyond crops, the livestock and fisheries sectors also contribute significantly to the nation's agricultural landscape. The dairy sector, witnessing exponential growth, has propelled India to become the world's largest milk producer, with production exceeding 198 million metric tons. Additionally, the fisheries sector has expanded, with fish production exceeding 14 million metric tons. As India stands at the nexus of global challenges and opportunities, the need for a comprehensive and sustainable agricultural strategy becomes paramount. This article seeks to elucidate current challenges, propose innovative solutions, and underscore the transformative potential of Indian agriculture – not merely as an economic sector but as an indispensable force in shaping socio-economic prosperity for generations to come.

MAJOR CHALLENGES IN INDIAN AGRICULTURE

Following are the multifaceted challenges Indian agriculture is facing, encompassing issues that impede its optimal growth and potential:

Research and development (R&D) investments:

Firstly, the sector grapples with inadequate research and development (R&D) investments, hampering the pace of innovation. Despite being a crucial component of the economy, the share of R&D spending in agriculture remains disproportionately low, hindering the development of high-yielding crop varieties, disease-resistant seeds, and sustainable farming practices. This deficit in research undermines the sector's resilience against evolving challenges, such as climate change and emerging pests.

Slow adoption of modern agricultural technologies:

Secondly, the slow adoption of modern agricultural technologies poses a significant hurdle. Precision farming, which leverages technologies like GPS-guided tractors and sensor-based monitoring, can optimize resource usage and boost efficiency. However, the high upfront costs of modern equipment and a lack of awareness and training programs hinder widespread adoption among farmers, limiting the sector's overall productivity.

Water management

Water management emerges as a critical challenge, given India's reliance on monsoon rains and vulnerability to climatic uncertainties. Insufficient investment in advanced irrigation systems and water conservation projects exacerbates water scarcity issues, affecting crop yields and overall agricultural productivity.

Market access and infrastructure deficiencies:

Market access and infrastructure deficiencies also plague Indian agriculture. Inadequate storage facilities, transportation networks, and marketplaces lead to substantial post-harvest losses. The lack of efficient supply chains not only affects farmers' incomes but also limits their ability to tap into global markets, hindering the sector's contribution to the nation's GDP.

Crop diversification and the adoption of sustainable practices

Crop diversification and the adoption of sustainable practices face resistance due to entrenched farming traditions and market dynamics. Monoculture practices, coupled with a dependency on specific crops, render Indian agriculture vulnerable to market fluctuations and climate change impacts. Encouraging farmers to diversify crops and embrace sustainable practices requires comprehensive policy measures and a shift in mindset.

Financial issues:

Financial inclusion remains a persistent challenge, particularly for smallholder farmers. Limited access to credit prevents them from investing in modern techniques, quality seeds, and equipment. Additionally, the absence of robust crop insurance programs leaves farmers exposed to the risks of crop failure and market volatility, impacting their economic stability.

Skill development and education:

Lastly, the need for skill development and education is evident. The gap in knowledge and skills among farmers hampers the effective implementation of modern agricultural practices. Investing in agricultural education, vocational training, and extension services is crucial for empowering farmers with the necessary tools to make informed decisions and optimize their yields.

STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES

Addressing these challenges necessitates a holistic and collaborative approach, combining policy reforms, targeted investments, and community engagement to unlock the full potential of Indian agriculture.

1. Boosting Research and Development (R&D) Investments:

- Increase funding for agricultural research institutions to facilitate cutting-edge research in crop genetics, sustainable farming practices, and climate-resilient crops.
- Foster collaboration between public and private sectors, encouraging partnerships that promote technology transfer, knowledge exchange, and commercialization of research outcomes.

- Establish research centers focused on region-specific challenges to tailor solutions that address the diverse needs of Indian agriculture.

2. Promoting Technology Adoption:

- Introduce targeted subsidy programs for farmers to facilitate affordable access to modern agricultural technologies, such as precision farming equipment, IoT devices, and drone technology.
- Implement widespread awareness and training programs to educate farmers about the benefits and usage of advanced technologies, emphasizing the long-term returns on investment.
- Foster public-private partnerships to develop and deploy technology solutions that address specific challenges faced by Indian farmers.

3. Enhancing Water Management:

- Invest in the development and implementation of advanced irrigation systems, such as drip and sprinkler irrigation, to optimize water usage and reduce wastage.
- Promote rainwater harvesting techniques and construct water storage structures to mitigate the impact of erratic rainfall patterns.
- Implement watershed management programs to ensure sustainable water use, prevent soil erosion, and promote conservation practices.

4. Strengthening Market Access and Infrastructure:

- Develop and upgrade storage facilities, cold chains, and transportation networks to minimize post-harvest losses and ensure the efficient supply of agricultural produce.
- Establish agricultural market clusters with integrated infrastructure, including modern marketplaces and processing units, to facilitate direct farmer-to-consumer transactions.
- Implement digital platforms and technologies to connect farmers with markets, providing real-time information on prices, demand, and supply.

5. Encouraging Crop Diversification and Sustainable Practices:

- Introduce incentive programs and subsidies for farmers who diversify their crops, emphasizing the cultivation of climate-resilient and high-value crops.
- Promote organic farming through awareness campaigns, training programs, and financial incentives to reduce reliance on chemical inputs and enhance soil health.

- Develop certification systems for sustainable farming practices, creating market incentives for farmers engaged in environmentally friendly cultivation methods.

6. Improving Financial Inclusion and Risk Mitigation:

- Expand access to credit through innovative financial instruments, microfinance initiatives, and digital banking services tailored to the needs of smallholder farmers.
- Strengthen crop insurance programs, ensuring comprehensive coverage and timely payouts to protect farmers from the financial impact of crop failure, natural disasters, or market volatility.
- Collaborate with financial institutions and insurance companies to create customized financial products that cater to the specific needs of the agricultural sector.

7. Investing in Skill Development and Education:

- Establish agricultural universities and research centers focused on practical, region-specific training programs for farmers.
- Implement extension services that provide on-the-ground support and knowledge transfer to farmers, covering modern farming techniques, sustainable practices, and market trends.
- Develop partnerships with agricultural experts, NGOs, and community organizations to facilitate continuous learning and skill enhancement for farmers.

CONCLUSION

India stands at the nexus of global challenges and opportunities, the imperative to transform its agricultural sector becomes paramount. The historical success, witnessed during the Green Revolution, serves as inspiration. Addressing challenges necessitates collaborative efforts, blending policy reforms, targeted investments, and community engagement. Strategies outlined, from boosting R&D investments to fostering technology adoption and strengthening market access, provide a roadmap for sustainable growth. This holistic approach, bridging the gap between potential and reality, not only positions Indian agriculture as an economic force but also secures its role in shaping socio-economic prosperity for generations to come.

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PACKAGE AND PRACTICES OF TAPIOCA CULTIVATION IN SOUTHERN PART OF INDIA

V K Meena[1]*, and Priyanka Kumari Meena[1]

[1]Agronomy Section, ICAR-National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal, Haryana 132001

*Corresponding author email: kumar.ladla@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Tapioca (Manihot esculenta Crantz), commonly known as cassava, holds significant agricultural importance in various states of India, notably Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Maharashtra. This perennial shrub, cultivated for its storage roots, serves diverse purposes in food, feed, and industrial applications. The article comprehensively covers the package and practices of tapioca cultivation in the southern part of India, exploring factors such as climate, soil conditions, land preparation, planting techniques, varieties, fertilizers, irrigation, and disease management. Additionally, it provides insights into popular tapioca varieties like H-97, Sree Harsha, Sree Prabha, Sree Jaya, Sree Vijaya, Sree Rekha, and Sree Apoorva, each with distinct characteristics and suitability for different regions. The cultivation practices outlined aim to optimize tapioca yield and quality, contributing valuable insights to the agricultural community.

INTRODUCTION

Tapioca (Manihot esculenta Crantz belonging to the family Euphorbiaceae) commonly known as cassava, tapioca grown different state in India. Tapioca crop most of the Tamilnadu, Kerala, and Maharashtra etc. This is a perennial shrub grown primarily for its storage roots for food, feed and industrial products. Cassava grows to a height of 1-3 m with erect stems and spirally arranged simple lobed leaves with petioles. The plant produces flowers on a raceme. Tubers are usually cylindrical, tapered and brown in colour and can be harvested 5-12 months after planting. Tuber is eaten raw and after cooking. It is also used as a source of starch, flour and ethanol. The cassava roots are processed and are known as tapioca. In India tapioca pearls or small balls are popular diet for patients. The package and practices for tapioca cultivation are as follows:

Climate and Soil: Tapioca crop cultivation any type soil was grown in India. Most of the well drained soil preferably red lateritic loam with a pH range of 5.5 -7.0. Tapioca crop best in tropical, warm humid climate region with well distributed rainfall of over 100 cm per annum.

Land Preparation for Cassava Cultivation: Tapioca crop preparing the land depends on the type of soil. For example, tapioca is cultivated as mounds if the soil is heavy and textured. Under irrigated conditions, furrow method of cultivation is followed. The land is ploughed 4-5 times to loosen the soil. Farm Yard Manure, superphosphate, lindane dust etc. are applied to the soil while ploughing. Beds with good drainage facilities are then prepared for tapioca cultivation.

Planting time: Tapioca crop can be planted at any time of the under irrigated condition. Most of crop planted during month April – May month in rainfed crop and other month in monsoon season (Kharif Month).

Planting materials: Tapioca crop Prepare sets of 15 cm long with 8 – 10 nodes from the middle portion of the stem. Avoid mechanical damage while preparation and handling of setts. The cut end should be uniform. Dip the setts in Carbendazim solution before planting. Plant the setts vertically with buds pointing upward on the sides of ridges and furrows. 17,000 20,000 setts are needed for planting one ha.

Tapioca crop Variety:

Sr, No	**Variety**	**Characters**
1	H-97	This Variety high yielding and matures in 10 months.They are resistant to drought, leaf spot, scale insect spider mite and mosaic diseases. Tubers contain 27-31% starch. Average yield is 10-15 tonnes per acre.
2	Sree Harsha	H-97 is a high yielding hybrid variety of tapioca with medium tall plants(1.5-2 m). Tubers with 27 - 31 percent starch and their avarage Yield is 25-35 T/Ha.

		Maturity period is 10 months. They are field tolerant to drought conditions as well as to Cassava Mosaic Disease (CMD) . They are also field resistant to leaf spot, spider mite and scale insect.
3	Sree Prabha	Hybrid variety of tapioca is excellent for cooking.They can be cultivated in low land as well as upland areas.They are tolerant towards spider mite and leaf spot.
4	Sree Jaya	Sree Jaya is an early maturing (6-7 months) cassava variety especially suitable for low land cultivation as a rotation crop in paddy based cropping system. It has conical tubers with purplish rind, white flesh colour and has excellent cooking quality
5	Sree Vijaya	Sree Vijaya is a high yielding variety of tapioca with excellent cooking quality. Duration is 6 months. It is a selection from the germplasm of cassava. Recorded an yield of 25-28t/ha. Starch content is 27-30%. The tuber flesh colour is light yellow after cooking.
6	Sree Rekha	Sree Rekha is a high yielding top crossed hybrid variety of tapioca with excellent cooking quality. They are suitable for upland and low land cultivation. Maturity period is 8-10 months and average yield is 45-48 T/Ha. They are field tolerant to leaf spot and spider mite.
	Sree Apoorva	It is a triploid variety and the plants are erect, non-branching type.They are suitable for cultivation in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.Starch content is 33%.This variety is used for both extracting starch as well as in cooking.Tuber size is big and flesh is white in color.

Fertilizers and Manure: Tapioca crop Farm yard manure is commonly used for cultivation at the time of ploughing. About 10 -15 tonnes of farm yard manure per acre is applied. Phosphate, nitrogen and potassium fertilizer is applied after 80-95 days of planting. Once the first rains set in 2 Kg of Azotobacter is applied on the field.

Irrigation: First irrigation is given at the time of planting. Life irrigation is given on the 3rd day followed by once in 7 – 10 days upto 3rd month and once in 20 – 30 days upto 8th month.

Diseases and Plant Protection: Some of the common diseases found affecting tapioca crop are:- Anthracnose, Cassava Mosaic Disease, Leaf Spot, Bud Necrosis, Root rot and Tuber scale

Diseases control: These diseases are controlled using disease free stakes for plantation. Resistant varieties developed by research centres are also used for cultivation of tapioca. Some insects affecting tapioca are:

Plant Protection: Tapicco crop mostly common affected in varius insect are Nematodes, Grasshoppers, Cassava scales, Witches' broom.

Insect control: Regular field inspection is the best way to control the spread of diseases and insects. Another method is to practice intercropping pattern. Crops like maize, groundnut, black grams are cultivated which help in controlling the diseases.

Harvest

Crop can be harvested at 9 to 11 months after planting. During tuber maturity, the leaves become yellow and 50 % of leaves become dried and sheds off. The soil near the stem base of the stem shows cracking. Tubers can be uprooted by using fork or crow bar.

Tapioca Crop Yield: Tapioca crop yield in irrigate condition40-50 t/ha and rainfed condition 20-25t/ha

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the cultivation of tapioca in the southern part of India encompasses a set of meticulously designed practices that account for the crop's adaptability and economic significance. The choice of varieties, from high-yielding hybrids like H-97 and Sree Harsha to early-maturing options like Sree Jaya, highlights the diversity in options available to farmers. Emphasizing optimal climate and soil conditions, the article underscores the importance of proper land preparation, planting techniques, and nutrient management for successful tapioca cultivation. Disease and pest management strategies, including the use of disease-resistant varieties and intercropping, further contribute to sustainable tapioca farming. The comprehensive information provided serves as a practical guide for farmers and agricultural enthusiasts, fostering the continued success of tapioca cultivation in the southern regions of India.

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TECH HARVEST: UNLEASHING THE POTENTIAL OF AI IN INDIA'S AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Dilip Kumar[1] and Sanjeev Kumar[2]*
[1]ICAR-Indian Institute of Sugarcane Research, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226002
[2]Agronomy Section, ICAR-National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal, Haryana 132001
Corresponding author email: bhanusanjeev@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The article, "Tech Harvest: Unleashing the Potential of AI in India's Agricultural Landscape," explores how India is leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) to revolutionize its agriculture sector. Confronted with challenges such as climate change, the country leads in integrating AI to address issues. Initiatives like Saagu Baagu and Google's AnthroKrishi demonstrate AI's impact on 7,000+ farmers, enhancing crop yields, minimizing inputs, and increasing incomes. With plans to reach 500,000 farmers, these initiatives highlight the transformative potential of AI. The article envisions AI's future role in India's agri-tech, influencing areas from pest detection to weather forecasting. India's AI-agriculture journey serves as a global inspiration for sustainable digital farming initiatives.

INTRODUCTION

India, the world's largest rice producer and a crucial player in global agriculture, is pioneering the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to transform its agricultural sector. This transformation is not just a trend but a necessity, given the challenges of climate change, pestilence, and financial burdens on farmers. The success of initiatives like Saagu Baagu, a pilot developed in partnership with the Telangana state government, showcases the potential of AI in agriculture. This program has significantly improved the chili value chain for over 7,000 farmers, demonstrating the effectiveness of AI in enhancing crop yields, reducing pesticide and fertilizer use, and improving farmers' incomes. The project's expansion to impact 500,000 farmers across ten districts further underscores the transformative power of AI in agriculture, paving the way for sustainable and efficient farming practices.

THE EMERGENCE OF AI IN AGRICULTURE

India's agricultural system, a cornerstone of its economy and a significant contributor to global food security, is confronted with profound challenges. The need for more efficient crop yield to sustain India's 1.4 billion population is paramount. Climate change disrupts agricultural systems, while unsustainable farming practices exacerbate climate change through substantial greenhouse gas emissions, water usage, and deforestation. Without a paradigm shift, food and environmental systems worldwide are at risk.

Google's AnthroKrishi and Google Partner Innovation teams are pioneering the use of AI to address these challenges, aligning with Google's AI Principles. Their goal is to advance agricultural sustainability, beginning with India. The teams are developing a suite of AI-powered technologies to organize and utilize India's agricultural data, with the most foundational being the development of a unified "landscape understanding".

LANDSCAPE UNDERSTANDING AND MONITORING

Landscape understanding employs satellite imagery and machine learning to demarcate fields, the fundamental unit of agriculture, essential for generating meaningful insights. With field segments established, the model can determine the acreage of farm fields, forest and woodland areas, and identify irrigation structures like farm wells and dug ponds to develop tools for drought preparedness.

The research team is also developing "landscape monitoring" models, which provide a more detailed picture of an individual field's current performance and future needs. Future landscape monitoring models would be capable of determining data like crop type, field size, distance to water, and a crop's last sow or harvest date. The team also aims to provide in-depth data about farm ponds, with information like water availability over the past month, year, or three years critical in establishing water security and drought management strategies.

PARTNERSHIPS AND FEEDBACK

The research was made possible through significant partnerships with state governments, academic institutions, and local communities. A shared vision across these partnerships was essential. Rama Devi, Director of Emerging Technology of Telangana State, noted that AI is "a powerful tool for governments to drive transformational impact across sectors, while impacting lives at large scale." The team also partnered with the state government of Telangana to conduct field research, including visits to villages to work with local farmers to better understand their current needs and get feedback on field boundary accuracy.

IMPACT BEYOND INDIVIDUAL FARMERS

The field data is key to unlocking the potential of India's agricultural power — with a deep and accurate understanding of field performance and ever-changing environmental conditions, farmers can reduce land and water waste while increasing their crop yield. However, the impact of these insights extends well beyond individual farmers and empowers India’s entire agricultural ecosystem. With more information on farm performance and needs, agricultural loans become more accessible, and state governments can support several farming districts at scale. This information also supports India’s rapidly growing agricultural technology industry, as new technologies are developed to make farming practices more efficient and sustainable.

THE FUTURE OF AI IN AGRICULTURE

The Indian agri-tech market, presently valued at USD 204 million, is expected to undergo exponential transformation owing to the adoption of technologies like artificial intelligence and supportive government policies. Detection of pests and weeds, agricultural robotics, precision farming with the help of predictive analytics, crop health assessment through drones, soil monitoring systems, AI-based price forecasting of crops based on historical data, and weather forecast to predict unfavorable weather conditions are some of the areas where AI is expected to play a key role.

Advancements in computer vision, artificial intelligence, and machine learning are enabling the development and deployment of remote sensing technologies to identify and manage plants, weeds, pests, and diseases. This also provides a unique opportunity to develop intelligent seeding methods for precise fertilization. Artificial intelligence solutions can enable farmers not only to reduce wastage but also to improve quality and ensure faster market access for the produce.

CONCLUSION

The integration of AI in agriculture is not just a trend but a necessity for India, given the challenges it faces. The success of initiatives like Saagu Baagu and the broader adoption of AI technologies in agriculture are transforming the sector, making it more resilient, efficient, and sustainable. As the world grapples with the challenges of ensuring food security, mitigating climate change impacts, and protecting livelihoods, India's experience with AI in agriculture offers valuable lessons and insights that can inspire global efforts in digital farming. The future of agriculture in India, and potentially the world, lies in the harnessing of AI to address the complex challenges of food production and sustainability.

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THE UNTAPPED BENEFITS OF NATIVE *Phyllanthus acidus*, A LESS POPULAR GEM

Darshini Srinivasan[1]*and Arun Kumar S[2]

[1]National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management, Thanjavur- 613005

[2]Assistant Professor, Rajalakshmi Engineering College, Thandalam- 602105

*Corresponding author email: darshivasan@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

__Phyllanthus__ __acidus__, a species belonging to the family Phyllanthaceae is native to Madagascar and found in many parts of Asia. Despite its name, it doesn't resemble gooseberry. It is one of the unknown and under-utilized fruit in terms of commercialization and processing. The fruit has a greenish yellow skin and a white to cream colored fleshy interior that covers a pit of seeds. It has a tangy taste. Plant extracts offer therapeutic qualities, according to studies. It harbors a high anti-oxidant potential and other minerals like iron, calcium, manganese and can be taken as a liver tonic. This essay examines the plant's therapeutic and nutritional qualities as well as its commercial uses.

INTRODUCTION

Phyllanthus acidus is a tropical tree in the *Phyllanthaceae* family. The tree can grow to a height of 10 meters and is occasionally categorized as an ornamental shrub. The small, thick, pink blossoms are produced by the rough, gray bark. Within 90–100 days, the three different flower types—male, female, and hermaphrodite—mature into hard, sour, oblate, and drupaceous fruits. (Morton, 1987). This species is tropical or subtropical and can be found in South America, Central America, the Caribbean, and all throughout Asia. It is referred to as "Grosella" in Puerto Rico. (Jules J and Paull. R. E, 2008)

The fruit is called Karmay in the Philippines, Jimbelin in Jamaica, Otaheite gooseberry in India, Lao in Tibet, Grosella in Puerto Rico and Belize, damsel in Grenada, chellomello in the Cayman Islands, sour cherry in Trinidad, mayom in Thailand, kantuet in Cambodia, or gooseberry, depending on the region in which it grows. (Afrin et al., 2016 and Orwa et al.,2009).

GROWTH CONDITIONS

The tree's ability to grow and adapt to a wide range of soil types accounts for its widespread distribution. However, moist soil types are favoured. *P. acidus* is mostly grown from fruit seeds. Budding or air layers are alternate methods by which the plant may be cultivated. The main pest known to harm the cultivation of these fruit trees and causes total defoliation is the *Phyllanthus* caterpillar. The tree can be found growing between 0 and 1000 meters above sea level. Recorded growth at 914 m has been documented in El Salvador (Morton, 1987, Orwa et al., 2009).

Moist soil is preferred by Otaheite gooseberries. In addition to standard seed growth, it can be cultivated via air-layering, cutting, and budding. The tree is grown for food and medicine in addition to its aesthetic value. Although it yields fruit all year round, the majority of the harvest occurs in January, with the exception of South India, where it bears fruit in April–May and again in August–September. When the fruit starts to fall, it is harvested since it does not soften when it is ripe (Morton and Julia, 1963).

Figure 1. *Phyllanthus acidus* fruit and tree

THE FRUIT

Fruits have a 2 cm diameter and are tightly packed. (Afrin et al. 2016 and Orwa et al., 2009). When the fruit reaches maturity, its colour changes from yellowish green to yellow. Because of their high acid content, mature fruits are typically acidic and sour. Although it can be eaten raw, the fruit is typically eaten with salt. The fruit is prepared for commercial sale in Thailand. The fruit has been adapted in many cuisines across its diverse geographic locations, where it is used to make pickles, syrups, sweetened dried fruit, or preserves when combined with other fruits. Drinks are made with fruit juice and vinegar. (Orwa et al., 2009).

THE FLOWER

They are tiny, pinkish, and grouped together in panicles that are 5 to 12.5 cm long. At the top of the tree, in the leafless sections of the main branches, flowers develop. The fruits are many, oblate, tightly grouped, and have six to eight ribs. They are quite sour, crisp and juicy, waxy, pale yellow or white, and juicy. Every fruit has a stone in the middle that holds four to six seeds. (Morton, 1987).

NUTRITIONAL PROFILING

The fruit yields high moisture content despite some sugars, phenolics and acids in it. Some notable minerals present are calcium, iron, manganese, potassium and zinc. It also contains trace amounts of vitamin B (thiamine, 0.01 mg/100 g, and riboflavin, 0.05 mg/100 g), ascorbic acid (36.7 mg/100 g), and other nutrients. (Shilali, 2015). *P. acidus* also contains hypogallic acid, kaempferol, adenosine, caffeic acid, and 4-hydroxybenzoic acid.

Table 1. Nutritional composition of *Phyllanthus acidus* fruits (Brooks et al., 2020)

Nutrient	(Thailand)	% (India)
Moisture (%)	91.7	86.7
Carbohydrates (%)	6.4	4.8
Protein (%)	0.7	0.25
Fat (%)	0.52	Not determined
Fibre (%)	0.51	Not determined

Table 2. Chemical constituents in *Phyllanthus acidus* fruits (Mahapatra et al., 2012)

Constituents	Percentage (%)
Reducing sugar	0.04
Non-reducing sugar	4.46
Phenol	0.6
Acid	0.45

ANTI-OXIDANT PROPERTIES

High amounts of antioxidant activity are seen in P. acidus fruit and leaf extracts, which is important for cardiovascular health. (Nisar et al., 2018). The 2,2-diphenyl-1-picrylhydrazyl (DPPH) radical scavenging assay was used to evaluate fruit aqueous extracts in vitro. The results showed that water extracts had higher levels of antioxidant activity than ethanolic extracts. The antioxidant activity of pulp and seed extracts is strong, with IC50 values of 5.96 µg/mL and 6.79 µg/mL, respectively. Compared to the seed (16.2 gallic acid equivalents/g of dried sample), the fruit pulp (25.6 mg gallic acid equivalents/g of plant extract) had a higher overall phenolic content. (Foyzun et al., 2016).

Table 3. Minerals and vitamins composition of *Phyllanthus acidus* fruits (Mahapatra et al., 2012)

Constituents	mg/100g
Potassium	223.44
Calcium	163.22
Sodium	17.5
Iron	2.43
Zinc	1.63
Manganese	1.31
Copper	0.20
Carotenoids	2.43
Ascorbic acid	36.7

FOOD INDUSTRY APPLICATIONS

Commercial exploitation of agricultural products of these fruits rises when value-added products (beverages, candies, jams, pulps, sorbets, etc.) with substantial nutritional and therapeutic value are produced from them. Raw *P. acidus* pickles having a good shelf-life is a notable fermented product.

There are several components of the plant that are edible. The cooked leaves are consumed in Indonesia, Bangladesh, and India. Although the fruit is consumed raw in Indonesia and occasionally added to other foods as a flavouring, it is usually thought to be too sour to be consumed unprocessed. It is used to make chutney, relish, or preserves after being candied in sugar or pickled in salt. (National Geographic, 2008)

It is consumed raw, soaking in salt or vinegar-salt solution, and sold by the roadside in the Philippines, where it is also used to produce vinegar. It is also candied and is typically kept in syrup-filled jars. In Malaysia, these are turned into syrup. It is also used to make fruit juice, which is heavily sweetened. It is a common component in Thai recipes for Som Tam, pickles, and boil-in-syrup (Ma-Yom Chuam). (Janick et al., 2008). The tree is rarely harvested for wood and utensils can be made out of it.

(a) Pickle **(b) Amla ginger candy**

Figure 2. Food products made from *P. acidus*

THERAPEUTIC QUALITIES

Every portion of the tree is thought to have unique therapeutic qualities in Indonesia. The fruits have laxative, astringent, and ulcer-healing properties. The leaves have been used to cure scurvy, cough, asthma, cancer, hepatic diseases, inflammation, rheumatism and weight loss. The bark is applied on rashes and asthma. The fruit is eaten raw by locals or used as a pickle ingredient. 200 mL of water is combined with 25 g of plant material to make medicine. (Dalimartha, 2008). Fruit extracts provide analgesic, anaesthetic, hypoglycaemic, and antidiarrheal effects. (Afrin et al., 2016). Infusions of roots have been used to treat foot psoriasis too.

CONCLUSION

The *Phyllanthus Acidus* is reported to be one of the under-rated fruits in terms of its utilization despite it holding numerous health benefits. Traditional medicine uses *P. acidus* preparations to treat a variety of illnesses. Research has validated the plant's antioxidant and nutraceutical characteristics. The fruits are a source of vitamins and minerals and is utilized in the manufacturing of value-added products such as jams and drinks. Studies demonstrated that, the greatest potential for antioxidant and cytotoxic effects is seen in *P. acidus* water extract. It is abundant in phyto-constituents, including phytosterols, tannin, gallic acid, tartaric acid, and ascorbic acid. In Ayurveda, the majority of these species are helpful in treating skin, respiratory, and digestive disorders.

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