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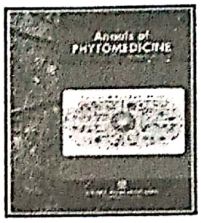
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Minor goes diviner: Functional, prebiotic, probiotic and bioactive properties of underutilized fruits

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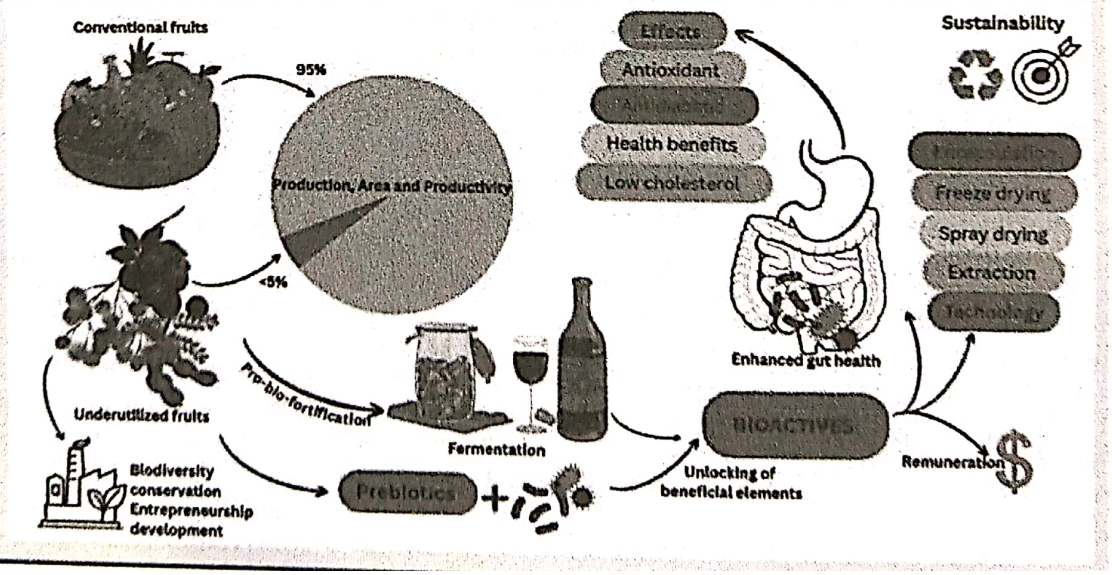
Lifestyle diseases

Pro-bio-fortification

Underutilized fruits

Abstract

The very unpopular opinion persists that arid regions cannot produce fruits of higher nutritional value and have been underestimated for decades. The arid regions are highly neglected from a fruit cultivation point of view. This review shall focus on the neglected crops with high potential as prebiotic, probiotic, and functional foods. The arid zone crops like Kaphal (*Myrica esculenta* Buch.-Ham. ex D.Don), Cluster figure (*Ficus racemosa* L.), Sea buckthorn (*Hippophae rhamnoides* L.), Bael (*Aegle marmelos* (L.) Corrêa), Timru (*Zanthoxylum armatum* DC.), Phalsa (*Grewia asiatica* L.), Khirni (*Manilkara hexandra* (Roxb.) Dubard), Peelu (*Salvadora oleoides* Decne.), Kair (*Capparis decidua* Forssk.), Silver Date (*Phoenix sylvestris* L.), Prickly pear (*Opuntia ficus-indica* L.), Manila tamarind (*Pithecellobium dulce* Roxb.), Lasoda (*Cordia myxa* L.), Mulberry (*Morus alba* L.), Chironji (*Buchanania lanzan* Spreng.), *etc*., are focused for their nutraceutical and functional properties. The consumption of these fruits is very rare nowadays, but have immense potential for planned promotion and expansion of their cultivation area. These fruit crops have high nutraceutical values. These fruits are capable of surviving in unsupportive climate conditions and have the ability to produce some unique phytochemicals that are only possible in the specific climatic conditions received. On the grounds of nutrition demand, barren lands, affected soils, and extreme climate conditions, it is important to reintroduce these species to their habitats. Health benefits of the fruits are well known, but the modern concept of 'eat more fruit' has been concentrating only on a few fruits; the window needs to be widened with the inclusion of minor fruits.



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