

Consumption practices of green leafy vegetables among selected households

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ABSTRACT

A total number of 100 households were surveyed by personal interview method to elicit the information regarding the consumption practices of green leafy vegetables in Parbhani (M.S.) India. The socio-economic background, frequency of consumption of green leafy vegetables and storage practices of selected green leafy vegetables were studied. The results revealed that the majority of the surveyed housewives were of middle aged and were from nuclear families. The literacy level of housewives as well as heads of families was good. Most of them were Primary School educated and were from middle income group. This may be due to the reasons that the surveyed households were urban and rural residents. The occasional consumption of Tandulga (*Amaranthus polygramous*), Shepu (*Peucedanum graveolens*), Chickpea gram leaves (*Cicer arietinum*), Rajkeera leaves (*Amaranthus paniculatus*) and Patra (*Sonchus arvensis*) was found to be more than 30 per cent. It was also noticed that very low per cent of subjects used to consume green leafy vegetables leaves in the powder form where as the majority of them consumed green leafy vegetables in cooked form. On the other hand, majority of the families were not having the awareness regarding nutrient content and medicinal value of green leafy vegetables.

KEY WORDS : Socio-economic status, Consumption, Storage practices, Green leafy vegetables

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In India, leafy vegetables from many plants have been used in the diet from ancient times. Leafy vegetables are inexpensive and protective foods, which have acclaimed as a basic component of balanced diet. Leafy vegetables are prerequisite of poor mans luxury because of their richness in protective nutrients wide range of choice and low cost.

Green leafy vegetables are available in plenty in Indian situation and also provide variety to the diet. They make the food attractive by their colour, texture and flavour. Indian population is mostly vegetarian but the intake of vegetables has been too low in daily diet because people do not eat vegetables or eat less in quantity due to ignorance of the importance of vegetables in the diet. Further, vegetables are perishable and storage facilities are limited, therefore the vegetables are unavailable in a particular place or season which results less consumption of vegetables.

Green leafy vegetables supply many nutrients and are rich sources of carotene, iron, calcium, ascorbic acid, riboflavin, folic acid and appreciable amounts of other minerals (Devadas and Saroja, 1980). Indian Council of Medical Research recommendation for leafy vegetables for adult is 100 g but the consumption is found to be only 10-20 g, which is only 20 per cent of the requirement

(Gopalan *et al.*, 1989). Low consumption of green leafy vegetables leads to lower intake of vitamins and minerals, as a result majority of the population suffer from iron and vitamins A deficiency.

The leafy vegetables are highly perishable and heavy losses occur due to non-availability of sufficient storage, transport and proper processing facilities at the production point (Pande *et al.*, 2000). Preservation of the vegetables can prevent huge wastage as well as make the available in the lean season. Dehydration is one of the best methods of preservation of leafy vegetables because it reduces the cost of storage and transportation by reducing both the weight and volume of the final product.

Many types of green leafy vegetables are consumed all over the country. However, the green leafy vegetables are seasonal and available only in particular season. Information pertaining to the storage practices of green leafy vegetables are meagre hence an attempt was made to find out the consumption and storage practices of green leafy vegetables among the selected households.

RESEARCH METHODS

A total number of 100 households covering both rural and urban areas were randomly selected in Parbhani