

Knowledge and use of preservation of fruits and vegetables among rural women of Nainital district

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■ **ABSTRACT** : The present study was made with an objective to find out the knowledge and use of preservatives in fruits and vegetables. The investigation was carried out in four villages of Ramnagar and Bhimtal Panchayat Samiti of Nainital district of Uttarakhand state, covering 100 rural women. Interview schedule was developed by the investigators for data collection. Frequency and percentage were used for analysis of data for present study. The results indicated that rural women had knowledge about the importance of fruit and vegetable in human diet whereas 62 per cent of the respondents did the preservation due its availability in off season. Majority of the respondents used oil and salt as a preservative (75%) whereas 76 per cent respondents used clean and dry containers for preparing items and 85 per cent of the respondents did not use the food items during menses time.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Preservation, Fruits and vegetables, Knowledge, Method

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India is an agriculture based country. Hundreds of fruits and vegetables types are grown in all parts of India. India produces a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. It ranks second in fruits and vegetables production in the world, after China. As per National Horticulture Database, 2010 published by National Horticulture Board, during 2009-10, India produced 71.516 million metric tones of fruits and 133.738 million metric tones of vegetables (Chadha, 2011). The area under cultivation of fruits stood at 6.329 million hectares while vegetables were cultivated on 7.985 million hectares. A large variety of fruits and vegetables are grown in India. Of these, mango, banana, citrus, pineapple, pear, plum, apricot, almond and walnut (temperate fruits) and aonla, ber, pomegranate, annona, fig, phalsa (arid zone fruits) are important. Amongst fruits, the country ranks first in production of bananas (28%) papayas, mangoes (39%) lemons and limes. Mangoes, walnuts, grapes, bananas, pomegranates account for larger portion of fruits exported from the country while onions, okra, bitter gourd, green chilles, mushrooms and potatoes contribute largely to the vegetable export basket (Chadha, 2011).

The importance of fruits and vegetables to a healthy

diet has been known for quite some time. But result of the studies proves that very few people eat the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables essential for a healthy diet. Fruit and vegetables are packed full of goodness and often contain a number of essential vitamins and minerals that cannot be found in other types of foods or they may contain higher levels of these nutrients than other foods. In addition to their great taste, fruits and vegetables are packed full of many essential vitamins and minerals, including many micronutrients that are not included in packaged vitamin supplement (www.wideworldoffood.com). Fruits and vegetables that are in season are usually quite a bit cheaper than those that must be shipped hundreds or even thousands of miles, and they are generally much fresher too. District Nainital is a unique district of Kumaun having tropical type, subtropical type, temperate, sub alpine and alpine zones in its lap. Apple orchards are found mainly in Ramgarh Mukteshwar belt. Beside this peach, pears, apricot, citrus fruits, kaffir lime, strawberry, hills banana grown in the hilly track, Lichi of Ramnagar makes Nainital a main fruit growing district (www.kumaoninfo.com). The rural people in India do not