



Indigenous technical knowledge on coleus crop cultivation

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted at Salem district of Tamil Nadu. Ten villages were selected by using simple random sampling procedure. One hundred twenty coleus growers were selected from ten selected revenue villages for the study. The Indigenous technical knowledge of coleus plant cultivation was collected by participatory mode of focused group interview with ten groups. The respondents were asked to indicate the problems faced by them, while cultivating coleus crop. The problems enlisted were interpreted based on percentage analysis. There were eleven indigenous technical knowledge (ITK) documented with respect to coleus crop cultivation of which four indigenous technology were pertaining to crop production and seven pertaining to crop protection aspects. With respect to crop protection, the chemical secret from the sorghum root will help to solve the potash in deficit the soil that might be the probable reason for 91.67 per cent of the respondents reported the cultivation of coleus crop immediately after the harvest of sorghum which will increase the tuber yield of crop. There were 17 constraints reported by the respondents. Most important constraints were lack of fixed price policy for medicinal plant like coleus by the government, insufficient research input management for medicinal crop based cropping system, inadequate storage facilities, lack of knowledge on processing and lack of co operatives for marketing as expressed by 52.00-70.00 per cent of the respondents.

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INTRODUCTION

India is renowned with bio-diversity with different agro-climatic conditions prevalent over the country. It is endowed with 15000 to 18000 flowering plants and are being used for traditional system for medicine. Estimates state that there are more than 7500 species of medicinal plants which are being utilized by about 4600 ethnic communities for both human and veterinary care (Vijayalakshmi, 1999) These medicinal plants are utilized not only in Ayurveda but also in Siddha, Unani, Homeopathy, Tribal medicine etc. India is known from time immemorial for its enormous herbal medicinal plant resource (Ghule, 2004) Medicinal coleus (*Coleus forskohli* Briq.) is one of the most important medicinal crops of the future as its pharmacopical properties have been discovered only recently.

It belongs to the family Labiateae, the genus coleus has 150 species of which *C.amboinicus*, *C. forskohlii*, *C.spicatus* and *C. malabaricus* are naturally occurring species. *C.forskohlii* is the only naturally

occurring species to have tuberous roots. The plant is well known throughout the country and is known by various local names, as Pashan Bhendi in Sanskrit, Patharchur in Hindi, Garmalu in Gujarati, Maimul in Marathi and Marunthukurkan Kilangu in Tamil.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted at Salem district of Tamil Nadu. Ten villages from Attur Taluk were selected by using simple random sampling procedure. One hundred twenty coleus growers were selected from ten selected revenue villages for the study. Indigenous technical knowledge operationalised as the knowledge prevailing among the coleus growers over the years about the concerned scientists in the field to know the rationality behind the documented indigenous technical knowledge. The indigenous technical knowledge of coleus plant cultivation was collected by participatory mode of focused group interview with ten groups. Each group comprised of twelve growers. Interview was made by participatory mode

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