Book Reviews

Underutilized and Underexploited Horticultural Crops. Vol. 2. K.V. Peter (ed.) 2007. New Indian Publishing Agency, Pitam Pura, New Delhi, India 110 088. 355 p., 35 color plates. \$99.95 hardcover ISBN 81-89422-69-3.

This book is the second volume on underutilized horticultural crops of the Indian subcontinent. Local authorities have prepared 20 chapters beginning with a general introduction on *In situ* Conservation of Horticultural Crops. The introduction is followed by chapters on specific underutilized crops, including six fruits, five vegetables, one root and tuber crop, two flowers, three trees, and two spices. Thus, there is something for horticulturists of every persuasion.

One chapter is dedicated to the underutilized fruits of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which are situated off the eastern coast of India. Many species that offer possibility of increased production are identified and discussed.

Individual chapters on fruits focus on giant granadilla (*Passiflora quadrangularis* L.), apricot (*Prunus armeniaca* L.), low-chill peach (*Prunus persica* [L.] Batch.), aonla (*Emblia officinalis* Gaertn), ber or Chinese date (*Ziziphus xylopyrus* Willd. or *Ziziphus jujuba* Mill.).

The vegetable section features two chapters on a multitude of cucurbit crops. Another chapter details vegetables suitable for production in arid areas of India. A short chapter is devoted to obscure plants in the genus *Alternanthera* Forsk. of the Amaranthaceae family and used as greens. The final vegetable chapter features the *Hibiscus* L. (roselle) and *Abelmoschus* Medic. (okra) genera of the Malvaceae family.

A multitude of underutilized root and tuber crops are included in one chapter. These crops are not grown widely but have potential for limited commercial culture. Many are illustrated with excellent images of above and below ground structures.

Underutilized flowering plants are featured in two chapters. One is on numerous types of lilies, and the other is on various native species. The sections on flowers (*Clerodendrum* spp. L. and others) are well illustrated with colored images.

Mahwa (*Bassia latifolia* Roxb.), chironji or charoli (*Buchanania lanzan* Spreng.) and moringa (*Moringa oleifera* Lam.), also known as drumstick or horseradish tree, are the focus of three chapters. Mahwa flowers are used for distilled liquor and potable spirits, and fruits are used in various ways. Chironji fruit are enjoyed raw or roasted. Drumstick is a multipurpose tree having

varied uses such as a windbreaks and medicinal preparations of many sorts.

Finally, the spices turmeric (*Curcuma longa* L.) and long coriander (*Eryngium foetidum* L.) are included in the last section of the book. Turmeric rhizomes are used as a coloring agent, flavoring spice, and for medicinal purposes. Long coriander leaves are used as a substitute seasoning for coriander especially in Asia and Central America.

The chapters vary considerably in length (3 to 63 pages) and in detail. Citations to local and international literature generally vary with chapter length. The book is not indexed so searching for a particular topic or crop is difficult.

Horticulturists in North America and elsewhere are familiar with the series that is edited by Jules Janick and others and that results from periodic New Crops (and New Uses) Conferences beginning in 1990. Several of these volumes have been reviewed in *HortScience*. The sixth volume in this series, titled *Issues in New Crops and New Uses*, resulting from a conference held in San Diego in 2006, will soon be published by ASHS Press.

Underutilized and Underexploited Horticultural Crops provides much useful information. However, horticulturists in many parts of the world may find the series edited by Janick to be also relevant to their needs.

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Wimauma

Introduction to Fruit Crops. Mark Rieger (University of Florida). 2006. The Haworth Press, 10 Alice Street, Binghamton, NY 13904-1580. 462 pp. \$69.95 softcover. ISBN-13: 978-1-56022-259-0/ ISBN-10: 1-56022-259-X

This book is quite unique among fruit books in that it covers a wide range of perennial, edible, economically important plants that are defined botanically as fruit. Consequently, it includes 7 types of nuts, 18 traditional temperate, subtropical and tropical fruits and several less common fruits including cacao, coconut, coffee, and palm oil. The first chapter offers an abridged introduction to the botany, distribution, culture, pest control and storage of fruit crops. In this chapter, there are 30 plates containing 178 high-quality, glossy, colored photographs. The chapter contains an extensive glossary of terms that by itself is very instructive and useful. The index is extensive, clear, and easy to use. A major strength or value of this book resides in the unusual and nontraditional information for each fruit, giving information that is often lacking in other introductory fruit books. Specifically,

information on medicinal properties, folklore, and contributions to the diet are most useful and interesting additions. *Introduction to Fruit Crops* is an extremely well written book that is very easy to read.

All chapters are structured in the same way. This format is quite helpful since the categorization makes it very easy to locate specific facts about an individual crop. Very useful information is presented and is not found in other similar books, and this property may be one of the major strengths of this book. Notes on individual chapters follow.

Taxonomy. This chapter includes genus and species, commercially important species, and botanically related fruit crops. When appropriate, important cultivars are named.

Origin, History and Cultivation. The region of origin and history and description of movement in the world for each fruit crop are described.

Folklore, Medicinal Properties, and Non-food Uses. In addition to the traditional food uses, many fruit have an equally important history for medicinal use and in myth, folklore, or symbolism.

Production. The important countries in which each fruit is produced are given along with the percentage of the world production in a given country. A separate section is reserved for production in the United States, where the states with the highest productions and the percent production are ranked.

Botanical Description. The plant size and growth habit, flower structure and description, pollination requirements, and fruit classification and description are provided for each crop.

General Culture. This section contains soils and climate preferences, propagation methods, rootstocks used if appropriate, major pest problems, and planting, design, training and pruning in cultivation of the crops.

Harvest and Postharvest Handling. Criteria used to determine the time of harvest, methods of harvest, and methods and length of storage are discussed.

Contributions to the Diet. The dietary value and percentage of the recommended daily allowance for each vitamin and nutrient are provided for fruits. Also listed are the major food uses and the utilization statistics.

Bibliography. Each chapter concludes with a useful bibliography of selected references that direct the reader to further information on each fruit discussed.

This book would be of interest to a wide horticultural audience. It may be most useful to instructors in an introductory horticulture course, extension personnel, and avid amateur gardeners.

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