



## Garcinia cambogia: A Miracle Medicinal Plant

(\*Anjali Jingar<sup>1</sup> and Bhagwati Baranda<sup>2</sup>)

<sup>1</sup>Asst. Seed Cert. Officer, Raj. State Seed & Organic Certification Agency, Jodhpur

<sup>2</sup>Agriculture Officer, Department of Agriculture, Govt. of Rajasthan

\* [anjali.jingar.12.4@gmail.com](mailto:anjali.jingar.12.4@gmail.com)

India with its diverse, but favorable agro climatic conditions produces a wide range of tropical and temperature fruits and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables belong to an essential class of foods that supply human diet with nutritive requirements including vitamins and minerals which are essential for normal body health and function. Garcinia (Malabar tamarind) is an exotic sub tropical fruit found in the Western Ghats of India as well as in South- East Asia. They belong to the family Guttiferae. Most of the underutilized fruits are believed to have some health promoting or disease preventing properties are termed as 'Nutraceuticals' in the market. Even though Garcinia cambogia had a number of nutraceutical effects, its use is under exploited in our country which resulted in the wastage of these fruits during the seasonal glut. Garcinia is described as "Nature's Natural Fat Buster". Since Garcinia has a greater dietary importance in treating obesity it can be utilized in the preparation of value added products like squashes, jams, preserves etc.

### Usage of Garcinia cambogia

Traditionally the fruit rind and extracts of Garcinia species has been used for centuries in Asian countries for culinary purposes as a condiment and flavouring agent in place of tamarind or lemon to make meals more filling in many recipes especially for fish curries. In the Indian Ayurvedic system Garcinia which is having sour taste are said to promote digestion. The anti-bacterial properties of the Garcinia fruit is applied as "Colombo curing" fish preservation method in the olden days. It is also employed in veterinary medicine as a rinse for diseases of the mouth in cattle. The dried rind is also used for polishing gold and silver and as a substitute for acetic and formic acids in the coagulation of rubber latex. The yellow resin obtained from the fruit is soluble in turpentine and used as varnish. Apart from the traditional uses of Garcinia cambogia, it finds a wide value of applications in "Nutraceutical" field. Drying, an old age method for preserving food is the existing preservation technique for Garcinia. Garcinia produced in excess, can be converted to more durable value added products by applying modern preservation like osmotic pressure, controlled pH, dehydration and processing techniques like utilization of fruit in the preparation of fruit beverages, in order to avoid wastage during seasonal glut. If utilized properly, medicinally and nutritionally valuable Garcinia can be processed into a variety of food products.

### Health benefits of Garcinia cambogia

The nutraceutical effects of Garcinia cambogia is due to the presence of an acid known as HCA or hydroxy citric acid in it. This higher HCA content in Garcinia makes it an effective anti- obesity agent because of its appetite reducing property by inhibiting the enzyme ATP-

citrate lyase. *Garcinia cambogia* is a rich source of antioxidants that fights oxidative stress and prevents the onset of diseases and disorders. Due to its high vitamin C content, a *Garcinia cambogia* fruits helps to prevent heart diseases. *Garcinia* has proven medicinal effect in treating conditions like flatulence, oedema, chronic alcoholism, dysentery, diarrhea etc. *Garcinia* is also used in Ayurvedic medicine to promote digestion and also as a remedy for arthritis and ulcers. The plant contains various chemical constituents such as Xanthones, Benzophenones and acids like Maleic acid and citric acid. *Garcinia cambogia* has wonderful anti inflammatory properties and it is especially useful for people suffering from inflammatory bowel diseases. Traditionally *Garcinia cambogia* was used as a remedy for treating gastric ulcers. *Garcinia Cambogia* exhibits good anti-bacterial and deworming activity. *Garcinia cambogia* also reduces blood sugar levels and it is useful for the diabetic patients too.

### Conclusion

Under exploited fruits like *Garcinia* are the several less known fruit species which have the potential for commercial exploitation and yet to be utilized for their potential. Since life style diseases are increasing today the fruit beverages by incorporating *Garcinia* can be best suited for the persons who are suffering from obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases etc. as a refreshing drink and this processed nutrient rich fruit drink helps in increasing the usage of the fruit by making it available throughout the year.

