Traditional Medical Applications of Agricultural Plants in the Eastern Serbia

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Abstract:

The particular geography of the Timok region (Eastern Serbia) in combination with the heterogeneous soils, topography, climate and geology is the basis for the remarkable biodiversity. The largely unpolluted rural areas offer great potential for organic food production and the sustainable harvesting of edible wild plants and medicinal herbs.

In ten villages in eastern Serbia, Timok region, 33 men and 61 women (mean age 64 years, range 48 to 79 years) participated in semi-structured ethnobotanical interviews on the use of agricultural plants for various medicinal purposes.

According to the results, the most commonly used plant species belonged to the Rosaceae (54.55%, 78 use-reports) and Apiaceae (32.87%, 47 use-reports) families. The most commonly used plants were *Apium graveolens* (17.48%, 25 use-reports), *Malus domestica* (14.69%, 21 use-reports) and *Fragaria x ananasa* (13.29%, 19 use-reports). The most common complaints treated by respondents with agricultural plants were endocrine, metabolic and nutritional disorders (40.56%, 58 use-reports) and digestive (34.97%, 50 use-reports) and urological conditions (17.48%, 25 use-reports).

The agricultural plant species cultivated in the Timok region play an important role in traditional health care, especially due to the region's great floristic diversity and ethnobotanical knowledge rooted in the local ecological conditions.

Keywords:

Apicaceae, ethnobotanical interview, Rosaceae.