



ETHNOBOTANICAL STUDIES OF SOME PLANTS COMMONLY USED AS VEGETABLES IN SELECTED PROVINCES OF THE PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT – Documentation of underutilized vegetables and wild food plants and their utilization in municipalities of Ilocos Norte, Palawan and South Central Mindanao was conducted to prepare strategies for genetic conservation, propagation and eventually, breeding and commercialization of promising vegetables. Respondents were asked on the socioeconomics, ethnographic and ethnobotanical aspect of underutilized vegetables and wild food plants they are familiar with. A total of 27 species (18 families) were identified in Ilocos Norte, 28 species (23 families) in Palawan and 20 species (15 families) in South Central Mindanao. Vegetables cited ranged from herbs to trees with various plant parts being consumed. They were consumed as salad, sautéed dish, or viand cooked with fish paste. Some served as vegetable ‘toppings’ in popular dishes while others served as souring agents. Based on feedbacks from the respondents, some underutilized and wild food plants were found to have potential for commercialization and can provide an appreciable additional income to farm families. The results of this study will serve as a take-off point for the future evaluation of the different species for the development of varieties and lines as well as evaluation of their nutraceutical value. This will in turn result to promotion and increased utilization and production of the selected vegetables for food security in the midst of the changing climate.

Keywords: ethnobotany, underutilized vegetables, wild food plants utilization



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