



❁ Yams and tuber crops that can be cultivated under less favorable conditions with minimum amount of agricultural inputs are good sources of starch. Yams are rich in potassium: Potassium is a mineral that helps the kidneys to function normally and control blood pressure, zinc: Zn is important to enhance human immunity: Important to blood cell formation, there by prevent from anemea, Calcium: important for strong bone, teeth nail and hair, prevent disease conditions such as osteoporosis.

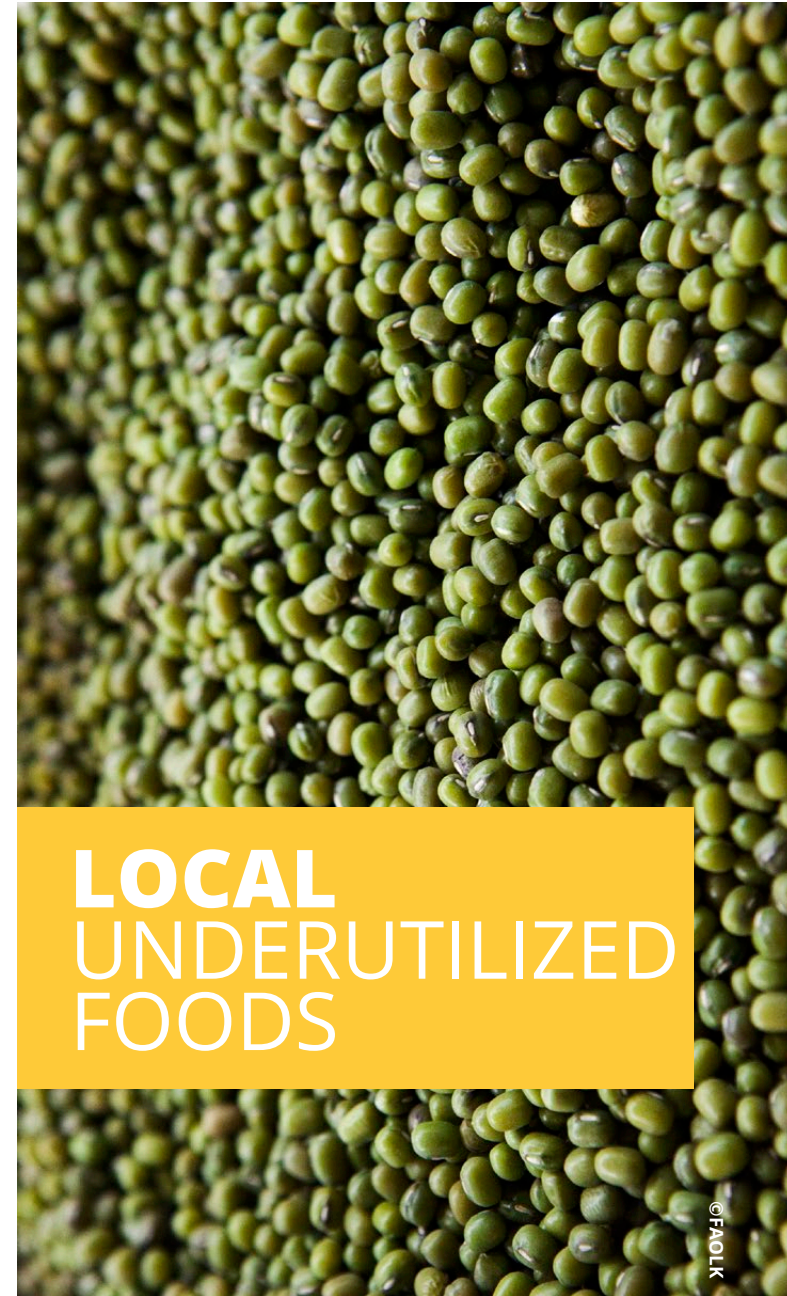
❁ All these fruits, vegetables and yams are rich sources for phytochemicals. Phytochemicals have lots of health beneficial properties like antioxidant, anticancer and anti-diabetes. Further, consumption of local berries (Dan, Karamba, Lovi, uguressa) and pomegranate has reduced platelet aggregation potential that protects us from cardiovascular diseases such as high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke. Vegetables like bitter gourd, dark green leaves and fruits like pomegranate have excellent anticancer properties.

❁ We can try several cooking methods for those foods and try them to enjoy our meal. Green leafy vegetable can be prepared as raw salads or by adding scraped coconut, coconut milk or tempering with oil. We can tryout all these cooking methods to have delicious dish from uncommon green leafy vegetables. Not only green leafy vegetables, we can try various cooking methods such and kirata curry, mirisata curry, tempered dishes for any vegetable and mix dishes with several vegetable items to add specialty for our meal. Yams and tuber crops can be eaten boiled, roasted, fried or cooked. Fruit can be eaten mostly as deserts or snacks. We can have mix of fresh fruits, fruits salads, juices using these underutilized fruits.

❁ Most of us are fed up of seen same types of foods in the market when buying as well as in our plate during consumption. So without getting boring, we can enjoy our meal by including variation into the diet by adding underutilized fruits and vegetables rather than limiting to same foods list every day and increase the diversity of our daily diet.



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



**LOCAL
UNDERUTILIZED
FOODS**





VALUE OUR LOCAL FOODS

- ✿ Currently, various types of fruits, vegetables and yams have been neglected in modern community and been disappearing from our food culture. The reason may be the poor consumer awareness, low cooking skills for those foods and unrecognized nutritional values. These food crops are not cultivated mainly and can be found around the villages and forests.
- ✿ *Dan, Madan, Lavalu, Beli, Eraminya, Karamba, Maa karamba, Palu, Weera, Lovi, Uguressa, Nelli, Weralu, Uguressa, Kon, Debara, Mora, Lawulu, Rose apple (jambu) Namnam, Durian, Woodapple, Pomegranate, Tamarind, and Emberella* are some examples for underutilized fruits in Sri Lanka.
- ✿ Examples for underutilized leafy vegetables are *Thampala, Sarana, Kowakka, Thebu, Kekatiya, Karan koku* and *Kirihenda*. Examples for other vegetables are *Alupuhul, Kekiri, Thibbatu, Thumba karawila, Bitter gourd* and *Diyalabu*.
- ✿ *Dam ala, Kiri ala, Rajala, Angili ala, Kukulala, Kahata angala, Elephant foot yam, Innala* and *Katuala* are some underutilized yams in Sri Lanka
- ✿ These foods give marvelous health benefits with their high content of micronutrients (vitamins and minerals), dietary fiber and various phytochemicals (such as antioxidants).

- ✿ Fruits are rich in vitamin A, E and C, dietary fiber and phytochemicals. Lavalu, passion fruits, orange and other yellow color fruits contain high levels of beta carotenes that are converted to vitamin A in our body. Most of the sour taste fruits specially lemon, lime and citrus family foods are rich in vitamin C. Beta carotene and vitamin C act as antioxidants as well and protect us from many disease conditions specially heart diseases and cancers. Bale fruit (Beli), Nelli, Durian, Anona has high dietary fiber contents that reduce glucose absorption in intestine and lower glycemic load that protect us from diabetes, reduce blood cholesterol levels and reduce the risk of colon cancers.
- ✿ High amount of minerals such as calcium, potassium and iron can be found in Thampala, Kowakka kola, Kathurumurunga, Wel gotukola, Sarana and Aguna kola. As well as they are rich in beta carotenes (form of vitamin A) and folate like vitamins. We can add some lime, Maldives fish or dried fish in to these green leafy recipes during cooking. It enhances the absorbability of those minerals into our body. Consuming these dark green leafy vegetables gives us strong bones and helps in blood formation that we can prevent from osteoporosis and anemia like mineral deficiency conditions. As well as high dietary fiber content in green leaves and other vegetables give various benefits that protect us from non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, heart diseases and cancers.



Mainstreaming Nutrition in the Agriculture Sector in Sri Lanka

