

Creating novel food dishes, and innovative food products using promising neglected and underutilized crops

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Introduction

The double burden of malnutrition, the coexistence of both over- and undernutrition, is nowadays seen in both developing and developed countries. Novel food approaches, with the capacity to simultaneously counteract food insecurity and malnutrition, improve biodiversity, increase sustainability, and prevent the outgrowth of overweight and obesity in humans, are required.

Objective

The objective of the current work was to develop a methodology for creating recipes for novel dishes and innovative food products, considering different cultural and traditional practices in numerous countries across Europe.

Methods

Comprehensive overview of the literature to assess the demand for novel foods and food products and the capacity to develop sustainable novel foods applicable to all populations across Europe.

Results

Locally available, nutrient-dense, climate adjusted, and affordable plant species are crucial for ensuring dietary diversity and healthy diets worldwide. Novel foods and food dishes, based on promising neglected and underutilized species, can help in overcoming several different nutritional challenges and should become available to all. The application and promotion of underutilized traditional foods provide nutritional, economic, and cultural benefits and, at the same time, address sustainability and food security concerns.

Conclusion

Novel foods and new food technologies, based on underutilized crops, have the potential to contribute to healthy and sustainable diets. The creation, application, testing, and improved availability of these foods should be strongly supported in all European countries. A carefully planned, well-designed, multidisciplinary method is required to link nutritional, cultural, and environmental aspects of food production with the food industry's willingness to produce and promote novel food products and improve consumers' awareness to accept and utilize novel foods in everyday life.



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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101000499

