

# UNVEILING OF UNDEREXPLOITED HORTICULTURAL CROPS

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# Prologue

In a world dominated by a handful of popular fruits and vegetables, there exists a vast universe of underexploited horticultural crops, waiting to be discovered and embraced. These unsung heroes of the plant kingdom, often overshadowed by their more mainstream counterparts, possess remarkable attributes and untapped potential. It is within this realm of underexploited horticultural crops that we find a hidden treasure trove of flavours, colours, and nutritional benefits.

“**Unveiling of Underexploited Horticultural Crops**” book is a heartfelt exploration of these lesser-known gems, shedding light on their diversity, cultivation, and utilization. It aims to inspire a renewed appreciation for these underutilized crops and the countless possibilities they offer to enhance our culinary experiences, improve nutrition, and foster sustainable agriculture.

Within the pages of this book, we embark on a captivating journey of discovery, unearthing the rich history and cultural significance of these horticultural wonders. We delve into their origins, exploring their native habitats and the traditional uses that have been passed down through generations. Through this exploration, we begin to grasp the profound connection between these crops and the communities that have cultivated them for centuries. We explore the abundance of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants they contain, as well as their potential health benefits. These crops, often adapted to specific environments, offer resilient alternatives to traditional food sources, fostering food security and diversifying our diets. We explore their applications in medicinal practices. By understanding and harnessing the full range of their benefits, we can unlock new opportunities for economic growth, conservation, and ecological restoration. As you immerse yourself in the chapters that follow, you will discover a wealth of information, from cultivation techniques and post-harvest handling to culinary tips and recipes that showcase the unique flavours and textures of these underexploited crops. It is our hope that this book will serve as a catalyst for experimentation, faculties, farmers, and way to food security to embrace the abundance and diversity that these crops offer. So, let us embark on this extraordinary journey together, as we unlock the potential of these hidden treasures and celebrate the wonders of underexploited horticultural crops.

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**Dr. Eggadi Ramesh**



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