Conclusion

India, which is the second largest producer of bamboo shoots after China, the food potential seems grossly underutilized. This may be primarily due to lack of awareness about the edible characteristics of the shoots. Consumption of tender shoots is confined mainly to the Northeastern states and few parts of Southern peninsula like Coorg, South Canara in Karnataka and in Wayanad, Kerala where they are part of the traditional cuisine during monsoon when the shoots emerge. In other parts, especially surrounding forest areas, shoots of species like *Bambusa bambos* and *Dendrocalamus strictus* which generally occur in the wild are consumed. Restrictions imposed by Forest department on the harvest of bamboo from the forests of Western Ghats have hampered the exploitation of bamboo shoots for edible purposes. Although multipurpose species like *D. stocksii*, *B. balcooa*, *D. asper*, *D. brandisii* and *D. hamiltonii* are widely cultivated, its potential as food is poorly recognized and there is a lack of awareness on sustainable management. The essential requirement for successful exploitation of shoot production technology is the availability of bamboo bioresource and technical and entrepreneurial skills in managing shoot-producing bamboo plantation. Awareness on the nutritional aspects and health benefits of bamboo shoots and the promoting edible bamboo species cultivable in peninsular India would expand scope for bamboo utilization. Also the industrially important species if cultivated with appropriate inputs will aid in the exploitation of the shoots for other industrial purposes as well as a potential nutrient source.

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