

*Underutilized plants are species with under-exploited potential for contributing to food security and nutrition by combating 'hidden hunger' caused by micronutrient deficiencies; they often have medicinal properties and other multiple uses; they provide options for improved incomes to the poor, and for environmental services to the global community. These species collectively receive little attention from research, extension services, farmers, policy and decision makers, donors, technology providers and consumers.*

This 5-day Symposium will be held in Arusha, Tanzania 3 - 7 March 2008. It is organised under the auspices of the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS), recognising the need to provide a global forum for exchange and debate on issues related to the promotion of underutilized plants. The Symposium is an activity of the newly formed ISHS working group on underutilized plant genetic resources (PG3) and will be a joint event of the ISHS Commission Plant Genetic Resources and Section Tropical and Sub-tropical Fruits.

The Symposium will be organised around four main areas of importance for underutilized plants: food security, nutrition and health, income generation, and environmental sustainability. Participants will be invited to share and discuss reasons for success and failure of diverse approaches to promote underutilized plants.

It is planned to use a variety of communication tools: oral and poster presentations, interactive discussion forums, films, theatre, video clips etc. Sufficient space will also be given to informal exchange. **Participants are encouraged to experiment with novel means of information exchange and communication.**

A **1-day post conference tour** will be offered as an optional activity on the last day of the conference.



#### **Programme:**

Four main sessions are planned:

#### **1. Just famine food? What contributions can underutilized plants make to food security?**

Contributions to this session will discuss the role of underutilized plants as risk buffers for food security in times of environmental or societal disasters. Experience may be shared on the use of underutilized species as emergency food and fodder and the role of seed banks and other community-based initiatives during difficult periods.

#### **2. Nourish or perish? The role of underutilized plants in family and society nutrition and health**

Contributions to this session will highlight the use of underutilized plants, for example in providing balanced nutrition to mothers and children, contributing to healthier diets and reducing incidence of overweight and obesity. Examples may be provided of research into new forms of traditional foods, "nutraceuticals" and medicines and the re-emergence of 'forgotten' crops into the mainstream of newly affluent urban communities as trend products.

#### **3. Do markets differ? Challenges and opportunities in the marketing of underutilized plant products**

Contributions to this session will discuss value/supply chains for underutilized plants and their products. Do they differ from mainstream commodities, and if so in what aspects? What experience do we have with collective action in processing and marketing? Are there products that lend themselves specifically to domestic, regional or export markets? In this session, we also welcome contributions that have a specific focus on intellectual property rights issues for both newly developed/introduced crops and underutilized species.

#### **4. Use it or lose it? The effect of developing underutilized plants on environmental sustainability and biodiversity**

Contributions to this session will deal with the impact of increased utilization of a species on inter- and intra-specific genetic diversity and will discuss strategies to limit any adverse effect. Information about gene flow from wild to domesticated relatives may be presented as well as experience with newly domesticated species. Questions such as whether agro-ecological systems are more diverse and/or more sustainable when using underutilized species may be discussed.

The organisers will select contributions to provide a balanced account of "Success stories and what we can learn from them" and "Never-ending stories and what went wrong". A high-level **moderated panel discussion** around these themes is being planned.



#### **Guidelines for abstract submission**

Abstracts should follow the format provided by ISHS (<http://www.ishs.org/acta/index.htm>).

Please indicate whether you intend to make your contribution during an oral or a poster session. Please also indicate if you are using a novel format, such as video, interactive play etc. (you must bring your own props if you need any). The Scientific Committee will make a final decision on acceptance and mode of presentation of the submitted abstracts.

#### **Poster specifications**

Each poster will be allocated a maximum space of 1m x 1.5m (ca 3ft x 5 ft)

#### **Time table:**

Abstract submission deadline: **15 August 2007**

Authors informed of acceptance of abstracts: **5 November 2007**

Deadline for submission of full paper: **28 February 2008**

## Registration

Registration fees will cover teas/coffees, conference dinner and the proceedings as a volume of ISHS's peer-reviewed series "Acta Horticulturae".

### Registration fees (in US Dollar):

	Before 15 November '07	After 15 November '07
ISHS members	500	575
non-ISHS members*	575	660
accompanying persons	250	290
local attendees and students	100**	115**

\* includes a 1-year membership of the ISHS

\*\* or equivalent in local currency

### Cancellation policy:

50% refund will be available for cancellations up to **31 January 2008**.

No refund will be available for cancellations after that date.

### Financial support

In order to encourage delegates from developing countries, we are currently negotiating with various sponsors to identify a suitable means of providing financial support. If you think you could qualify for assistance, please write a brief (no more than 400 words) proposal outlining the reasons why you think you should be considered. All applications will be considered in confidence by the Organising Committee.

### For further information, please contact:

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### co-convended by:

International Centre for Underutilised Crops (ICUC)  
Global Facilitation Unit for Underutilized Species (GFU)  
The World Vegetable Center (AVRDC)  
The Global Horticulture Initiative (GlobalHort)  
Bioversity International  
Plant Resources for Tropical Africa (PROTA)  
The International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS)

## Registration form for International Symposium on Underutilized Plants 3-7 March 2008:

Name			
Job title/ Affiliation			
Address			
email			
Fax			
Telephone			
Section to which you would like to contribute (please tick):			
1. Just famine food? What contributions can underutilized plants make to food security?			
2. Nourish or perish? The role of underutilized plants in family and society nutrition and health			
3. Do markets differ? Challenges and opportunities in the marketing of underutilized plant products			
4. Use it or lose it? The effect of developing underutilized plants on environmental sustainability and biodiversity			
Please indicate whether you wish the paper to be submitted for oral presentation, poster or another format (please specify)			
Title of your presentation and authors (please submit your abstract following the guidelines on <a href="http://www.ishs.org/acta/index.htm">http://www.ishs.org/acta/index.htm</a> on a separate page):			
	Numbers of persons attending:	Registration fee (US Dollar)	
		Before 15 Nov 07	After 15 Nov 07
ISHS member (please state mem- bership number)		500	575
non-member		575	660
accompanying person		250	290
local participant		100	115
student		100	115

Information about accommodation will follow shortly.

Please return this form to ICUC by fax: +94-11-2786854 or email the relevant information to [icuc-iwmi@cgiar.org](mailto:icuc-iwmi@cgiar.org).

[first circular January 2007]

# First Circular International Symposium "Underutilized Plant Species for food, nutrition, income and sustainable development"

3-7 March 2008  
Arusha, Tanzania

