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Curry Leaf Essence: A High Value Low Volume Product for Rainfed Farmers

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Abstract

Curry leaf is used in the world over to flavour curries and chutneys. The availability of leaf during summer season is low leading to sharp increase in prices of the fresh leaves. The post-harvest processing of curry leaf thus can help in fetching better prices to the farmers. The essence product after extraction can provide the aroma of fresh curry leaf for the people living in mega cities and countries abroad round the year where fresh leaf material is not available or is very expensive. Clevenger's assembly is used for the extraction and quantification of any essence oil which is lighter than water. It has been established earlier that some of the essence components are very sensitive to heat and their levels go down with extended time of extraction. Present manuscript describes a modified curry leaf essence extraction assembly which also resolved a very characteristic peak on GC. This peak was found to be absent in the essence extracted from the traditional Clevenger's assembly. Of the three genotypes tested, Bhuvneswar was found to be superior in terms of total essence yield and also possessed better storage characteristics over Local and Suwasini. This value added product can find a good use as a flavoring in fast food products, pharmaceuticals and perfumeries.

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Keywords

Curry leaf, essence extraction.

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