

Book Review

Spices : E V Nybe, N Mini Raj & K V Peter, New India Publishing Agency, New Delhi, 2008, 316 pp, Rs. 1910.00, ISBN 81-89422-44-8.

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The book entitled “Spices” authored by E V Nybe, N Mini Raj and K V Peter published under Horticulture Science Series is a good addition to the existing books on spices. The book has been divided into six chapters namely, Introduction, Major Spices, Tree Spices, Seed Spices, Herbal Spices and Other Spices. The book provides exhaustive information in each chapter.

Introduction: This chapter begins with the definition of spices and condiments. The nomenclature of 52 spices and condiments have been given in a table. The present status of production, productivity and export has been given. However, in some cases the figures given are for 2001–02. A brief history of spices research has been given. The authors have also dealt with advances, challenges and opportunities in spices research and development.

Major spices: This chapter deals with black pepper, cardamom (small and large), ginger, turmeric, chilli and vanilla. A good account of information related to chemical composition, biosystematics, floral biology, improvement, propagation, agrotechniques, nutrition, pre-and post-harvest practices have been given for all these crops. A list of all important varieties/germplasm have also been mentioned.

Tree spices: Under this group 14 spices namely, nutmeg, cinnamon, cassia, tejpat, clove, cambodge, kokam, curry leaf, tamarind, pimento, star-anise, caper, sweet bay and juniper have been described in detail. The crops have been described under the heads like, botany, crop improvement, varieties, crop management, plant protection, harvesting and processing.

Seed spices: Twelve crops have been covered under seed spices. Very concise information has been given for seed spice crops. In case of pomegranate, the seeds of sour varieties are used as *anardana*. However, most of the varieties mentioned fall in the category of table fruits (Alandi, Dholka, Mridula/Arakta, Jyothi, Ruby, etc.). The package of practices are also applicable to table fruit varieties.

Herbal spices: Eleven spices have been dealt under this chapter. A brief description of these crops have been given under botany and chemical composition, crop management and uses. The information is supported by photographs of good quality.

Other spices: Eight spices crops including garlic, asafoetida, saffron, long pepper and others have been covered in this chapter. A brief account of cultivation practices including pre-and post-harvest techniques have been

described, supported by good photographs. All the references quoted in the text have been given at the end. The exhaustive index will also facilitate consultation. The authors have

made a good attempt in providing most of the information on the crops covered. The book will be useful to researchers, students, educated farmers and traders of spices.