

Nepalese Climbing Moth Bean

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Introduction

The moth bean (*Vigna aconitifolia*) is a legume that can be grown in the Terai region of Nepal. It is grown in a warm subtropical climate. The moth bean is grown on stems. Moth beans are contained within a brown pod, with seed numbers varying from 4 to 9. The seeds may vary in colour, ranging from brown to green. Although it is mainly grown in the Terai region, it can also be grown in other regions of Nepal. The production of moth bean will create profit for Nepalese farmers from the sale of this product. Not only is this legume another great food source for the people living in Nepal but also it contains critical amino acids and carbohydrates. Because of these benefits the moth bean provides, it could be a new and different flavor for wealthy nations as an export product.

Health and Nutritional Information

The moth bean is a good source of nutrients, such as critical amino acids for developing countries. “The consumption of moth bean seeds, after processing such as soaking/dry heating followed by cooking, along with cooked rice, sorghum or pearl millet is a common practice among the rural people in India” (Siddhuraju, 2006). By eating and serving the moth bean in such a fashion, it increases the intake of protein and vitamins. It is important for people all over the world to have certain amino acids and vitamins to prevent diseases that may lead to death or blindness, along with many other conditions. It is not as easy for the people of Nepal to gain access to these amino acids and vitamins as it is in wealthier nations, so by harvesting a product such as the moth bean, it can be very beneficial to the health of the people in Nepal.

Growing Conditions

The moth bean is a very drought tolerant plant and can still grow in tropical conditions that are hot and dry. Because of the moth beans have “little or no need for water irrigation for growth, moth bean plant is valued for its ability to grow close to the ground providing a mat-like dense foliage cover to protect soil from sun’s heat thereby helping reduce moisture and organic matter loss as well as soil erosion” (Sathe & Venkatachalam, 2007). The moth bean is very drought tolerant so there is not one region of Nepal that it must be grown. In saying this, the Terai region would be a good spot to grow and harvest this crop because in the summer, temperatures may reach higher than 37 degrees Celsius.

Nepal can go days or even weeks without rain at certain times of the year, which is why it is good to have a product such as the moth bean. Not many crops can survive long dry spells but the moth bean “can thrive and give a good harvest under long dry spells (30-40 days) with high ambient temperatures (35-40 degrees Celsius) from seedling emergence to maturity” (Tarafdar & Kumar, 2003). Many people in Nepal can go broke or starve because their crop cannot handle the severe weather conditions of Nepal. But with a crop such as the moth bean, this problem can be fixed for certain duration of time. As humans we need more protein and carbohydrates than the moth bean can provide on its own, but this legume can certainly do its part until other sources of food are available.

Impact on Nepalese Woman

Living in Nepal can sometimes be tough for women because they possess a lot of responsibility on their farms and around the house. It is unfair as “reproductive tasks such as child-rearing and food preparation are typically carried out by women,

while productive tasks include agriculture and are often shared by both genders” (Halbrendt et al., 2014). It is unfair for the women, but until some of these responsibilities shift, a crop such as the moth bean can be good as it is drought tolerant and does not require too much upkeep. The moth bean also does not need a specific soil type to grow, which bring down some labor costs and time for these women and men.

Canadian Buyers

Consumers in Canada and other nations will be interested in purchasing the moth bean because it is a healthy legume and is a good source of protein and carbohydrates. People all around the world are searching for new ways to eat healthy, and the moth bean is one of these ways. This legume can be consumed in many different ways, such as an ingredient in a stir-fry dinner to a snack in between meals to keep you going throughout the day. Restaurant and household cooks are always interested in new ways to improve their meals and the moth bean is a great way to provide this. Moth beans are small in size and compact well, which makes them easily transported overseas.

The possibility for Canadian buyers and this product are endless. Many businesses will find this product relevant when it comes to sales. Types of businesses that would find the sale of this product useful would be any grocery store chain including a specific food brand such as President’s Choice Foods. President’s Choice sells a variety of different foods, ranging from healthy and nutritious food, to deserts and treats, which is why moth bean would be a great product for them to sell and promote. President’s Choice Foods is in stores all

across North America, which would be great for the promotion of Nepalese agriculture. You can contact Presidents Choice toll free at 1-888-495-5111.

Conclusion

Overall, the growth of moth bean in Nepal and the sale of it in Canada would benefit both countries. Nepal would create work and food for themselves and a source of income. Canada would expand their ethnic market and gain a healthy new legume along with a great new business partner in Nepal. The moth bean is a great source of protein and carbohydrates for both the people of Nepal and those in Canada.

References

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