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Role of tropical and subtropical fruits for crop diversification, biodiversity, environmental protection in changing climates, nutritional food security and poverty reduction in Bangladesh

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Bangladesh economy is predominantly dependent on agriculture. So, the importance of horticulture in the national economy has been well justified. The Horticultural crops, particularly fruits, vegetables and spices are playing a vital role in crop diversification, human nutrition, economy, environment, with an ultimate goal of balanced diet, fight malnutrition, food self-sufficiency, biodiversity, environmental protection and poverty alleviation. In Bangladesh around 40 million peoples are suffering from micronutrient deficiency-the hidden hunger. Moreover, almost 70% peoples are below the poverty level. Our Government has paid much emphasis on rice but not on fruits, vegetable, spices and flowers production as our diet is rice based. Although there has been considerable success in variety development and technology generation in fruits and vegetables but their application are not adequate. Improved varieties of fruit like mango, guava, jackfruit, litchi, pineapple and banana are available in Bangladesh. The paper

deals with mainly achievements, constraints and opportunities of horticultural crops (fruits) in Bangladesh for plantations and climate change. They are also contributing in nutrition and poverty alleviation of our land scarce, malnutrition affected and poor peoples. Bangladesh Agricultural University also established the largest fruit repository including a number of underutilized, tropical, subtropical, indigenous and temperate fruits here in Mymensingh. Contribution of the horticultural crops in the climate change, nutrition of poor people and to alleviate poverty in coastal (saline), hunger prone (monga) and flood affected areas also addressed. Plantation of underutilized fruit ber (Jujube) cv. BAU Kul 1 tremendously contributes in the poverty reduction and natural soil reclamation from saline to non-saline condition. Finally, the paper focuses on the future policy of the managements of horticultural crops in Bangladesh for economy, nutrition, food security, poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

Biography

Mohammed A Rahim holds Ph.D. degree in Vegetables Physiology and Post-doctorate in vegetables breeding from University of London, UK and University of Wisconsin, USA, respectively. He is now the Advisor of Aquaculture-Horticulture Collaborative USAID program in Bangladesh. He is now the Director of HORTEX Foundation in Bangladesh- a government organization for Horticulture production and export. His expertise is in the area of improvement, irrigation water market, conservation of agriculture, food safety and nutritional security, and mechanization in postharvest managements, varieties development of nutrient rich high value fruits and vegetables. Now he is working at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, USA with the horticulture research team. Now he is working in the Feed the Future (FtF) working areas in Bangladesh in collaboration with AAS-World Fish, Blue Gold, Solidaridad, and Government organization. He is also working with University of Wisconsin for adopting the wild crops relatives in saline and drought areas of Bangladesh.

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