

# Medicinal Seeds and Plants

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## PREFACE

The World Health Organization has listed 21,000 plants that have reported medicinal uses around the world. Other estimates indicate the number to range between 35,000 and 70,000 worldwide. The last decade has witnessed a great revival of interest in the use of herbal medicines both in the developed as well as developing countries. Almost 50 per cent of the medicines we use today are derived straight from plants and 25 per cent of the prescription drugs have their genesis of tropical plants. According to World Health Organization, 80 per cent of the world population relies chiefly on plant based traditional medicines especially for their primary health care needs. Medicinal and aromatic plants have a high market potential with the world demand of herbal products growing at the rate of seven per cent per annum. The major importers of medicinal plants are the European Union, Russia and the USA, while the major exporters of medicinal plants or its value added products are China, Japan and Russia. These countries also show strong intellectual property protection. It is noteworthy that active Intellectual Property Right Protection has helped countries like China to establish supremacy in the world trade. Forty five per cent of all patents on herb or herbal based or related medicine are with China, closely followed by Japan with 28 per cent share.

In India, the evergreen forests of Western Ghats and the Himalayas are rich in herbs useful in treatment of common ailments to lethal diseases like blood cancer. Satawari, Safed Musli, Kali Musli and Ashwagandha for promising tonic, Kukronda and Adusa for respiratory trouble, Gudmar and Sadasuhagan for Diabetes, Bramhi and Bach for memory, Kalmegh for chronic fever, Sarpagandha and Arjun for heart troubles are some examples of miracle herbs. Sarpagandha, Aloe and Gloriosa once in abundance, now they have become rare plants in some parts of India. The availability of wonderful herb Safed Musli is also continuously increasing in the country. The climatic and edaphic conditions of India are suitable for commercial cultivation of more than 50 potential plants including Safed Musli, Satawari, Ashwagandha, Akarkara, Sarpagandha, Bach, Ratanjot, Aloe, Senna, Gymnema, Mucuna etc.

Considering above facts, the Medicinal Seeds and Plants has been prepared for the benefit of scientists, students and extension personnel. This book contains Global and National scenario of medicinal plants, Industrial

applications of medicinal plants and detailed description of taxonomy, botany, propagation, seed biology and uses for important species.

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**K. VANANGAMUDI  
V. ANBUKKARASI  
M. PRABHU**



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