Coix Seeds: Health and Medicinal Benefits

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Abstract

Coix (also known adlay, adlay millet or Job’s tear) is a Chinese medicinal plant that grows across Asia and has been consumed in various forms for centuries. It is a tall grain-bearing perennial tropical plant belonging to the family Poaceae.

Keywords
Common; Coix; Tropical; Poaceae; Tear

Introduction

The entire coix plant and its seed pod has tear drop appearance, which is the English equivalent of the Latin species name (Lactima=tear) [1]. There are two main varieties of the species; wild (Coix lacryma jobi) and the cultivated variety Coix lacryma jobi var. ma-yuan. [2].

Plant coix belongs to sub tribe Maydeae. Linnaeus gave the botanical name in 1753, relying upon an existing population. There are 2 types of Coix plant: nutritive and ornamental [2]. Seed of coix is used in salad and porridge. Seed coix is otherwise called as barley-coix which is the English equivalent of the Latin species name (Lacrima=tear) [1].

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This plant is weed in commercial rice fields. Seed of coix have 50% starch. The nutrient content is mentioned in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrient</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>15.4 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbohydrate</td>
<td>65.3 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ca</td>
<td>25 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>435 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fe</td>
<td>5 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>0.28 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>0.19 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niacin</td>
<td>4.3 mg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Nutrient contents of coix per 100 g [5].

Job’s tears are well known for its health benefits due to its rich antioxidant and high fibre content [4]. The Extract of the Coix plant is used in Chinese medicine for treatment of cancer [5]. Coix is suitable for relieving muscle spasm and blood sugar regulations [6,7]. This plant is used for the treatment of abdominal bloating, constipation, diarrhoea and also has anti-allergic properties [8,9].

Conclusion

This article presents a short review on the perspective of the health benefit of Coix plant. More research should be carried out to explore the therapeutic value of this plant.

References