

One of the Star among the Fruits: Carambola

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SUMMARY

India is also known as fruit bowl country in the world. Because so many fruits cultivated in India due to different climatic as well as soil condition available in different region of this country. But due to lack of awareness, ignorance many fruits have not much more used in Indian diet instead of that highly nutritious and rich source of medicinal properties. Among them one of ignore and less popular fruit that is 'Star fruit or Carambola!

INTRODUCTION

Carambola botanically known as (*Averrhoa carambola* L.) Belonging to the oxalidaceae family, The fruit is also known as golden star or starfruit. The word Carambola springs from Sanskrit word karmaranga meaning "food appetizer". Carambola is believed to have originated in Moluccas island of Indonesia and Sri Lanka but it has been cultivated in Southeast Asia and Malaysia for many centuries. In India, fruit prefers the warm climate and can be grown on low altitude of 1200 m MSL. The carambola tree is bushy, small and evergreen that grows very well under tropical climatic condition. Carambola is a seasonal fruit, in India the fruit flourishes during two particular times. September through October and December through January. The leaves of star fruit are medium green, soft and spirally arranged around the branches.



Carambola

The oval shape of the fruit weighing around 70-130 g. The fruit is about 5-15 cm in length and 5-10 cm in width. It usually has five prominent longitudinal ridges but in rare cases it can be four or six. Each fruit having 5-14 number of seeds it depends on size of fruit. Once far away from the fruit, they lose viability within a couple of days. It having specific gravity up to 1.33. The volume of carambola fruit is up to 114 ml. The skin of fruit is thin, smooth, and waxy and turns gold green to dark yellow when it is ripe. The carambola flesh is translucent, light yellow in colour with crispy texture, juicy and firm. Carambola fruit having 50% juice recovery. It The fruit is mildly sweet or extremely sour depending upon the cultivar type and amount of ethanedioic acid concentration. There are two main sorts of carambola- the tiny sour (or tart) type and therefore the larger sweet type. The sour varieties have a better ethanedioic acid content than the sweet type. A number of cultivars are developed in recent years. The most common cultivars grown commercially include the sweet types "Arkin" (Florida), "Dah Pon" (Taiwan), "Ma fueng" (Thailand), "Maha" (Malaysia), and "Demak" (Indonesia) and therefore the sour types "Golden Star", "Newcomb", "Star King", and "Thayer" (all from Florida). Some of the sour varieties like "Golden Star" can become sweet if allowed to ripen.

Nutritional and Medicinal Properties

Averrhoa carambola possesses a medicinal property such as anti-inflammatory, hepato protective and anticancer activity and therefore, the plant and fruit can be used as a perfect medicine. The carambola juice has antioxidant, astringent property to treat vomiting, diarrhoea, dysentery, piles, etc. The fruit is a rich source of vitamin C, also β complex, vitamin, antioxidants, phyto-nutrients such as polyphenols and flavonoids, lower percentage of sugar, high acid content with small amount of minerals and electrolyte like K, P, Zn and iron. Carambola fruits have enriched nutritive value as well as medicinal properties but due to sour taste it makes unpopular among all fruits as well as less market demands because of less consumer acceptability for eating fresh fruit. Due to availability of fruits for a longer period, there is a huge scope to develop new product of carambola so as to have an appealing taste and making its availability throughout the year.

CONCLUSION

Carambola fruits have a high nutritive value but due to its sour and tar taste it makes unpopular. The ripe carambola fruit is processed into fermented or unfermented drinks, jam, jelly, etc. Hence, many attempts have been made to prepare carambola products such as essence, juice, wine, and blended cordial. Hence, in future fruit growers have huge scope for cultivation of carambola. According to that, now need to think by farmers, processors, researchers for cultivating, processing of products and development of new research strategies on carambola fruit respectively. It helps to earn maximum profit and supply one of the nutritious and medicinal fruit to the Indian population.

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