INDIGENOUS TUBER CROPS THAT BRINGS HEALTH AND WELL BEING

By
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Community Development Centre and Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition Project

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Introduction

The ancient glory of Sri Lanka rested upon the local food we found on our own. Within that, the indigenous tuber varieties rich in taste, quality and nutrition occupied a significant place in our diet we consumed.

There was a group of animals living in the environment with the habit of consuming indigenous tubers. Diversity among these evoked the spontaneous development of ecological biodiversity.

The local foods, customs and culinary arts have gradually become distant with the open economy system.

The threat of extinction faced by the indigenous tuber varieties has increased the tendency towards artificial foods to take possession of our kitchen. The outcome of this was the abundance of chronic diseases such as Diabetes, High blood pressure and Heart failures which could transform the nation into a weak form. On this ground, Aranayake Community Development Centre has initiated a forum to re-conserve the local foods.

Accordingly, this was initiated through the focal point of the society via the family unit.

We thoroughly believe that women’s contribution is essential for the maintenance of sustainable development of a society. We motivated the farmers to conserve 64 Tuber varieties that are going to be extinct, in their home gardens with women as pioneers.
At the initial stage of the project (In the year 2001) we have aimed at protecting the varieties facing extinction and to get them accustomed and to use them in their respective families. Thirdly, an attempt was made to popularize the indigenous yams island wide by sharing this experience with the communities of other areas. By now, these varieties are grown in home gardens of 500 farmers and they have begun to consume them and to sell the remainder to other farmers as seeds.

During the lapse of last 10 years, we have been able to disseminate this knowledge and experience to more than 5000 farmers in 7 districts and they have initiated themselves to grow them by now.

However, the women in the modern society possess little knowledge on how to utilize (culinary methods) these tubers. Our effort is to endow this society held by instant foods with the information on preparing the indigenous tubers as food items and emphasizing their nutritional and medicinal values.

This endeavor is to re-establish and increase awareness and knowledge on Indigenous Tubers existed within society.

Damayanthi Godamulla
Biodiversity is a much discussed topic around the world and Sri Lanka is uniquely identified as one of the biodiversity hot spot in the world. Our country is composed of many diversified local wild edible plant species which if made available can be effectively utilized to fulfill the daily dietary requirements among the population.

Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition project which stands for mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable use for improved human nutrition and well being is implemented in Sri Lanka by United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization & United Nations Environment Programme under Mahaweli development and Environment and implemented by the Department of Agriculture. Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition Project identified Community Development Centre Aranayake as one of the key organization which aims to popularize local traditional yams cultivation, popularization utilization and conservation. This booklet is one such example exhibiting their efforts in increasing the awareness among the people on local traditional yams in Sri Lanka. Increasing food security by assisting livelihoods through popularizing local yams as cultivations is a great effort put forwarded by the Community Development Centre, Aranayake. This book will immensely support to disseminate the message on local yams and its importance thus making people aware of the diversity of local root & tubers existing within the island. It will also enhance the popularity for local yams among the international community as the book is translated to a globally used language.

The immense efforts of community development centre in popularizing and conserving the local agro biodiversity will truly become successful and this book will also disseminate the message to a wider community around the world. May this book gain popularity globally and gather to protect and conserve the agro biodiversity for future generations as well.

Dr.W.L.G.Samarasinghe
National Project Coordinator
BFN Project
Preface

Our ancestors knew that the precious things produced by the flora are preserved inside the earth. Accordingly, it can be observed that various elements in the soil such as tubers and root systems had been utilized not only as food but also as medicines since past. How the trees expect to make use of these hidden natural chemicals when necessary is compared to the honey collected by the bees. Therefore, it is not so difficult to understand the significance of exploiting the earthen parts of flora as medicinal foods.

Up to now the expertise have shown how Sri Lankan children lose their health seriously. Researches have verified unhealthy foods make the children below 5 years of age vulnerable to the diseases such as hemoptysis and malnutrition. It is no more a doubt that the impure foreign foods which have already been invaded the local market has gradually engulfed the health and well-being of our future generation. We should think twice before we feed our children with toxic food identified as rich foods.

Under such an environment, the book written by Mrs. Damayanthi Godamulla at Community Development Centre of Aranayake comes to us at the most required moment. The effort made to identify the indigenous tuber crops accurately, to cultivate them in home gardens avoiding agricultural chemicals and to prepare with no hesitation as food for our children is highly commendable.

“Saru Diviyata Deshiya Ala”, the previous publication of this author has also received public attention. I have no doubt that the encouragement received from that must have contributed to the completion of this work. Hence, I make this opportunity to appeal all the public to be alert on indigenous tuber crops, where the health and the well-being of Sri Lankans are preserved, more than earlier, assure its conservation and utilize them freely.

Assistant Professor Piyal Marasinghe
Senior Scientist
Indigenous Medicine Research Institute
Navinna
Maharagama
Our great gratitude is to the programme of COMPASS network for providing financial assistance and to Mr. K.A.J. Kahandawa – the Sri Lankan co-coordinator of COMPASS for encouraging us to render a service to the community following a research on disease curing characteristics and treatments which can be received by indigenous tuber varieties that face the risk of extinction.

We gratefully recall Mrs. Sherine Amarasooriya and Mrs. Dinali Jayasinghe, the national coordinators of UN’s micro financial aid programme for giving us hands for the successful implementation of this task based on the farmer concepts of the male and female farmer leaders at the Community Development Centre who provided the basic guidance in the field of indigenous tuber crops.

Also, our thankfulness goes to the male and female farmers as well as the indigenous doctors residing at the Divisional Secretariat of Aranayake for enriching us with knowledge revealing different facets of Tuber Crop Cultivation.

The participation of Chanditha Swarnakumari, Achala Sagarika Adikari and Sakinthala Kularathna at the Community Development Centre in formatting the information is highly appreciated.

Our special thanks go to Mrs. Anoma Premathilaka, the Former Director of Tuber Crop Section of Agriculture Center at Gannoruwa, Mr. Seneviruwan of SARUKETHA trade in Mathugama, Ayurvedic Doctor, W.H.Piyadasa of Welimanna dignified with the honours of ‘Waidya Shiromani’, ‘Ayurveda shobana lanka puthra”, ‘Ayurwedha wisharada panditha’, ‘Deshabandu jyothirwedi’,’Ayurveda waidya shuri pandith” and ‘samaaja sewa wibhushana’, Mrs. Wishaka Samarasinha Former Assistant National Coordinator and Mr. Piyal Marasinghe, Assistant Professor and the Senior Scientist for providing us with the foreword for this book.

Our sincere gratitude also extended to the National Project Coordinator of the Biodiversity for Food & Nutrition Project, Dr. W.L.G. Samarasinghe for the support provided to translate this book in to a global language and providing the financial assistance to print the book in a colourful way.
I dedicate this work to all those nature lovers who love and search with thirst for knowledge on tasty and nourishing indigenous tuber crops offered to us by the Mother Earth.
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HULANKEERIYA
Other Common Indigenous Names: ‘Aerukka’
Name in English: Arrow Root
Botanical Name: \textit{Maranta arundinacea}
Botanical Family: \textit{Marantaceae}

\textbf{Nature of the Plant}

The plant is grown well in the wet zone. It is abundant in different types of forest areas. Shoot is a shrub of 01-02 feet in height. Leaves are narrowed, somewhat elongated and dark green in color. Tubers are white. The close end of the tubers is thin and the swollen far end is terminating with a point. There are circular shaped links in the tubers. Number of tubers can be obtained from a single shrub. Mature tubers could be obtained within 8-10 months.

\textbf{Medicinal and Nutritional Values}

It nourishes our body. Tubers are dense with starch and contain 2\% of protein, little amount of vitamin and calcium. It is suitable for the patients who have to consume small amounts of protein. It helps to keep the equilibrium between acidity and basicity of our body. It eliminates the obesity and relieves Indigestion and Diarrhea. It is Significant as the first food that can be given to a patient just after recovering from any kind of disease (Convalescence ) and as an infant food.
Method of Preparation as a Food and Medicinal Practice

1. **Arrow Root (Araluk) Flour**

First, the washed and cleaned arrow root rhizomes should be pound in a mortar. Tie a piece of thin cloth over the mouth of an earthen pot and keep the crushed tubers on it. Add some water over them so as to strain through the cloth. Sediment settled at the bottom of the pot could be seen and the residues will be remained on the cloth. Pour off the water over the sediment. Wrap the sediment in cloth and hang over a hearth until the wetness is removed. Then dry it in the sunlight. Store the dried flour in a sealed dry container in order to avoid contamination from air.

The flour is useful to make porridge and other food, and even to prepare medicines.
2. Arrow Root Porridge

Ingredients:

- Arrow Root Flour 2 Tablespoons
- Coconut Milk ½ a coconut
- Pepper Peas 3-4 seeds
- Garlic 3-4 bulbs
- Raw Ginger 1 piece
- Salt

Method of Preparation:

Put coconut milk and Araluk flour (arrow root flour) into an earthen pot and mix it well. Grind pepper peas, raw ginger and garlic bulbs together and add them to the above mixture. Add salt as required. Keep the pot on a hearth and heat until it is boiled.

Arrow root porridge is good to consume twice a day by a child under the age of 10 years. Taking 4 times a day by persons above 10 years of age will help to recover from digestive issues caused by increased acidity.
3. **Araluk Powder Solution**

Take about 1 kg of Arrow Root Rhizomes and wash them. Slice them into pieces and dry under mild sunlight for about 02 days. Then put the dried slices into a mortar and pound well. (Araluk Flour can be prepared using this method as well.) Add 1 table spoon of Araluk Flour into a mug /cup full of boiled water. Let the flour to boil for a while and drink.

Drinking once a day by a child and 3-4 times by an adult will cure loose motion.

4. **Arrow Root “Thalapa”**

**Ingredients :**

- Araluk flour 250 g
- Cow’s milk ½ a Bottle
- Jaggery 100 g
**Method of Preparation:**

Mix Araluk Flour, Cow milk and Scraped Jaggery, well. Keep the mixture on a hearth and stir about half an hour. Remove the mixture from the hearth when it converts to a state of half-solid.

Consuming this paste once a day is adequate. No age limit is there to consume this food item. This is a special nutritious food that should be given to the patients during the treatments for hemorrhoids.

5. **Arrow Root Flour Food**

**Method of Preparation:**

Wash about 1kg of Arrow Root Rhizomes and cut them into slices. Then dry them under the mild sun light. Put the dried Arrow Root slices into a mortar and pound to obtain flour. Mix 01 table spoon of flour with 02 tea spoons of honey (Pure and Unmixed).

This food should be given thrice a day and it prevents dysentery and bleeding with dysentery when given twice or thrice a day.
6. Boiled Arrow Roots

Ingredients

- Arrow Root Rhizomes
- Water
- Salt as required

Method of Preparation:

Wash the Arrow root rhizomes thoroughly. Peel off the outer covering of the tubers and then put them into an earthen pot. Pour some water until the tubers are covered with water. Add some salt and boil the tubers for 1 ½ hour. Proper boiling will resemble easily crushed tubers. This can be taken for consumption after removing the thick peel of the boiled tubers.

It can be consumed irrespective of the age of a person. Getting once a day and twice or thrice a week will keep off the vulnerability to the diseases such as diarrhea. Much effective if it could be consumed as a breakfast meal.
7. **Arrow Root Powder with Milk**

**Method of Preparation:**

Mix one tea spoon of Arrow Root flour into a boiled cup of cow milk, and drink it early in the morning prior to the other meals.

While engaging in exercises that balance the body weight, this is a good drink to have daily for a longer period of time. Controls obesity and makes the body healthy.
BUTHSARANA

Red Buthsarana

White Buthsarana
Other Common Indigenous Names: Seeni Ala / Seeni Kesel
Botanical Name: Canna indica
Botanical Family: cannaceae

Nature of the Plant

The stem of the plant that grows well in lowlands of wet zone in Sri Lanka is about 5-6 feet in height. Leaves are somewhat broad and elongated. Shrubby and the tubes are ovular. Few of the tubers are combined with each other. The mother tuber is relatively large with mosaic patterns and lateral roots. The plant belongs to the family of cannaceae with flowers in red color.

8-10 months taken for harvesting. Delicious yams are produced during dry season.

Varieties and their Characteristics

1. Red Buthsarana - This is the prominent type. Both the plant and the tubers are reddish in color.
2. White Buthsarana - This has faced the threat of extinction. Both the Plant and the tubers are white in color.
Medicinal and Nutritional Value

Cure the disease called jaundice. Relieves the sticky paste inside the mouth of the infants and cures the poison created by the bites of Krait and hump nosed viper.

Allergies

Due to sugary and cold nature of Buthsarana, supplying as a lunch meal would be more appropriate for elders and the patients suffering from phlegm diseases.

Preparation as a Food and Medicinal Practice

1. Preparation of Buthsarana Flour

Wash and peel off the outer cover of Buthsarana yams. Then slice them into pieces and dry in the sunlight or in a dehydration stove if available. (It takes 02 hours to dry in a Dehydration stove and 02 days in the sun). Pound those dried slices of tubers and sieve to make the flour. Buthsarana flour can also be extracted by the same method used to make Araluk flour. However, the residues are higher in that method and the wastage is also high. The flour prepared in this manner can be used to make various food items and medicines.
2. Boiled Buthsarana Tubers

Ingredients:

- Buthsarana Tubers 1 kg
- Water as required
- Salt as required

Method of Preparation:

Wash the Buthsarana tubers well and put them into an earthen pot. Pour some water as the tubers are dipped in water and add some salt into it.

Boil the yams for about 20 minutes until they become soft. Strain off the water. (Since Buthsarana yams are covered with a hard peel, the peel can be removed before or after boiling)

Consuming boiled Buthsarana yams twice a day for a longer period of time would help in curing jaundice disease. These tubers should be given while following either indigenous or western medicine. There is no age limit to consume these yams.

Similarly, by consuming Boiled Buthsarana yams once in 3-4 days will prevent the vulnerability of catching jaundice.
3. **Buthsarana Porridge**

**Ingredients:**

- Buthsarana flour 02 table spoons
- Coconut milk ½ a coconut
- Pepper Few seeds
- Garlic 4-5 bulbs
- Salt as required
- Raw ginger A few pieces

**Method of Preparation:**

Put 02 table spoons of Buthsarana flour into an earthen pot and pour the coconut milk into the pot. Add smashed pepper, garlic, raw ginger and salt adequately. Keep the mixture on a hearth and boil. Drink the porridge after cooling.

Consumption of Buthsarana porridge 3-4 times a week is good for jaundice patients. This should be considered as a nutritional food supplement which can be given while obtaining other treatments.
4. Cream (Ointment) of Buthsarana Flower

Ingredients:

- Buthsarana flowers
- Peels of ripened jackfruit (waraka)
- Cumin seeds
- Peels of Gurulla
- Alum (Seenakkaram)
- Eariya milk
- Pushkara powder
- King coconut
- Sesame oil
- Kaluduru (Black cumin seeds)
- Ghee
**Method of Preparation:**

Pound Buthsarana flowers, peels of ripened jack fruit, Gurulla peels, Eariya milk and king coconut together. Add Kalu duru, cumin seeds, alum (seenakakaram) and pushkara powder to the juice squeezed out from the above mixture. Pour Sesame oil and Ghee and let it evaporate/simmer.

This medicine is useful to cure gummy deposit on the tongues of babies and illnesses associated with phlegm.

5. **Buthsarana Juice**

**Method of Preparation:**

Drink the squeezed juice taken out by pounding equal portions of leaves and flowers of Buthsarana with lime juice, when bitten by a krait.
6. **Use as an Ointment Prepared from Buthsarana Fruit**

Grind the Buthsarana fruit well in sesame oil and apply the mixture on a piece of banana leaf. Then, light an oil lamp and hold it against the flame. The soot that deposited on banana leaf is mixed with the juice of lime. The resulting paste is applied under the eye lashes. This kills the venomousness of the poison of kraits.
SEVEL ALA
Botanical Name  : Alocasia spp.
Botanical Family  : Araceae

Nature of the Plant

The leaves of this plant are circular in shape and green in color. It has a light pinkish stick. This ‘sevel ala’ grows in sandy dry soil, prefers shelter very much. It takes 6 months to harvest.

The specialty seen in this ‘sevel ala’ is its itching quality. Therefore, care must be taken when cooking. There are two methods used by typical women to minimize the itching condition of these tubers. i.e.

1. Application of coconut oil in hands and to heat the hands against a hearth.
2. Wash the tubers from hot water.
There is a belief that this itching condition on hands remains until the curry is boiled. Hence, the people are very careful not to talk when preparing the curry assuming as a secret treatment (‘Kem’ practices; an ancient belief). When examining the accuracy of this belief, the time consumed by a single person to prepare the curry is less than that of doing by two persons as they talk with each other. Then the itching is felt for a longer period of time. Therefore they try to avoid talking as a cooking practice.

If the attention is completely given on peeling off the tubers, the touching area will be limited and thereby itching will be minimized.

**Medicinal and Nutritional Qualities**

Minimize the drying off of joints and drying nature of the body. Cures body heat / increase appetite and strengthens the fetus.

**Allergies**

Even though the tubers are highly nutritious it is an extremely cold food item. Therefore it is better to consume tubers for lunch if suffering from phlegm conditions.
Method of Preparation as a Food and Medicinal Practices

1. Special Food of Sevel Ala

Method of Preparation:

Peel off Sevel Ala tuber and cut into thin slices. Then fry it for 10 minutes in a frying pan. Temper those with Sesame oil. (Sesame oil is used to minimize itching). Then mix equal portions of ghee and bees honey and blend well. Daily consumption of an amount of the size of a ‘thibbatu fruit’ before meal will prevent drying of joints.

2. Sevel Ala curry

Ingredients:

- Sevel ala 500 g
- Curry powder 02 tea spoons
- Chili powder 03 tea spoons
- Garlic 02 Pieces
- Red Onion 03-04 Pieces
- Garcinia 03 pieces
- Turmeric powder and Salt
- Rampe and Curry leaves
- Green chilies 3-4
- Coconut milk half a coconut

**Method of Preparation:**

The ‘Sevel Ala’ can be washed in hot water after removing the soil due to the itching condition of the tubers. Then peel off the tubers and cut them into pieces. Prepare gravy separately by adding chili powder, curry powder, finely chopped red onions, garlic, green chili, turmeric, rampe, curry leaves and salt in adequate amounts. Addition of 2-3 pieces of Garcinia in to this gravy is essential because it can reduce the lubricant quality. Boil the gravy for 15-20 minutes. When it starts to boil, add the chopped tubers and let it boiled.

Since this makes easy to swallow the food, this is suitable for any patient under critical condition. It reduces the body heat. Cancer patients are able to consume this food under medical recommendation.
3. **Sevel Ala Stem (Ala Goba) Curry**

**Ingredients:**

- Sevel Ala stems  A bunch
- Coconut milk  half a coconut
- Chili powder  01 tea spoon
- Turmeric powder
- Curry powder  01 tea spoon
- Rampe, Curry leaves  2-3
- Maldives fish
- Red onions 4-5
- Green chilies  3-4

**Method:**

Fresh stems or two or three days wilted stems can be used to prepare the curry. Wash the bunch of stems and chop it finely. Add coconut milk, curry powder, Maldives fish, red onions, green chilies, turmeric powder, chili powder, rampe and curry leaves into an earthen pot and boil the gravy for about 30 minutes.
After that, add the stem parts to the gravy and boil for another 30 minutes. If this curry is kept under hot condition it can be stored up to 2 weeks.

This can be identified as a food that reduces the body heat and consuming twice a week would be beneficial. Daily consumption is recommended for the people with extremely hot condition in the body.

4. Boiled Sevel Ala

Ingredients:

- Sevel Ala 1 kg
- Salt
- Garcinia 04 Pieces
- Water
- Scraped Coconut 1/2 a coconut
Method of Preparation:

Pour some water to a clay pan and keep on the hearth to boil. Add the peeled off ‘Sevel ala’in to the boiling water. Add Garcinia and salt adequately and boil for 20 minutes. Drain off the water and eat the boiled tubers with scraped coconut.

‘Sevel Ala’ improves the appetite in pregnant women who have passed 1 ½ -2 months of their pregnancy. It also strengthens and protects the fetus of those who have not been conceived for a longer period of time. It is suitable to consume as a meal at least twice a week after 03 months of pregnancy.
HIRITHALA

INDIGENOUS TUBER CROPS THAT BRINGS HEALTH AND NOURISHMENT
Botanical Name: Dioscorea opposititolia var opposititolia
Botanical family: Dioscoreaceae

Nature of the Plant

This plant is typically grown in bushy-woods. The whitish tubers of this plant can be easily uprooted from the soil. The tubers are small. The root system of ‘Hirithala’ is distributed and the tubers begin at the terminating parts of the roots.

Medicinal and Nutritional Values

Reduces the body heat and cure cracks in the feet.
Method of Preparation as a Food Item and Medicinal Practice

1. Hirithala Flour in Milk

Method of Preparation

First, wash a Hirithala tuber and slice into small pieces. Then dry it under the sun for 02 days. Pound the dried Hirithala slices in a mortar and obtain its flour. Add 01 tea spoon of Hirithala flour with a hot cup of cow’s milk.

Drinking this twice a day for a long period of time will cure the body heat ailment and cracks in the feet. It is a popular belief in indigenous medicine that the heat conditions of the body are balanced by the food identified as hot foods and therefore, being a hot food, Hirithala cures body heat ailment.
Botanical Name : *Dioscorea pentaphylla*
Botanical Family : *Diascoreaceae*

**Nature of the Plant**

The plant is abundant in forests and shrub lands and naturally found in the hot wet regions of Sri Lanka. A tuber of Katu ala is 05 or 06 feet in length and extends through as far as the soil is loose. Katu ala grows vertically without branching. The leaf of the Katu Ala is 16.5 -17 cm in length and 7.5 cm in width. This is an extremely hot food.

**Medicinal and Nutritional Values**

Cure diseases of digestive system. It improves the starchy matter within the body and provides the required fitness.
Medicinally Important Recipes

1. Katu Ala Curry

Ingredients:

- Katu Ala 500 g
- chili powder 02 tea spoons
- Salt
- Curry powder 01 tea spoon
- Garlic 03-04 Bulbs
- Turmeric
- Pepper Few seeds
- Kochchi (Green chili) 7-8 pods
- Red onion bulbs 5-6
- Coconut milk First squeeze
- Water
- Scraped coconut
- Curry Leaves
**Method of Preparation:**

Put the pieces of washed and peeled off Katu Ala in to an earthen pot and pour some water, salt water and turmeric powder adequately. Then boil the mixture for about 30 minutes. Smash garlic, Curry leaves, pepper seeds, scraped coconut, Kochchi and red onion bulbs together until it becomes a fine mixture. Next add the fine mixture to the boiled tubers and then pour the coconut milk. Boil the curry in a low flame for about 15 minutes.

This food item can be consumed by any person irrespective of their age. Weekly consumption of this curry many times with main meal will aid to cure the problems related to digestive system.

2. **Katu Ala Special Food**

**Method of Preparation:**

Remove the soil in katu Ala and wash it well. Cut it into small slices and dry for 02-03 days under the mild sun. Fry the dried slices for 10-15 minutes and pound in a mortar. Mix 02 tea spoons of katu ala flour with 01 tea spoon of honey.

Taking 02 kalangs of this food thrice a day before meal keeps the body healthy.
Other Common Indigenous Names : **Wel Kola**
Botanical Name : **Alocasia sp.**
Botanical Family : **Araceae**

**Nature of the Plant**

The stem of Wel Ala Kola plant remains as a small tuber. The plant is abundant in marshy lands and has broad leaves very similar to Habarala leaves. The plant is 1½ -2 feet in height and grows well in wet muddy soil.

Care must be taken when handling Wel Ala Kola because of its itchy condition. Some people do not cook them immediately after plucking but let it wilt for at least a day. Leaves get soluble immediately when cooked just after plucking the leaves and it also create itching inside the mouth.

Therefore, the folk women never wash Ala Kola due to its itchy nature.
Medicinal and Nutritional Value

Contain proteins and minerals.

Preparation as a Food and Medicinal Practice

1. Wel Ala Kola curry

Ingredients:

- Wel Ala Kola leaves  Wilted bunch
- Rampe leaves, Curry leaves
- Kochchi  5-6 pods
- Turmeric powder
- Chili powder  02 tea spoons
- Curry powder  01 tea spoon
- Red onion  5-6 bulbs
- Garcinia  02 pieces
- Salt  02 tea spoons
- Water  A cup
- Coconut milk  First squeeze
Method of Preparation

First, cut Wel Ala Kola to the size of ½ inches. Add kochchi, turmeric powder, chili powder, curry powder, Rampe leaves, Curry leaves, Salt, garcinia, finely chopped red onion in to an earthen pot and pour some water and place it on a hearth. Add the chopped Wel Ala Kola in to the gravy when it boils. Pour coconut milk after the tubers were boiled. Keep under low flame for 10 -15 minutes.

There are high amount of protein in Wel Ala Kola. It is also considered as a hot food because of high protein. The protein content of Wel Ala Kola is similar to that of beef and therefore a person who is not consuming beef can get the same amount of nutrition by consuming Wel Ala Kola.
KIRI ALA (KOLA KANA ALA)
Other Common Indigenous Names: Kiri Ala / Kola Kana Ala

Nature of the Plant

This plant is grown as a shrub and it is relatively big. The stem of the tuber plant is whitish. The leaf is circular in shape with ridges. Veins of the leaves are divided to both sides parallelly. When compared to leaves of other tuber crop leaves, Kiri Ala Kola leaves are beautiful. Shrubs as well as the small plants are grown attached to the main plant.

Kiri Ala is well grown in humus rich black soil. Tubers are grown in shady areas. The factors such as rain, moisture, temperature and sun light do not have a great influence on the growth of the tubers. There’s no any growth retardation with the passing of time.

Leaves are the only edible part in Kiri Ala compared to other tuber crops.
Medicinal and Nutritional Value

Heals the burns from steam, improves the body strength, sharpens the eye sight and relieves the phlegm condition.

Preparation as a Food and Medicinal Practice

1. Juice of Kiri Ala stem

Method of Preparation

Applying the juice obtained from the stem of edible leaves (prior to the emergence of blisters) prevents the formation of blisters caused by burning.

2. Mucilage (Nanu) of the Kiri Ala Plant

Wash and clean the Kiri Ala Tuber well and rub it finely in an earthen container (Naembiliya) used for the draining of sand from rice. Then the mucilage of Kiri Ala will be formed and apply them in blisters erupted at burns. The burn will be cured if applied twice a day.
3. Stem of Kiri Ala and Sambol from the Leaves

Wash the stem and the leaf of Kiri Ala Kola and remove the long fibers on the stem. Then finely chop the Kiri Ala Kola leaf and the stem. Squeeze them from salt water. (It is not essential to wash in salt water) Mix the finely chopped Kiri Ala Kola stem and leaves with scrapped coconut, finely chopped onions, Maldives fish, raw chilies and lime juice.

If this sambol is consumed often it will develop the body strength and the eye sight will be improved.
RELBURULLA
Other Common Indigenous Names: Thadala, Pettagam, Gurala, Yakutala, Kamath Ala

Botanical Name: Alocasia sp.

Nature of the Plant

The leaf of this Relburulla plant is light green in color and the stem is white in color. The yams spread on earth surface so they need to be covered with soil. If they are not covered with soil shoots come out from them. Harvesting period is nearly 06 months.

Medicinal and Nutritional Properties

Cure Pain in bones, joints and dryness in joints. Relieves defecation and decreases the body heat.

Method of Preparation as a Food and Medicinal Practice

1. Relburulla Special Curry

Ingredients:

- Relburulla yam and pod 250 g
- Red Onions 6 bulbs
- Pepper 10 seeds
Method of Preparation

Wash and clean the Relburulla yam and the long pod resembling the yard bean pod. (Remove the stamens in the pod). Chop the yam and the pod into small pieces and put in to an earthen pot. Mix chopped Relburulla pieces with fried red onions, pepper and crushed garlic. Temper the mixture in Ghee and serve as a curry.

Frequent use of this curry will cure pain in bones, joints and dryness in joints.

2. Relburulla Curry

Ingredients:

- Coconut milk of half a coconut
- Rampe and curry leaves
- Relburulla pods 500 g
- A snatch of Turmeric powder
- Chilli powder 03 - 04 Tea spoons
- Curry powder 03 Tea spoons
- Red Onions 5 - 6 bulbs
• A piece of Garcinia
• Salt 2 Tea spoons
• Green chilli 4 pods

Method of Preparation

Pluck the Relburulla pod and squeeze to remove the peel. Wash it well to remove sand and break it into pieces of 1 1/2 inches. Add Turmeric powder, Chili powder, Curry powder, garcinia (goraka), Rampe, curry leaves, chopped Red Onions, green chilli and Salt to the coconut milk in an earthen pot and prepare the gravy. When the gravy boils with a sour taste add Relburulla and cook again. Allow to evaporate in mild heat. Relburulla pieces should not be allowed to crush if its taste is to be retained. If Relburulla is cleaned well prior to prepare the curry, it will take only 10-15 minutes to cook.

If this curry is consumed continuously for 2 - 3 times defecation will be relieved and the heat of the body will be decreased.
HABARALA (COLOCASIA)
Other Common Indigenous Names : Sabarala, Hasthi Karna, Haburu

Botanical Name : Colocasia esculenta
Botanical Family : Araceae

Nature of the Plant

Areas receiving ample amount of rainfall is most suitable for the cultivation. This plant can also be grown in fields with heavy slopes and regions in the dry zone. The leaves are large. This monocotyledonous plant carries large root traps. Though the plant behaves as a perennial plant, due to the presence of underground yams, it is treated as an annual crop.

This crop can be grown in different soil types except in highly clay soil because when it is grown in clay soils, tuber formation is hard and deformed tubers may develop. Since the yellowing of leaves is the sign of maturity it is during this season that the harvest is collected.
Varieties and their Characteristics

I. **Sudu Habarala:** Leaf stem is light green in color. Very large leaf has thick ridges.

II. **Kalu Habarala / Rathu Habarala.** The plant is dark black in color and the leaf is very beautiful in shape and therefore grown in home gardens because of its elegance. Though the color is different its shape resembles the shape of the Kiri Ala plant. This plant type is not consumed as a food.

Medicinal and Nutritional Properties

I. **Sudu Habarala:** Removes the venomousness of the mapila (Foresten’s Cat Snake), Cure boils formed in abdomen and buttocks of small children, Cure pimples formed on the face, Cure cuts reated by dog - bites, Cure ring-worm, Cure tonsillitis, Cure poison caused by the attack of the viper, Cure scabies and eczema, acts as an anti-venom for Habarlaa (a snake by that name) helps to remove a thorn pricked deep under the skin and relieves joint pains.
II. **Kalu habarala**: Cure pimples, Cures body heat, burning sensation in the stomach and limbs, extracts puss from boils, removes all poisons of snakes, Cures tonsillitis.

**Method of Preparation as a Food and Medicinal Practice Sudu Habarala**

1. **Sudu Habarala Mellum**

**Method of preparation**

Meaning: To relieve the poison of the venom of mapila. (Foresten’s Cat Snake) Take the Habarala yams, leaves, stems and roots. Pound them and add turmeric and salt and use as the medicine for the venom of mapila (Foresten’s Cat Snake)

Wash and clean the Habarala tuber, leaves and stems. Break them in to small pieces. Put all the pieces in to a small mortar and pound them. Add a piece of fresh turmeric and a pinch of salt before pounding further.
Allow to cook for about 05 – 10 minutes in mild heat. This mixture when applied on the wound for three times per day will relieve the poison of mapila (Foresten's Cat Snake).

2. **Sudhu Habarala and Bees Honey Application (Ointment)**

**Ingredients**

- Sudhu Habarala Yam
- Bees Honey

**Method of Preparation**

Take a piece of Sudhu Habarala bulb to suit your requirement, wash it and allow to cook for about 05 minutes covered in the hot ashes of the hearth. Thereafter grind it in Bees honey to a smooth paste. Apply this preparation two times a day in the morning and afternoon and all boils and pimples will be cured.
3. Sudhu Habarala and Lime Application (Ointment)

**Ingredients**

- A piece of Sudhu Habarala Yam
- Required amount of Lime used for consumption

**Method of Preparation**

Wash the piece of Sudhu Habarala bulb and remove the peel. Thereafter grind it with lime to get a smooth paste.

When bitten by a dog, apply this mixture covering the bitten area and blow exhaling air on to it few times. The wound will be healed if this mixture is applied two times a day (Morning / Afternoon) for 2 – 3 days. (Due to the fear of hydrophobia many indigenous doctors direct patients to western medical care).
4. Habarala Stem Juice

**Method of Preparation**

To cure the damage of ring worm, clean the area by rubbing 5-6 chopped red onions vigorously. Allow the paste on the wound for about 30 minutes. Clean the area again using a stem of Sudhu Habarala. Thereafter, grind small amount of chicken excreta with the juice of a lemon and apply on the area affected by ring worm. Re apply after about 30 minutes and Following this treatment for few times will result in the elimination of the ring worm.

5. Sudhu Habarala mixed Application ( Ointment )

**Method of Preparation**

- Take equal quantities of tender drumstick leaves, tender lime leaves and lime with seeds.
- Add 04 - 05 cloves.
- Take a piece of Habarala bulb and clean it.
- Grind all these with the juice of lemon to make a smooth paste.
- Apply small amount of paste using the finger, on the inside of the throat when tonsillitis present. Continue this application until cured.
6. **Sudhu Habarala mixed Application (Ointment)**

**Method of Preparation**

- Take equal quantities of cleaned Habarala bulbs, Ash plantain bulbs, Niyagala bulbs, and Kitul leaves.
- Mix all of them and pound in a mortar.
- When bitten by a viper, apply this mixture on the head mixed with human urine. Continue this treatment at least for 03 times. (Urine of children under 12 years of age is taken as human urine).

7. **Oil mixed with Habarala bulbs. (Thailaya)**

**Method of Preparation**

- Boil some sesame oil. Add 8 - 10 small pieces of Habarala stems finely chopped into the boiling oil and take out after about 2 - 3 minutes.
- Apply the oil on Scabies or eczema and repeat the treatment after bathing until it is fully cured.
8. Habarala Stem Juice

Method of Preparation

Take Habarala stem and insert a leaf of Aloe in to it. Allow it to cook for about 05 minutes covered in the hot ashes of the hearth. When bitten by the snake called Habarala, squeeze the juice of Habarala and give the patient to drink. Continue the treatment for at least 02 times.

9. Application (Ointment) mixed with Habarala bulbs

Method of Preparation

Take equal quantities of cleaned Karingala bulbs Habarala bulbs and Kohila ala. Cut them in to small pieces and grind into a smooth paste with human urine. Application of this mixture on the head for at least three times will relieve the poison of python.
10. Attaching a rotten Habarala Stem over a thorn pricked

Method of Preparation

Clean the mouth of the place where the thorn is pricked and attach a rotten Habarala Stem over it. Leave it tied over night and by the morning the thorn will come out.

11. Application (Ointment) mixed with Sudhu Habarala bulbs

Ingredients

- Kernel of Kumburu seed 02
- Habarala Bulbs 100 g
- Bees honey As Required

Method of Preparation

Wash the Habarala bulb and slice into small slices. Pound with the kernel of Kumburu seeds in order to make a smooth paste. Mix the required amount of paste with bees honey. Apply well over the places affected by joint pains. Avoid bathing until fully cured.
II. Kalu Habarala

Kalu Habarala and medicinal practice

1. Kalu Habarala Application (Ointment)

Ingredients

- Kalu Habarala bulb A piece
- Juice 1 lemon

Method of Preparation

Wash piece of Kalu Habarala bulb and pound it into a smooth paste. Apply this paste on pimples once a day 30 minutes before bathing. Continue the treatment for quick results until completely cured.
2. **Decoction (Kasaaya) mixed with Kalu Habarala**

**Ingredients**

- Kalu Habarala bulbs - Take the following in equal quantities
- Kohila ala
- Kidaran yams
- Red onions
- Iriweriya
- Gotu kola (Centella)
- Sugar 01 Tea spoon
- Bees honey 01 Tea spoon

**Method of Preparation**

Add 8 cups (measurement of 8 ceramic tea cups) of water into an earthen vessel. Add all types of yams cut into pieces. Add red onions, Iriweriya and Gotu kola (Centella) and heat the mixture until the remaining quantity is equal to one cup. Add Sugar and Bees honey to the mixture.
Consuming this mixture in the morning / evening for 04 days will relieve the burning sensation in the stomach, limbs and body heat. This decoction is suitable for patients above 15 years of age.

3. **Application (Ointment) of Kalu Habarala mixed with other yams**

**Ingredients**

- Kalu Habarala bulbs - Take the following in equal quantities
- Wild Onion (Wal Lunu) bulbs
- Tholaboe ala
- Beindhuru yams
- Juice of one orange (Ambul Dhodam)

**Method of Preparation**

Wash and take equal quantities of yams as above mentioned. Cook them all with water which was used to wash rice for about 20 minutes. Grind the cooked yams together with Juice of orange (Ambul Dhodam) to make a smooth paste.
Applying the paste twice a day (Morning & afternoon) on the boils will result in rupturing of the boil with further removal of the pus. This ointment can be used without any age limit. Snakes poison will be relieved. Patient must avoid bathing during the period of treatment.

4. **Application (Ointment) of Kalu Habarala and Kekiri Hondala**

**Ingredients**

- Kalu Habarala bulbs
- Kekiri Hondala
- Turmeric and salt

**Method of Preparation**

Take equal quantities of all the above mentioned ingredients and pound them in a mortar. Apply on the snake bites of the stung wound and after 2 - 3 days of applying snake poison will be removed. This can be applied for patients of all ages.
5. **Application (Ointment) of Kalu Habarala and Orange (Ambul Dhodam)**

**Ingredients**

- Kalu Habarala  05 Kalans
- Juice of one Orange (Ambul Dhodam)
- Salt 01 tea spoon

**Method of Preparation**

Wash the Kalu Habarala bulb and allow it to cook for about 05 minutes covered within the hot ashes of the hearth. Grind the bulb pre cooked in salt water & orange juice to make a smooth paste.

Applying this paste on tonsils will cure tonsillitis and caution must be taken in applying this paste. This treatment is most suitable for persons above 18 years of age.
6. Kalu Habarala and Diya Habaralaadhi leipaya

Method of Preparation

Take small and equal quantities of Kalu Habarala bulbs, Diya Habarala Goba (Young Stem), Heen desodium (Undupiyaliya), Panam Pethi, Ahu Geta and tender lime (Dhehi Geta). Cook them all in water used to wash rice for about 20 minutes and grind to obtain a smooth paste.

Application of this paste on boils in any place of the body will result in the rupturing of the boil and removal of the pus. In the event when the rupture of the boil does not come out, place the stem of the Diya Beraliya leaf and rub on the face of the boil and then the boil will be ruptured and the pus will be removed.

7. Kalu Habarala Nasnaya

Method of Preparation

Take Kalu Habarala leaf and cut into small pieces. Grind it with the juice of lime or human urine.
By inserting this medicine inside the nostrils and by blowing into the nostrils of a person bitten by a Foresten’s Cat Snake (Mapila), the effect of the medicine will spread around the whole body and when it acts on the brain and the eyes the poison of the serpent will be relieved from the body. The procedure must be followed for at least two times a day. (Urine of boys or girl below the age of 12 is considered as human urine.)

8. Application (Ointment) of Kalu Habarala

Method of Preparation

Take a piece of Kalu Habarala bulb and clean it. Grind it with 04 bulbs of garlic, 10 seeds of pepper, bark of a drumstick tree together with lime juice.

To relieve the poison of the snake venom apply the medicine on the wound created by the snake bite. This must be followed at least for three times to remove the poison of the snake bite. Bathing is not recommended.
9. **Application (Ointment) of Kalu Habarala and ashes of the conch shell**

Take a Habarala bulb, clean it and allow it to cook for about 10 minutes covered in the hot ashes of the hearth. Take a conch shell and burn it in the hearth for 15 minutes and collect the ashes of it. Rub both the cooked Kalu Habarala bulb and ashes of the conch shell hardly, mixed with juice of a lime.

Apply this paste on the outside of the throat for few times and the tonsillitis will be cured. Apply continuously until fully cured.

10. **Application (Ointment) of Kalu Habarala and soot (Wiyan dhumbulu)**

**Method of Preparation**

Take equal quantities of comb taken from the ant hill (Humbas aasmi), Kalu Habarala and soot (Wiyan dhumbulu). Grind and stir them in human urine. This is a cure for the swelling resulting from python's poison and must be applied from time to time until the swelling is reduced.
11. Application (Ointment) of Kalu Habarala and fresh turmeric

Method of Preparation

Take a bulb of Kalu Habarala, and allow it to cook for about 10 minutes covered in the hot ashes of the hearth. Take equal quantities of Wild onion bulbs, Hendirikkaa yams, fresh turmeric and cooked Kalu Habarala and grind all of them in water used to wash rice or fresh coconut milk.

The above medicine will help in rupturing of a boil in any place of the body and removal of the pus. The application of this medicine must be continued until the boil is ruptured and this will prevent the spread of the boil.

12. Application (Ointment) of Kalu Habarala bulb

Method of Preparation

Take a bulb of Kalu Habarala, clean it and rub it hard on a stone in required quantity together with salt water. Apply this paste on the outside of the throat few times for the cure of tonsillitis until it is fully cured.
13. **Application (Ointment) of the juice of Kalu Habarala leaves**

**Method of Preparation**

Take a leaf of Kalu Habarala, and cut it in to small pieces. Grind the pieces with salt water and make it in to a smooth paste. This paste is a medicine for swelling resulted from contusions and application of this for two or three times will cure the swelling completely.

14. **Application (Ointment) mixed with Kalu Habarala**

**Method of Preparation**

Take equal quantities of Kalu Habarala bulbs, Niyagala yams, and fresh turmeric. Clean them well. Cut them in to small pieces and grind with a crystal of salt and a pod of dried chillie to make a smooth paste. Thereafter, heat it in a pan for about 05 - 06 minutes.

This is a cure for katu pilika (Cancer) and this medicine must be applied in the morning / evening daily until it is fully cured.
KIDARAN ( Arum )

INDIGENOUS TUBER CROPS THAT BRINGS HEALTH AND NOURISHMENT
Other common Indigenous Names : Kidaran (Arum)

Botanical Name : Amorphophallus paeonifolius

Botanical Family : Araceae

Nature of the Plant

This is a beautiful plant with a yam taking the shape of a bowl.

Varieties and their characteristics

I. Sudhu Kidaran / Maha Kidaran : This type with light green stem and white patches, is used as a food

II. Wal Kidaran / Polon Kidaran : This type is a wild relative with red stem and patches resembling a python with large leaves. This is not used as a food. The yam takes the shape of a bowl

III. Beheth Kidaran : The type with dark green stem and dark green leaves, is beheth kidaran. This is not used as a food
Medicinal and Nutritional Properties

I. **Sudhu Kidaran / Indian Kidaran** : Minimize extreme heat of the body. Dangerous poisons like snake poison is relieved. Cures ankylosis of older women. Helps curing hemorrhoids. Protects from hemorrhoids and the loosening of the bowel.

II. **Wal Kidaran / Polon Kidaran** : This type cures inflammation of plethora / diseases caused by phlegm. Increase appetite. Cure all diseases in the eyes. Relieves any type of snake poisons. This is a wild relative with red stem and patches resembling a python with large leaves. This is not used as a food. The yam takes the shape of a bowl.

III. **Beheth Kidaran** : Cures hemorrhoids.
Method of Preparation as a Food and Medicinal Practice

I. Sudhu Kidaran / Indian Kidaran

1. Boiling of Kidaran

Method of Preparation

Clean the Kidaran yams and cut in to pieces. Wash two times with water mixed with the juice of a lemon to remove the acrid taste. Put the pieces of yam into an earthen pot and add water to cover the pieces. Add a tea spoon of salt, a chopped piece of garcinia and a piece of freshly grounded turmeric. (Adding a piece of freshly grounded turmeric will add color and will relieve if there are any toxicity. It is also advisable to spread a piece of banana leaf to avoid possible burning of the yam.) Mix the contents to avoid burning. After about 30 minutes, check whether the pieces are well boiled using an eakle or the handle of the coconut shell spoon. After straining the excess water, boiled yams can be consumed best with scraped coconut and Lunu miris for breakfast.
Consuming for two to three times in this manner, will relieve excessive heat of the body. The theory behind this is that the heat is relieved by the heat.

The risk of occurrence of hemorrhoids will be less with the continuous consumption of these yams. This is good for any person above the age of 05 years. Yams are not given to small children because of its hot properties.

2. **Application (Ointment) of Sudhu kidaran**

**Medicinal Properties**

Relieve extreme poisons like the venom of snake's poison.

**Method of Preparation**

Clean Kidaran yam and cut in to small pieces. Boil with a piece of fresh turmeric together with coconut milk for about 20 minutes. Grind the boiled content in to a smooth paste.

Apply this paste on the wound of snake bite 03 times a day until the poison is reduced. Extreme poisons are minimized by the acuteness of kidaran.
3. Kidaran and Ash plantain Guliya

Method of Preparation

Clean the Kidaran yam and cut in to small slices and let them dry in the breeze for about two days. Pound the dried slices in a mortar to make a powder. Cut the middle of the ash plantains in to small slices and let them dry in the breeze for about a day in the same manner. Pound the dried slices in a mortar to make a powder. Blend equal quantities of Kidaran powder and ash plantain powder with bees honey to make a smooth paste. Make small balls to the size of Kumburu seeds and give the patient to consume in the morning and evening until fully cured.

Ankylosis suffered by elderly women can be cured by this medicine.
4. Kidaran yam Medicinal Chuurna

Method of Preparation

Clean the Kidaran yam and cut in to slices and let them dry in the mild sunlight for about two days. Pound the dried slices in a mortar to make a powder. Take 10 ounces and dried powder of Badhulla wel, gallnut and 4 kalangs of Bulu each. Grind all together with bees honey to make a smooth paste.

Give the amount equal to the size of a thibbatu fruit twice a day, 30 times in total to cure hemorrhoids. This is an in between treatment with other treatments given for hemorrhoids. This medicine will help to control the disease to a certain extent.
5. **Kidaran Pickle**

**Ingredients**

- Kidaran 250g
- Ghee 01 ounce
- Garlic fried and powdered 12 kalangs
- Thippili 12 kalangs
- A small quantity of vinegar

**Method of Preparation**

- Clean the Kidaran yam and cut in to small pieces. Add Ghee, fried and powdered garlic.
- Thippili small pieces of Kidaran yam with a small quantity of vinegar. Allow for the development for 21 days.
- Take 05 kalangs each 03 times a day to be consumed with other food. This medicine will cure hemorrhoids.
6. Kidaran Curry

Medicinal Properties

Ingredients

- Kidaran yams 500 g
- Garlic bulbs 04
- Turmeric and salt as required
- Red Onions 04 bulbs
- Curry Powder 1/2 a tea spoon
- Coconut milk of half a coconut
- Kochchi pods 04 - 05
- A small quantity of pepper
- Garcinia 04 pieces
- Scraped coconut 02 table spoons
- Rampe and Curry leaves
Method of Preparation

Peel off & clean the Kidaran yam and cut in to small pieces. Add the cut pieces of Kidaran yams, turmeric, Garcinia, salt, rampe, curry leaves and curry powder with second squeezed coconut milk in to an earthen pot and leave to be cooked for about 20 minutes. Heat chopped garlic, red onions, kochchi and scraped coconut in a pan and grind well in to a fine powder. Add the powder in to the yams curry with first squeezed coconut milk and leave on the mild heat for another 10 minutes and take out from the hearth.

If consumed at least once a week, a person will protect himself from the risk of catching hemorrhoids. This medicine will help to control the disease to a certain extent. By consuming twice a week by a patient suffers from hemorrhoids can and affected by loosening of the bowel, can be cured to a certain extent. This is best for consumption by children above 08 years and adults.
II. Wal Kidaran / Polon Kidaran

1. Wajra Kanthi Thailaya (Oil)

Method of Preparation

Boil 02 nelis (A measurement) of Wal kidaran and Bebila juice, 04 nelis of king coconut water and 02 nelis of fresh cow's milk well.

Grind deodar, sweet - flag, kalanduru yams, satha kuppa, sidhdhinguru, weniwel geta, kottang, mustard, cardamom, cinnamon peel, stamens of Sri Lankan iron wood flowers, nandhun, pora aratu and stamen of lotus flowers each containing 3 kalangs. Put this mixture in to the pre boiled oil. Continue stirring this medicine in mild heat for three nights until it is golden colour. When the oil is up to the required condition, allow it to cool and drain off the excess oil.

Application of this oil will relieve heat of plethora & diseases caused by phlegm. Increase the appetite. Cures all diseases occurred in the eyes. (This oil can be drunk and can be consumed together with sugar, white jaggery or hot water. If applied on the head, bathing must be done after seven days.)
2. **Mellum**

**Medicinal Properties**

**Method of Preparation**

Take equal quantities of Wal Kidaran yam and leaves, ruk aththana leaves and bark, kobo mella bark, wal keppetiyaa leaves and bark cleaned and cut in to small pieces. Add a piece of fresh turmeric and a little salt and pound well using a mortar. Cook the above mixture for about 05 minutes in mild heat. This is a medicine for python poisoning. Apply and tie the mellum on the cut caused by the python's bite. Applying in this manner for 03 times will relieve the poison of the python.

3. **Application (Ointment) mixed with Kidaran yams**

**Method of Preparation**

Take equal quantities of cleaned Wal Kidaran yams, Beinduru yams and kalu Habarala yams. Grind them to obtain a smooth paste together with male human urine.
This medicine will relieve any type of a serpent poisoning. Allow to dry and apply again. Bathing is not recommended.

III. Beheth Kidaran

1. Kidaran Smoke (dhumaya)

Method of Preparation

Cut the Kidaran yam in to slices and let them dry under the mild sunlight for about two days. Burn them in a cinder pan for about few minutes.

Allow the smoke generated to contact with the places affected by hemorrhoids. They will be cured if applied three times a day for about 05 minutes in each turn.
2. **Kidaran Thailaya (Oil )**

**Ingredients**

- Kidaran yam
- Pas Kulu Badu (Five types of spices )

**Method of Preparation**

A hut should be prepared at a separate place before preparing this oil. Special feature in the preparation of this oil is that a ceiling (wiyana) is made above the hut and only males involve in the preparation. Peel off the Kidaran yam, wash it using turmeric water, cut in to small pieces and put in to an earthen pot. Add other medicines and put on a hearth made inside the new hut. Continue to stir until the oil is extracted. Rituals like exposing for scented smoke, lighting camphor & incense sticks are practiced around the hearth which should be continued throughout the night.

This oil cures hemorrhoids. Application of oil on the boils must be done by a doctor or a person skilled in medicine. Applying once a day persons above 15 years of age is recommended.
NAATTAALA

INDIGENOUS TUBER CROPS THAT BRINGS HEALTH AND NOURISHMENT

[Image of two naattala tubers]
Botanical Name : **Dioscorea alata**

**Nature of the Plant**

Naattaala is a type of creeper producing yams (Wel Ala). Both the creeper and the yam are thorny. The yam is of medium size and the outer cover of the yams are close to white colour. Thorns are abundant at the time of harvesting. The harvest is rich and sometimes cannot complete the digging & harvesting of yams within a day. These yams are hairy and very sweet in taste. The length of the leaf is about 15.5 cm and 11.5 cm in width.

When Nattaala yams are cooked sticks are laid at the bottom of the earthen pot and a banana leaf is kept over the sticks before the yams are put in, because the pot may get cracked due to the excessive heat of the yams.

**Medicinal and Nutritional properties**

Ease Excretion.
Method of Preparation as a Food and Medicinal Properties

1. **Boiling Nattaala**

**Method of Preparation**

Lay banana leaves and their stems at the bottom of the pot. Clean and cut Nattaala yams and put the pieces into the pot and add sufficient quantity of water. (Another advantage of laying banana leaves is that it stops burning of the cooked yam at the bottom of the pot due to its fast cooking and quick soluble nature.) It is also possible to boil them with vapour by putting them over a sheet of cloth tied over the pot with water. This will take about an hour.

Consuming the yams so cooked for two or three times will make the excretion easy.
DHANDHINA
Other common Indigenous Names: Dhandhina / leina pahuru/
lei dhantha / dhandhila

Botanical Name: Dioscorea alata
Botanical Genus: Dioscoreaceae

Nature of the Plant

The yams are very hard and there are varieties with dark purple and light purple incolors. The length of the leaf is about 18.6 cm and 15.7 cm in width.

Medicinal and Nutritional Properties

- Control high blood pressure.
- Cures white spot disease. (Psoriasis).
- Improve stamina and growth of women's hair.
Method of Preparation as a Food and Medicinal practice

1. Dhandhina Kenda (gruel)

Ingredients

- Dhandhina yams 500 g
- Coconut milk a coconut
- Garlic bulbs 05
- Rampe and Curry leaves
- Salt as required
- Fresh ginger one piece

Method of Preparation

Boil Dhandhina yams for about 30 minutes in an earthen pot and crush well. Put the crushed yams into an earthen pot and add Coconut milk, chopped Garlic bulbs, Fresh ginger, Salt, Rampe and Curry leaves.

Cook the gruel for about 20 minutes until coconut milk is well boiled and remove from heat before it gets burned.
If a patient with high blood pressure consumes this gruel at least two times a week for breakfast, high blood pressure can be controlled to a certain extent.

2. **Dhandhina kashaya (decoction)**

**Ingredients**

- Gallnut
- Margosa roots
- myrobalan (aonla)
- Dhandhina yams
- Weni wel geta
- Garlic
- red sandalwood
- Sidhdhiguru
- Ehela bark
- Coriander
Method of Preparation

Take Dhandhina yams, Gallnut, myrobalan (aonla), Weni wel geta, red sandalwood, Ehela bark, Margosa roots, Garlic, Sidhhdiguru and Coriander 1 1/2 kalangs each.

Evaporate from 08 cups to 01 cup of the above mixture and sieve it well. Drink 04 pots of decoction with sugar and bees honey. Bathe after 03 days. Stay in mild sunlight for about 15 minutes after bathing and wipe the wetness off the body.

2. Dhandhina soup

Ingredients

- Dhandhina yams 1 kg
- Water, salt and a small quantity of coconut oil
- Red onions 100 g
- Pasteurized milk or powdered milk
- The white part of the Leeks plant 100 g
Method of Preparation

Allow small quantity of coconut oil to heat in an earthen pot and add chopped red onions and finely chopped leeks. Clean & wash Dhandhina yams and cut in to small pieces.

Add the cut pieces of dhandhina yams in to the leeks pot, add water and boil for about 30 minutes. Now grind all the boiled ingredients, add salt and drink with warm pasteurized milk or dried milk powder.

This soup increases stamina and develop the hair of women.

Dhandhina soup is a nutritious food and can be consumed by young and adult. Consuming any food with dhandhina yams once a day for once in two days will give nourishment.
SAW KENDA

INDIGENOUS TUBER CROPS THAT BRINGS HEALTH AND NOURISHMENT
Botanical Name: Kaempferia rotunda

Nature of the Plant

This magnificent plant has leaves only when it grows and flowers only when it dies because of the bunch of yams like coleus. The leaves resemble the leaves of mango, turmeric or Hulangkeeriya and the flowers resemble Vesak flowers. The fully grown bush looks like a mango or turmeric bush. At the time of blooming with the death of the plant, flowers with sweet fragrance and beauty blooms a one everyday continuously for about a month.

Medicinal and Nutritional Properties

Cures boils and cures muscle and joints stiffening disease.
Method of Preparation as a Food and Medicinal Practice

1. **Sawkenda yam Application (ointment)**

   **Method of Preparation**

   Take few Sawkenda yams and allow it to cook for about 10 minutes covered in the hot ashes of the hearth. Take the required amount of ghee and grind to make a smooth paste. If boils are present apply this mixture on them three times a day and the boils will soften, rupture and the pus and blood will be removed.

2. **Sawkenda yam mixed Application (ointment)**

   **Medicinal Properties**

   Cures muscle and joints stiffening disease.
Ingredients

- Buthsarana yams 02 kalangs
- Sawkenda Yams 02 kalangs
- Pus wel seed 02 kalangs

Method of Preparation

Take few Sawkenda yams, Buthsarana yams and Pus wel seeds and grind them to make a smooth paste. Spread the mixture on a banana leaf and cook for about 05 minutes covered in the hot ashes of the hearth.

If muscle and joints stiffening disease is present, apply this ointment for 03 times on the affected place and massage slowly.
INI ALA
Botanical Name: *dioscorea alata*

**Nature of the Plant**

These plants produce big and long yams which resemble big fingers. Outer cover of the yam is light purple in colour and inside is white in colour. The length of the leaf is about 12 cm and 12 cm in width.

**Medicinal and Nutritional Properties**

- Cure hemorrhoids.
- A medicine suitable for any type of snake poisons.
Method of Preparation as a Food and Medicinal Practice.

1. Special Food mixed with Ini Ala

Ingredients

- Required amount of Ini yams
- Required amount of Heenati rice
- Required amount of Ghee

Method of Preparation

Cut Ini ala in to small pieces. Take equal quantities of Ini yams and heenati rice, add water and cook well for about for 25 minutes. Grind all to make a smooth paste and add some ghee.

Take one guli (measurement) made to the size of a thibbatu fruit for 04 days in the morning and evening before meals to cure hemorrhoids. The patient must bathe in the fifth day.
2. Ini ala and Finger Millet application (Ointment)

Medicinal Properties

A medicine suitable for any type of snakes poisons.

Method of Preparation

Cut Ini yams in to small pieces. Take equal quantities of Ini yams and finger millet flour. Boil Ini yams in water used to wash rice for about 30 minutes. Add finger millet flour to boiled Ini yams and grind to make a smooth paste.

This is a medicine suitable for any type of snakes poison. Apply the mixture with kitul treacle on the bite for 03 occasions. Bathing is not recommended.
ISURU ALA
Other common Indigenous Names: Isuru dheisaala / Rathu Iri Kiri Ala

Botanical Name: Colocasia Spp.

Nature of the Plant

Main characteristic for the Isuru ala plant to be easily recognized is the prevalence of purple colour margin it has along the stem. It grows well in the presence of sunlight on the sand mixed soil. The harvest can be gathered when the plant is 8 - 10 months old.

Before the gathering of harvest, the villagers cut off all the stems and put a stone on the plant to allow yams to be big. This happens because all the nutrition so far absorbed by the stems are received by the yams.

Varieties and their Characteristics

I. Black plants
II. Green color plants
Medicinal and Nutritional Properties

Provide energy due to the presence of starch. Contain higher amount of nutrients. Extremely suitable for the people with low nutrition and small body size.

Method of Preparation as a Food and Medicinal practice

1. Kiri ala curry

Ingredients

- Kiri ala 250 g
- Pepper seeds 10 - 12
- Garlic bulbs 02
- Red Onion bulbs 4 - 5
- Chilli powder 1/2 a table spoon
- Curry powder 1/2 a table spoon
- Salt as required
- Coconut milk of half a coconut
Method of Preparation

Clean Kiri ala and wash 2 - 3 times before cutting in to pieces. Grind pepper and garlic to make a fine paste. Add chopped red onions, chili powder, curry powder, salt and kiri ala pieces to the mixture and mix well. Boil this mixture with secondly squeezed coconut milk for about 20 minutes. Stir continuously until it is cooked. Add the first squeezed coconut milk and allow to heat in mild heat for about 15 minutes.

The hotness in dheisaala is relieved by the addition of coconut milk. Considerable quantity of starch can be absorbed to the body if the curry is consumed at least twice a week. The body gets energy due to its high starch content.
2. Kiri ala tempered curry

Ingredients

- Kiri ala 200 g
- Tomatoes 30 g
- Finely chopped green chili 04 pods
- Maldive fish 03 table spoons
- Big Onion 50 g
- Turmeric 1/4 tea spoon
- Curry leaves
- Pepper seeds 10 - 12
- Rampe
- Coconut Oil
- A piece of Cinnamon bark
Method of Preparation

Clean the Kiri ala, wash them and cut into pieces. Add salt and boil for about 20 minutes and drain off water. Put a pan on fire, add coconut oil and fry onions, rampe, curry leaves and cinnamon bark.

Add maldive fish, chopped chili and salt and continue frying. Add tomatoes and lime together with Kiri ala & cook in the mild heat for some time.

Due to its hot characteristics, frequent consumption by pregnant mothers and lactating mothers is not advisable. It is a very good food for persons with lean bodies and persons in low nourishment because it is rich in carbohydrate. It is appropriate to cook the Kiri ala well before consumption due to its high fiber content.

Kiri ala are abundant with thiamin and calcium of the vitamin family. It is also rich in vitamin C, Caroin vitamin and minerals. This is a food of high nutritional value.
INDIGENOUS TUBER CROPS THAT BRINGS HEALTH AND NOURISHMENT

GONAALA
Botanical Name: Dioscorea spicata
Botanical Genus: Dioscoreaceae

Nature of the Plant

This is a creeper type yam abundant in forest regions. The yam resembles the shape of the antler of a sambar deer. Goenaala is famous as a food with hot characteristics. Goenaala is frequently used by the ancient people in exorcism. This yam type is a constituent of five types of yam. (Ala pas wargaya) They are Katu ala, Hirithala, goenaala, Jaburala and Innala.

Medicinal and Nutritional Properties

Cure any type of a poison of serpents.
Medicinal Practice

1. Goenaala mixed aaleipaya (Ointment)

Ingredients

- Goenala
- Kethi dhemata kola Bark
- Kii kirinndhiya
- wilandawanna
- Jaburala
- Sulu Nayi
- Maha Nayi
- Heen dhadha
- Maha dhadha
- Garlic
- Cows' milk
Method of Preparation

Take equal quantities of the ingredients mentioned above and boil with cows' milk for about 30 minutes. This medicine will relieve any type of a poison of serpents. Apply on head after it is well boiled. Bath with hot water after applying on head for three days.
INDIGENOUS TUBER CROPS THAT BRINGS HEALTH AND NOURISHMENT

MAW ALA
Other common Indigenous Names : Kaha ala / Kadhalu / Naew ala

Botanical Name : Dioscorea sp.

Nature of the Plant

These types of yams are dark yellow in color. The leaf is light green in color. In the leaf, lateral veins are distributed from the central vein. The yam is a part of the main root. No lateral yams.

Medicinal and Nutritional Properties

Develop stamina within the body.

Method of Preparation as a Food and Medicinal Practice

1. Maw ala curry

Ingredients

- Maw ala 500 g
- Chilli powder 1 tea spoon
- A little amount of Turmeric
- Green chili       05 pods
- Garlic           01 bulb
- Rampe, curry leaves as required
- Curry powder     2 tea spoons
- Cinnamon bark
- Red Onion bulbs  5 - 6
- Coconut milk     one cup
- Garcinia         02 pieces

**Method of Preparation**

Remove the peel of Maw alaya a little deeper so that the white peel is removed. (Only the part with the yellow yam is consumed.) Cut the yellow part of the maw alaya into pieces. Put the pieces in to an earthen pot and add turmeric, curry powder, chili powder, garcinia, rampe, curry leaves, cinnamon, green chili, chopped red onions, garlic and required amount of water. Allow to boil for about 30 minutes and add coconut milk. Allow to boil for few minutes. Consumption of this starchy food two or three times a week will supply energy needed for the body. Maw ala is even used as a main meal due to this reason.