

ASSESSMENT OF ECHIUM AMOENUM AS NUTRITIONAL FOOD ADDITIVE AND SOME OF ITS APPLICATION IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY

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There was an increasing trend for consumers to use functional and natural ingredients in food products, instead of chemical additives. Medicinal plants are recognized as sources of natural antioxidants and can be used as an inhibitor in food producing to protect products. Echium amoenum belongs to the Boraginaceae family and is a biennial or perennial herb indigenous to the narrow zone of northern part of Iran and Caucasus, where it grows at highlands at the altitude ranging from 60 to 2200 m. it is a rich source of antioxidants, like rosmarinic acid (RA) anthocyanidine, flavonoids, γ -linolenic acid and trace amount of alkaloids. Extract of this plant has been shown to contain flavonoids, saponins, unsaturated terpenoids and sterols. The antioxidant properties of flavonoids and RA have been well established. amoenum is one of the most important medicinal plants in Iranian traditional medicine. E. amoenum has the capacity to increase the cellular immune response. Concoction of this herb mixed with wine was believed to bring about euphoria and when mixed with honey it was used to ease heart palpitations. It can also be used in bio-films and preserves foods very effectively. In this paper some of its application in food industry was investigated.

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