

Noni (*Morinda citrifolia*) the Wonder Plant: History and Future Perspective

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Abstract

Noni is a small evergreen shrub or tree, native to South, Southeast Asia, and Australia. Presently, the distribution is pantropical. Though, it is a shy plant, yet it persists well even under adverse conditions. All parts of the plant have traditional and/or modern uses. Roots and bark are used for dyes and medicine; trunks for firewood and tools; and leaves and fruits for food and medicine. Agriculturally, it is well suited for intercropping within traditional agroforestry subsistence farming systems. A renewed interest in studying botanicals that were used in traditional healing systems has brought Noni in the forefront for further bio-prospecting and use. Scientific studies have shown that Noni consists of more than 160 phytochemicals with potential to stimulate the immune system, purify the blood, inhibit tumor growth, regulate proper cell function, regenerate damaged cells, etc. In light of these developments, the present article discusses in detail, the history, botany, origin and distribution, potential use, and future perspective of Noni plant in agriculture as a crop to supplement food, nutraceuticals for health care and a medicine for curing a range of diseases, and in production of large number of other by-products, thereby increasing farmers' income and human wellness.

Morinda citrifolia, commercially known as Noni, is a plant species with numerous medicinal properties. In Chinese, it is called hai ba ji and wu ning (Singapore), and luo ling (Singapore and Taiwan); in English, canary wood (Australia), Indian mulberry, large-leaved morinda, and Noni (Hawaii), Noni fruit, Noni plant, nonu (Samoa), and painkiller tree (Caribbean Islands); in French, nono (Tahiti); in Malay, bengkudu, bengkudu

daun besar, bengkudu laki-laki, mengkudu, and pacel (Indonesia); in Spanish, mora de la India, Noni (Puerto Rico); and in Tamil, munja-pavattay (Tamil Nadu, India) and in Telugu, nuna, tarugu, molagha, and maddi chettu (Andhra Pradesh, India).

Noni is an evergreen plant ranging from a small bush to a 30-foot tall tree. It grows well on sandy or rocky seashores. Apart