

### Abstract:

Neglected and Underutilized plant Species (NUS) are often called “minor” because in global production and market values they are of minor importance when compared with major staple crops and other agricultural commodities. Nevertheless, they are source of food, nutrition, herbal remedies and income for poor rural communities. Analysis of socio-economic and marketing aspects is one of the areas for research to foster their sustainable conservation and use. The paper presents a pilot study that has been recently conducted in Syria on six selected species, and their varieties. The study follows a “filière” approach, i.e. the analysis of the production-to-consumption chain, organization of production system, mode of circulation of the products and roles of actors. Information was collected with two methods. In the first, checklists were used in focus group interviews designed to elicit information about actors and the structure of the market chain. In the second step, semi-structure questionnaires were implemented with individual actors in the market chain to gather both qualitative and quantitative data on demographic, social-economic, marketing issues. Respondents were selected through the snowball method since too little was known about the population to draw statistical sample. Data confirm the strategic role played by NUS in the livelihood strategies of rural households in Syria and the importance of strengthening markets if these strategies are to be supported and these species conserved in situ.