

## **Scope for value addition of minor tubers for food security**

The tropical tubers are classified as major and minor tubers based on the utility, area under cultivation and industrial application. The tubers namely cassava, sweet potato and potato are classified as major tubers and elephant foot yam, taro and karunai kilangu, tannia *etc.*, comes under minor tubers. In India the minor tubers include elephant foot yam, taro, karunai kilangu and they are consumed for vegetable purpose, in addition these tubers are also used for indigenous medicinal preparations for various ailments. Except for the use as vegetables, most of the minor tuber crops are less exploited to utilize these for therapeutic food preparations of other value added products.

The minor tubers are well known as energy store houses of nature, but their food value is gradually diminishing due to changes in the life style of the people. Now a days there is an increased in demand for healthy foods due to the occurrence of diseases like obesity and other complications, which created a market for value added foods having additional food value.

The elephant foot yam, taro and karunai kilangu have nutritionally beneficial components such as resistant starch and mucilage, which helps for the slow liberation and absorption of glucose and aids in the reduction of the risk of obesity and diabetes and other related diseases.



**Elephant Foot Yam flour    Elephant Foot Yam Suji    Elephant Foot Grits**

Value addition often referred as secondary agriculture, and it has significant importance in enhancing the income of the farmers. The elephant foot yam, taro or cocoyam are not having universal acceptance. As a food, there is a great scope and urgency for value addition of minor tubers. These tubers are free from gluten and it is one of the advantages for using these tubers for the development of health oriented foods. The tuber crop flours are a good replacement to refined wheat flour for making gluten free diet and it can be fortified with addition of pulses and millets to make it more nutritious and it can play a good role in health food sector. Most of the

minor tuber crops are less exploited. Proper exploitation and highlighting the nutraceutical aspects helps to expand their cultivation and utilization. These tubers can be converted in to flour, grits (flakes) and sujii (rava). The processed tuber can be used for development of various traditional South Indian value added products like pakkoda, spiced chapathi, murukku, and bakery products like cookies (sweet, salt, chilli and spice) as a substitute for refined wheat flour. Value addition and diversified uses of the minor tuber is the only alternative way to retain these crops for food security.



**Taro Flour**



**Taro Gritz**

**Source :**

Dr. S. Parvathy,

Professor and Head,

Department of Home Science Extension,

Home Science College and Research Institute,

Madurai-625 104