MORINGA FOR SCHOOL - BASED FEEDING PROGRAM

by:

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Moringa olifeira, (Malunggay), also known as miracle, drumstick, or horseradish tree, is a plant native to Northern India, and commonly grows in tropical and sub-tropical places such as in Africa, Central and South America and South Asia.

Thurber (2010) introduced Moringa oleifera as an edible tree found worldwide within the dry tropics, is more and more getting used for nutritional supplementation; resulting in its widespread use to treat under-nutrition and a spread of illnesses by clinicians, therapists, nutritionists and community leaders.

Razis et al. (2014) explains that it's been acknowledged by researchers as a plant with abundant health benefits.

Likewise, on a study conducted by Soliva et al. (2005), it was found out that both whole/fresh Moringa leaves and extracted Moringa leaves have a high potential as alternatives to soybean meal and rapeseed meal as protein sources. It was supported by Melo et al. (2013) claiming that the leaves of Moringa oleifera and the residue obtained after the recovery of oil from seeds can be good sources of proteins for human.

According to Arnarson (2018), studies show that Moringa oleifera may lead to modest reductions in blood sugar and cholesterol where most (if not some), people are experiencing today due to unhealthy food intake which are available around. More than that, it may also have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects and protect against arsenic toxicity. Even so, Moringa leaves are also highly nutritious and should be beneficial for people who are lacking in essential nutrients.
As stated by Seshadri and Nambiar (2003), several studies have indicated green leafy vegetables as a group to be important sources of nutrients required for growth and maintenance for its being rich sources of Beta-carotene. These greens also contribute a significant amount of other minerals such as iron, calcium, phosphorous and zinc; and provide substantial amounts of vitamins such as ascorbic acid and folic acid.

In relation to the statement of Seshadri and Nambiar, Ratini (2019) enumerated what important vitamins and minerals Moringa has. 7x more vitamin C than oranges are can be found in leaves and 15x more potassium than bananas. Similarly, it helps the body heal and build muscle with calcium, protein, iron, and amino acids in it. In addition, it is also packed with antioxidants, substances that can protect cells from damage and may boost your immune system, making it a super food – which United Nations even recommended for pregnant women, nursing mothers and young children.

Moreover, Antemano (2020) added and emphasized that Moringa oleifera also protects the brain from dementia, enhances memory, and keeps retention, which is very essential for people especially school-age children. Therefore, inclusion of this plant at least in every meal will give boost to the total nutritional benefits of individuals.

With these in view, it is definitely vital to prioritize Moringa oleifera as part of the School-Based Feeding Program. Its advantages are indeed worth having.

References:


Their Effects on Ruminal Fermentation in Vitro. Available at https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anifeedsci.2004.10.005


