

## **Seasonal availability and consumption of wild edible plants in semiarid Ethiopia: implications to food security and climate change adaptation.**

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### **Abstract**

Quantitative ethnoecological analysis of seasonal availability and implication to food security of wild edible plants (WEPs) was conducted in Boosat and Fantalle districts of semiarid east Shewa, Ethiopia from October, 2009 to September, 2010. Semi structured interview, focus group discussions, key informants discussions, seasonal record of fruits abundance were used to collect data on gathering and consumption of WEPs to cope with food shortage and adapt to climate change. Collected data was summarized into frequency tables, graph and qualitatively described under each subtopic. Thirty seven WEPs were identified for use as human food, and livestock feed and other multipurpose uses. About 24.3 % of WEPs were locally marketed, 75.7% were not marketed. All wild fruits were not included in official production system in the study area. It has indicated the underutilized existing potential of WEPs. Wild edible plants were preferred by local people of the study area not only for their food value, but also for their availability during dry seasons and shortage of food, potential for dry land agro biodiversity and multipurpose to human wellbeing, livestock and environmental services they provide. Pair wise ranking by key informants was in agreement with direct matrices ranking for multiple uses of WEPs. The pair wise ranking, market survey and participant observations, community preference has confirmed the real potential of top seven priority WEPs species for dry land agro biodiversity and agro forestry. Hence, these WEPs can be potential for dry land agro biodiversity and agro forestry, to enhance people's livelihoods in semiarid areas. This result can shed light on further research and promotion work on WEPs utilization and management.