

## The use of indigenous green leafy vegetables in the preparation of dishes

**Sarah Darkawa**

University of Cape Coast, Ghana

This study was conducted to assess the use of indigenous leafy vegetables in the preparation of dishes in Ghanaian homes. As an important source of vitamins, vegetables are always recommended as part of our food. Although Ghana has a wide range of vegetables, most people patronize exotic vegetables which are more expensive and often out of reach ignoring indigenous ones which are cheaper and more affordable. Probably, providing adequate nutritional information on these indigenous vegetables as well as promoting their use through recipe formulation will encourage more Ghanaians to patronize them. The objectives were to develop some recipes from selected indigenous green leafy vegetables; highlight some dietary uses of the selected vegetables; and determine processing and storage methods for these vegetables. A self developed questionnaire was administered to 25 randomly selected individuals to fill and return and 15 purposively selected individuals who sensorily tested the products to ascertain their overall acceptability and responses were analyzed using ANOVA. Out of 10 indigenous green leafy vegetables presented in the questionnaire, only 4 were well known and often used by respondents. Among the 4, *Conchorus olitorius* commonly called "bush okra" was the most used and dandelion was the least used. Recipes prepared with vegetables included stews, soups, salads and drinks and the soups were the most accepted by respondents who tasted. Refrigeration was the best identified method of preservation followed by drying in cool air and the least was by adding preservatives. There was significant difference in colour at 0.05 level of testing and taste at 0.01. However, there was no significant difference in the overall acceptability of all the 4 products tested. In conclusion, indigenous green leafy vegetables could augment exotic vegetables in Ghanaian dishes if well packaged and promoted.

sardarks@yahoo.co.uk